

**CITY OF BELVIDERE  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
Minutes**

**Tuesday November 10, 2020  
City Council Chambers  
401 Whitney Boulevard  
6:00 pm**

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:**

Carl Gnewuch, Chair  
Natalie Mulhall, VCHM  
Paul Engelman  
Andrew Racz  
Art Hyland  
Alissa Maher  
Robert Cantrell

**Staff Present:**

Gina DelRose, Community Development Planner  
Cathy Crawford, Administrative Assistant  
Mike Drella, City Attorney

The meeting was called to order at 6:00p.m.

**MINUTES:** It was moved and seconded (Racz/Mulhall) to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2020 meeting. The motion carried with a 7-0 roll call vote.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**2020-09: Boone County Historical Society, 605 N. State Street:** Application of Anna Pivoras on behalf of the property owner, Boone County Historical Society, 314 South State Street, Belvidere, IL 61008 for a map amendment (rezoning) for 605 North State Street, Belvidere, IL 61008 from SR-6, Single-family Residential-6 District to I, Institutional District pursuant to the Belvidere Zoning Ordinance Section 150.903 Amendment to Official Zoning Map.

The public hearing was opened at 6:01 p.m.

Gina DelRose was sworn in. Ms. DelRose summarized the staff report dated November 4, 2020.

Gina DelRose summarized the history of the subject property and stated that the property was a notable residence when it was built and remains one to this day. In the 1930s it was purchased by the Funderburg family who resided in it until the late 1970s. Although the subject property has been vacant for decades, it has been well-maintained. In 2019 K-B Farms Inc. gifted it to the Boone County Historical Society. The intent of the gift was for the property to be used as an extension of the Boone

County Museum of History by offering a community gathering space, small event venue, space for a local art gallery, additional exhibit rooms and other uses.

In anticipation of allowing the public to enter the building, renovations such as repainting, refinishing the floors, HVAC upgrades etc. have occurred. An architect has been secured to design the remodeling to meet the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act.

In regard to parking, there is enough on-site parking for employees and a large enough area for drop-off parking. Due to the extra wide right-of-way of East Boone Street, an additional 16 on-street parking spaces can be created in addition to the significant amount of on-street parking found across from Big Thunder Park in front of the courthouse.

Land uses permitted by right in the Institutional District are not-for-profit recreational facilities such as gyms, swimming pools, libraries and museums. Schools, colleges and churches, nonprofit clubs and other similar land uses are also permitted. The property measures less than one acre which is too small to house many of the permitted land uses in the Institutional District. Parcels of this size are most likely to be developed into funeral homes, churches, small libraries or museums. The Ida Public Library is two blocks away, the Boone County Courthouse and Public Safety Building are both one block away and there are numerous churches scattered through the city in predominantly residential neighborhoods. Institutional land uses are uses that have traditionally been located in or near residential areas.

The planning staff recommends approval of case 2020-09. Ms. DelRose reminded commission members that there are no conditions of approval placed on a rezoning. Ms. DelRose stated the case was published in the Boone County Journal on October 23, 2020 and notifications were sent to neighboring property owners by certified mail on October 22, 2020.

Chair Gnewuch invited questions for the staff from commission members.

Alissa Maher asked if the requirements for the Institutional District allow a clause for a live-in caretaker.

Gina DelRose said that if it was for a live-in caretaker and not a rental apartment, then it would be an accessory use.

Paul Engelman asked if there are limitations of any kind placed on the rezoning of the subject property, such as hours of operation.

Gina DelRose said there are no hours of operations specific for the Institutional District, however, greater setbacks are required, which would create the needed buffer between the property and residential properties.

Paul Engelman asked if that property would be zoned Institutional in perpetuity.

Gina DelRose said that is correct.

Natalie Mulhall asked if the Museum has stated any hours of operation or if it will open on an event by event basis.

Gina DelRose stated no conditions of approval can be placed on a rezoning, so whatever the Historical Society anticipates cannot be regulated.

Carl Gnewuch asked if the applicant had questions for the staff. Seeing none, the applicant was invited to present evidence.

Anna Pivoras, director of the Boone County Museum of History, said she had nothing further to add.

John Wolf, head of the Funderburg House Renovation Committee and trustee of the Museum District was sworn in. Mr. Wolf gave his personal historic connection to the Funderburg House and outlined the types of events and exhibits the Society hopes will be held at the subject property. Mr. Wolf stated the house is in the process of renovation, Ollmann Ernest Martin Architects have been hired as design professionals. The house has been on the tax rolls for forty years unoccupied but it has been maintained. Mr. Wolf stated the house has three stories and the intent is a permanent display for the community, including space for the Boone County Arts Council, fundraising events, school tours, and small parties. Mr. Wolf stated the Museum would not have the funds to undertake such a project without the donation of K-B Farms and the donation of the house by the Funderburg family. Mr. Wolf stated this would be something Belvidere has never had previously.

There were no questions for Mr. Wolf.

Anna Pivoras was sworn in to answer questions.

Natalie Mulhall asked if the plans will include set hours of operation or will vary due to special events.

Anna Pivoras stated the committee envisions a limited number of hours open to the public per week and the event hours on a case by case basis.

Robert Cantrell asked if, when it is open to the public, there will be staff in period dress.

Anna Pivoras said that was their hope. Ms. Pivoras said they would like the tour process to include creative elements such as that.

Natalie Mulhall asked if artworks will be displayed throughout the house or if there will be permanent exhibit rooms.

Anna Pivoras stated the Boone County Arts Council will have a dedicated gallery space available to them. The Museum may combine exhibits from their collections with the features of the house.

Gina DelRose stated that, while the rezoning is going forward now, the renovation of the Funderburg House has been ongoing for some time in order to allow the Society to better understand the requirements and cost of making the property accessible to the public so that they may be better prepared to answer any questions during the rezoning process.

Natalie Mulhall asked if the house carries landmark status.

Gina DelRose said no.

Anna Pivoras stated that applying for landmark status is a plan for the future.

Alissa Maher asked if landmarking the property will attach requirements to how the house can be renovated.

Gina DelRose explained some of the differences in the requirements placed on a landmark if it has a local or national landmark status. The requirements differ greatly, with local landmarks only have exterior renovations regulated and national landmark requirements being the least restrictive. Ms. DelRose mentioned the maintenance grant monies available for exterior renovation of local landmarks.

Natalie Mulhall asked if any neighbors had contacted the Planning Staff with comments.

Gina DelRose said there had been no comments forwarded; the notifications were sent to all neighbors within 250 feet of the subject property, exclusive of the right-of-way, to give them the opportunity to comment.

Carl Gnewuch commended the members of the committee and all who have been involved in the project.

The public hearing closed at 6:28 p.m.

It was motioned and seconded (Maher/Engelman) to recommend approval of case 2020-09. The motion carried unanimously.

Gina DelRose said the case will go before the City Council on November 16, 2020 for a silent reading and for final vote on December 7, 2020.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** None

**DISCUSSION:** None

**Staff Report:**

Gina DelRose explained, for new commission members, that the State of Illinois does not allow conditions for approval for rezonings. The Findings listed in the staff report are not required to be adopted for rezonings either.

Gina DelRose stated there will be one case for a special use for video gaming before the commission in December, 2020. While there are no video gaming licenses available at this time, some anticipate businesses may not reopen post-Covid 19 and are applying for special uses to be ready in that eventuality.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

**Recorded by:**

  
Cathy Crawford  
Administrative Assistant

**Reviewed by:**

  
Gina DelRose  
Community Development Planner