

**MINUTES
ZONING ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION**

6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, November 5, 2025

City Council Chambers, Historic Federal Building

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Matt Mulligan, Commission Members Martha Christ, Troy Froistad, Carrie Lohrmann, Pat Norton, and Rich Russell

Commissioners Excused: Teri Zuccaro

Commissioners Unexcused: None.

Staff Members Present: Shena Moon, Travis Schrobilgen, and Jason Duba

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mulligan at 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES: Motion by Christ, seconded by Mulligan, to approve the minutes of the October 1, 2025 meeting. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Christ, Froistad, Lohrmann, Norton, Russell, and Mulligan; Nay – none.

Commissioner Norton recused himself from the meeting.

ACTION ITEM/ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGE: Application of the City of Dubuque, for property located at Radford Road to review proposed changes to the conceptual plan for the Planned Unit Development with PR-Planned Residential zoning district designation.

Pat Norton, Buesing & Associates, 1212 Locust Street, spoke on behalf of the applicant. He explained that since the original conceptual plan was approved that they found the terrain of the site was different than the preliminary contours showed, and so they now desire to rotate the side layout by 90° and relocate the entrance further north.

Commissioner Russell asked why they believed the changes were not significant. Mr. Norton replied that it still has the same number of units and parking stalls, they're just rotating the project on the site.

Chairperson Mulligan asked about the relocation of the curb cut. Mr. Norton replied that it moved north and is now closer to the center of the property.

There was no public input.

Staff Member Moon detailed the staff report noting that the Commission is being asked

to assess if the change to the concept plan is significant. She explained that the Unified Development Code does grant authority to the City Planner to generally make a determination of whether a change to the development is significant, however there are some instances where the Commission may be asked to provide guidance as is the case this instance.

She explained that the development is still on the west side of the property and the buildings are the same size, that the same number of residential units are proposed and the same quantity of parking spaces. She noted the access drive is relocated about 200' north and that a detention of stormwater would still be required. . She noted that the new concept plan was reviewed by the development review team and that specifically the Engineering Department has evaluated the modified driveway location. She explained that if the amended conceptual plan is found to be substantially compliant with the previously adopted plan, then a PUD amendment would not be required.

Chairperson Mulligan noted that the other apartments to the north are oriented in a similar layout on that site, and that the project is generally the same and so he thought it made sense to approve the request.

Commissioners Christ and Russell expressed agreement, with Commissioner Russell noting the new arrangement would require less grading.

Motion by Russell, seconded by Christ, to find that there was not a significant change to the concept plan. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Christ, Froistad, Lohrmann, Russell, and Mulligan; Nay – none.

Commissioner Norton returned to the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING/PUD AMENDMENT: Application of James Steiner, University of Dubuque to amend the ID Institutional zoning district to for property located at 2000 University Avenue to allow the construction of a new academic and administrative building.

James Steiner, University of Dubuque (UD) Vice President of Finance & Auxiliary Services, spoke on behalf of the application. He stated that they are seeking to construct a campus innovation center and add the property at 2104 Bennett Street to their district. He noted the new building would be constructed where Smith Hall is now, and it would have 75,000 square feet of interior area. He said the construction would start in 2026 and finish in 2027. He stated the center will provide interdisciplinary, collaborative, hands-on and team-oriented learning opportunities. He stated UD will work to comply with all required regulations.

Catherine Behnke, 1380 O'Hagen Street, stated that she has experienced increased water runoff at her property and in the surrounding area particularly since Hardees and McGovern Hardware were demolished and turned into gravel lots. She expressed concern for this flooding but did not know who to direct her inquiry to.

Mr. Steiner stated the new building will comply with stormwater management requirements. He noted that the gravel lots along University have not been developed because they are waiting on the City's roundabout study.

Staff Member Schrobilgen detailed the staff report explaining that new building is to be built at the corner of McCormick and Grace Streets where Smith Hall sits currently. He noted that the Security Department is temporarily relocating from Smith Hall to 2104 Bennett Street, so UD is seeking to incorporate that property into their Institutional District. He stated that the Bennett Street property will return to a residential use once the new building is completed. He stated that there are two reasons to amend an Institutional District, which include when there is a substantial construction project or when the borders of the district are being modified, and that this request includes both of those. He stated that staff will look into the runoff issue that Ms. Behnke brought up and put her in touch with the Engineering Department. He noted that this project will be required to go through site plan review with the Development Review Team.

The Commissioners had no questions or concerns.

Motion by Norton, seconded by Christ, to approve the PUD amendment as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Christ, Froistad, Lohrmann, Norton, Russell, and Mulligan; Nay – none.

Commissioner Norton recused himself for the following public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING/PUD AMENDMENT: Application of Eric Dregne, Next Level, LLC to amend the Planned Unit Development for property located at Wood Street by updating the conceptual development plan and amending the lot and bulk regulations.

Eric Dregne, 8618 Fisher Road, Galena, spoke on behalf of the applicant. He stated they are seeking to plat the home sites for Rosalynn Carter Place and as a result of creating new lots are seeking to amend the PUD ordinance governing those lots.

There was no public input.

Staff Member Moon detailed the staff report explaining that a PUD was approved in November 2024 and that the applicant came before the Commission just in October with the subdivision plat. She stated that the property was subdivided to created lots for each home, and now the bulk regulations are being established in the PUD ordinance. She noted that there are now 14 single-family homes planned, rather than 16 in the previously conceptual plan, and that the number of parking spaces is not changing. She noted the main change is to the bulk standards for lot size, frontage, coverage, setbacks, and maximum height, and that a section to allow for Variance and Special Exception requests was also added. She noted that neighbors have called in to get information about the change, but none have had concerns to register.

Commissioners had no questions or concerns.

Motion by Christ, seconded by Russell, to approve the PUD amendment as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Christ, Froistad, Lohrmann, Russell, and Mulligan; Nay – none.

Commissioner Norton returned to the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING/PUD AMENDMENT: Application of Jill Connors, City of Dubuque to amend the Dubuque Industrial Center West Planned Unit Development signage regulations to allow directional signs to be 24 square feet in area.

Jason Duba, Assistant Planner, spoke on behalf of the applicant. He explained that Universal Tank is seeking to install 24 square foot directional signs. Rather than apply for a variance that would just affect this property, the City of Dubuque Economic Development Department saw the benefit in applying to change the regulation for all of Dubuque Industrial Center West. He explained that the larger directional signs can improve traffic flow and safety, especially for the movements of semi-trucks, and he noted that directional signs are not primarily for advertising the business at that location. He noted that this same increase in area was approved for the Dubuque Industrial Center South, so they felt it was fair to apply the same standard here.

There was no public input.

Commissioner Russell asked about the company logo on the sign renderings for the Universal Tank directional signs, and Staff Member Duba replied that they help to identify the location for people viewing the signs. Commissioner Russell asked how many directional signs are allowed, and Staff Member Duba replied that they are not limited but that the city does not anticipate them becoming a blight on the landscape.

Commissioner Froistad asked if smaller signs could be effective, and Staff Member Duba replied that it was a matter of degrees.

Commissioner Christ stated that it was only fair to allow 24 square foot directional signs since the Dubuque Industrial Center South allows them.

Commissioner Lohrmann asked about other sign types, and Staff Member Duba replied that there is a table of sign types and area allowances in the PUD ordinance. He clarified that directional signs are referred to as Secondary Signs in this ordinance.

Commissioner Russell said he felt that 24 square feet is too big, but it's only fair to allow them since DICS has them.

Staff Member Moon said that these types of signs are not generally abundant, and they serve a specific purpose.

Motion by Norton, seconded by Christ, to approve the PUD amendment as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Christ, Froistad, Lohrmann, Norton, Russell, and Mulligan; Nay – none.

ITEMS FROM PUBLIC: None.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSION: Chairperson Mulligan brought up the fact that PUD changes are interesting. He referred to his experience with The Farm's PUD and the fact that they are often too strict at first. He suggested there should be a second step to allow for adjustment of plans without requiring amendment.

Commissioner Norton compared this to a preliminary plat and final plat version.

Staff Member Moon acknowledged that it is a lot to ask a developer to have everything figured out right from the start. She discussed the benefits of a PUD and the need to have a conceptual plan. She said that it is understood that modifications may be needed, and the City Planner can determine whether those modifications are in substantial compliance with the approved conceptual plan. She said there is an internal review process before even coming to the ZAC.

Commissioner Russell encouraged the City Planner to have more flexibility with approving changes in concept plans.

Commissioner Norton stated that the same flexibility should be given to Institutional District. Staff Member Schrobilgen confirmed that an ID is a form of PUD district.

ITEMS FROM STAFF: Staff Member Moon noted the UDC update is moving forward and that we hope to have more information to share in the near future.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Russell, seconded by Christ to adjourn the November 5, 2025, Commission meeting. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Christ, Froistad, Lohrmann, Norton, Russell, and Mulligan; Nay – none.

The meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shena Moon, Associate Planner

December 3, 2025

Adopted