

**STORY COUNTY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**  
STORY COUNTY ADMINISTRATION  
900 6<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
NEVADA, IOWA 50201-2087  
515-382-7245



*"Commitment, Vision, Balance"*

**MINUTES  
STORY COUNTY  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

**AN AUDIO RECORDING OF THE FULL MEETING MAY BE FOUND IN THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, OR BY VISITING [WWW.STORYCOUNTYIOWA.GOV](http://WWW.STORYCOUNTYIOWA.GOV)**

<b>DATE:</b> June 2, 2021	Cheryl Moss (Zoom)	2025
	Debbie Younkin (Zoom)	2021
<b>CALL TO ORDER:</b> 4:00 PM	Kathy Mens, Vice Chair (Zoom)	2022
<b>PLACE:</b> Zoom Meeting Originating From Administration Building	Wendie Schneider (Zoom)	2023
	*Ben Jensen (Zoom)	2020
	*Ray Lee (Zoom)	2023
	Dalton Johnston (Zoom) (4:02)	2024
	*Absent	

**Special Note:** Due to recommendations to social distance in order to help slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the capacity of our meeting room is significantly limited. Therefore, public access to the meeting was provided via Zoom. Members of the public could participate by using the information found at the bottom of the agenda.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Amelia Schoeneman, Director; Marcus Amman, Planner; Andrea Wagner, Planner, Jenna Gilliam, Intern, Stephanie Jones, Recording Secretary

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** None

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**APPROVAL OF AGENDA (MCU)**

**Motion by Mens, Second by Schneider to approve agenda**

**Voting Aye:** Mens, Schneider, Moss, Younkin

**Voting Nay:** None

**Absent:** Johnston, Lee, Jensen

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

May 5, 2021

**Motion by Mens, Second by Schneider to approve the May 5, 2021 minutes.**

**Voting Aye:** Mens, Schneider, Moss, Younkin Johnston

**Voting Nay:** None

**Absent:** Lee, Jensen

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**NEW BUSINESS**

**Proposed amendments to Chapter 89- Home Business And Signs Of The Story County Land Development Regulations**

Jenna Gilliam stated that as part of the comprehensive review and update of the Story County Land Development Regulations assigned to the Planning and Development Department as part of the 2021 Work Program, staff has completed a draft of proposed changes to Chapter 89— Home Businesses and Signs. Gilliam and Amelia Schoeneman presented the proposed changes to the Commission and requested feedback on proposed amendments.

Changes to 89.01 home business requirements include:

- Revised the language for those who may be employed by a home business to clarify that one person living in the residence shall be employed at the home business and use the household unit language in lieu of the word family. Also, we included that the household unit in which the home business is located should be the individual's primary place of residence.
- Added that a home business shall be entirely based in the dwelling or accessory building, with no business activity or storage in another accessory building or buildings off-site. We've had several recent requests for businesses located in cities or commercial districts and want to have a home business permit in the county as well to create large buildings for warehousing and storage. This change supports the intent of allowing home businesses to promote limited commercial activity accessory to a dwelling.

Mens asked if someone having a home business on Etsy would be allowed able to have an accessory structure for their business. Schoeneman stated there is a limit of one accessory structure, or an addition could be added to an existing accessory structure.

- Placed a square footage cap on the total gross floor area of an accessory building that is associated with the home business. This is related to the issue discussed under the previous point and we would like the Commission's feedback on if both are necessary.

Much discussion took place about the square footage limit possibly being too small and whether or not the size of accessory buildings should be regulated. Schoeneman stated that if staff decides to keep the square footage cap, it shall be increased.

- Created definitions for on-site employees and off-site employees in Chapter 85, Definitions. Many home businesses have off-site employees that don't report to the site. Staff wanted to add a standard to clarify what employees should be included in the limit of one non-resident employee. The proposed definitions are below.
- Off-site employee and on-site employee defined.

Discussion took place about a home business owner going to the site several times a day for equipment and then leaving the site. Schoeneman stated there are a lot of businesses that

have off-site employees that do not report to the site every day, or sometimes they would like to report to the site every day, but there is no way to accommodate that under the current standards.

- Off-site employees do occasionally visit a home business location. To allow for this, language was added for off-site employee visits to count as client visits towards the allowed traffic for the home business. There are also other counties that limit duration, but would be difficult to enforce.

Schneider stated that regulating traffic would be easier than duration. Younkin asked if home daycares are included. Schoeneman stated it is being proposed for childcare to be considered as a permitted use rather than a home business.

- Amended the number of trips permitted by a home business from six trips a day per person living in the household to 10 visits (20 trips) generated by customers, employees, or delivery services. Staff determined that the number of people in the family was not an appropriate multiplier. Clarification was also made to the number of clients that can visit the home business to be limited to 2 clients at any one time, including off-site employees.

Schneider asked what would happen if a business is giving classes such as embroidery classes. Schoeneman stated consideration could be given to not limiting the number of clients at a time, but rather only trips per day. Schneider asked about parking standard limits and feels when the number of clients is already being limited that having additional restrictions could be discriminatory. Moss feels 20 trips seems like a lot. Gilliam stated that the limit of 20 trips would include employees and delivery services. Schoeneman mentioned that professional services and offices currently have a parking maximum of one parking space for every 200 square feet of gross floor area and stated staff could consider creating a parking maximum for home businesses.

- Added that all applications shall comply with the standards in Chapter 88, General Site Planning Standards including our requirements for conceptual review. Before this was just limited to complying with parking and site lighting standards.

Chapter 89.02 sign requirements include:

- Staff took the standards from Chapter 88 Site Lighting requirements so that all standards for illuminated signs are in the same chapter. The revised standards for sign lighting are more Dark Sky compliant. Illuminated signs can either be internally illuminated or externally illuminated by shielded light fixtures. Any light source that is used to illuminate a sign shall be designed and constructed as a full cut-off light fixture. We are going to create a visual for our definition for "fully shielded lights." We also added that for internally illuminated signs, dark backgrounds with light lettering or symbols are preferred and there is now a light curfew for internally illuminated signs. Specifically, internally illuminated signs may be illuminated from 5:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m., or one hour past close of business or the facility, whichever is later. Flashing lights and beacons are still prohibited for all illuminated signs; we combined the standards into one point or subsection. Illuminated signs are still only permitted in the Commercial/Light Industrial and Heavy Industrial districts.

Younkin asked if this is the same requirements for rural residential areas with private security lights. Schoeneman stated that this only applies to lighting for signs and our site lighting standards are in Chapter 88. Younkin asked if there are requirements for signs in right-of-way. Schoeneman stated signs cannot be in the right-of-way and that is enforced by the County Engineer, but it could be added to Chapter 89.02 as well.

- Ensured signs listed in 5(A) (exempt from permitting requirements) are also exempt from area calculations in 5(B) of the exceptions section.
- Edited the allowance for one or more temporary signs up to 32 cumulative square feet in size provided that the signs are permitted by the property owner(s) and removed within the 90-day time limit. Before we only allowed one temporary sign up to 32 square feet.

Schneider asked if political signs would be included. Schoeneman stated political signs are included and reminded the Commission that staff operates on a complaint basis, so if received a complaint they would then notify the property owner.

Schneider asked about political signs put up by renters and wondered if it would fall under free speech. Schoeneman stated that would be an unintended consequence of the requirement and it should probably be removed.

- Removed the requirement that once limited the number of flags per lot or tract.
- Removed the height restrictions on pennant signs. Pennant signs are essentially freestanding signs and the height of a freestanding sign shall be regulated based on the zoning district it is located in.
- Added an exception for changing the face or faces of an existing sign or the sign face itself provided that such sign has previously received a zoning permit and the area, height, lighting, or other aspects of the sign that are regulated by this chapter do not change. We want to make it easier on those who already have a zoning permit for their sign so that they don't have to go through multiple permitting processes if they are not altering the sign's area, height, lighting, or other aspects, but rather, merely changing the content or message of the sign. Having content-neutral sign regulations is important.
- Added additional regulations within the subsection 6, Miscellaneous Restrictions, including compliance with our vision clearance provisions in Chapter 88.06 and restrictions on signs attached to vehicles and/or natural features.

Younkin asked about semi-trailers parked in fields with messages on them. Schoeneman stated those are not considered as signs. Schoeneman stated that the regulation could be revised to clarify that no illuminated sign shall be constructed upon a mobile or portable device.

Younkin asked about enforcement and who does the enforcing and feels the language is vague and clarification may need provided on enforcement. Schoeneman stated 92.11 outlines how the department handles code violations in any manner. Enforcement is the same for most all of the chapters and refer back to 92.11. Schoeneman summarized what 92.11 says.

Gilliam stated after changes are made communication would be made with home business owners for feedback. It would also be reviewed by the County Attorney and County Departments and then would be brought back to the commission for action.

**COMMENTS:**

**Staff:** Schoeneman introduced Johnston and Younkin since Johnston was absent at the last meeting. Schoeneman stated the Board of Supervisors has removed occupancy limits in the public meeting room. Recommendations have been made to follow the CDC guidelines which will allow the next meeting to be in person with a Zoom option still available for commissioners and the public.

**Commission:** Mens will be absent at the July meeting. Schneider stated that at the last couple of meetings involuntary annexations were discussed and she had concerns of homeowners being forced to put money into utility hookups when they don't want to be annexed. Schneider asked at future meetings if the city could be asked to attend the meetings. Schoeneman clarified that the Planning and Zoning Commission only hears the amendment processes, such as the C2C Plan or Ames Urban Fringe Plan processes that are necessary to make an annexation happen. If the city is the applicant, they could be asked to attend. The Board of Supervisors acts on the annexation process, so Schoeneman could ask the Board of Supervisors if they would like the city present at their meeting. Schoeneman stated there is not a specific chapter in the Land Development Regulations about handling annexations, but rather follow the state code. Schneider asked about when dealing with those being involuntary annexed if it can be required for the applicant to meet some of the annexation expenses so that those are not placed on homeowners. Schoeneman stated she would need to look into that further, but that typically imposing fees for improvements for a developer to pay would happen at the time of rezoning which would then be up to the individual city. Schoeneman stated that fees involved do vary.

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**ADJOURNMENT:** 5:25 PM

Cheryl Moss  
**Approval of Minutes**

PZC Chair / 7/7/21  
**Title and Date**