

P&Z Report – January 26, 2021

The Honorable Michael Kidd
and Members of the City Council
Dallas Center, IA 50063

Dear Mr. Mayor and Members of the Council:

The Dallas Center Plan & Zoning Commission met via Zoom meeting on Tuesday, January 26, 2021 with the following members participating in the call: Abby Anderson, Kari Boscaljon, Kristi Northway, Thomas Strutt, Daniel Willrich and Matt Ostanik. Also participating were City Attorney Ralph Brown and community members Julie Becker and Bob Haxton.

Discussion of Code of Ordinances 165.41(5) Relating to Off-Street Parking

In November 2020 the Commission discussed the City's current off-street parking requirements as requested by City Council. The Commission felt that Dallas Center's requirements are reasonable and in line with other cities. We did not see a reason to change them. However, the Commission did make a recommendation to City Council to clarify the ordinance language without changing the meaning of it. Our recommendation was presented at the December 2020 City Council meeting.

Following that meeting, we received feedback expressing concern about this particular sentence in our proposed revisions to the ordinance:

Such off-street parking shall only be permitted between the building and the public (or private) street right of way.

This sentence had been included by the Commission because it was our understanding that this was the original intent of the ordinance when it was passed in 1994. However, the concern expressed was that this specific requirement may inadvertently change how the ordinance has been applied in the years since then.

As part of our follow-up discussion in January, the Commission reviewed existing off-street parking in residential areas of Dallas Center. It appears that approximately 1 out of every 8 houses in the city have some form of off-street parking on their property that is not a driveway. 80% of those parking areas appear to be in side and rear yards.

In addition, we took another look at ordinances in nearby cities to see how they handle this specific issue. We reviewed nine other central Iowa cities and were unable to find

any examples of cities that limited parking to only front yards. Most other cities either expressly allow side and back yard parking (on asphalt or concrete) or are silent on it.

After discussing this updated information, Daniel Willrich moved and Thomas Strutt seconded to strike the above sentence from our recommendation to City Council.

The motion was approved 6-0:

- Anderson – Yes
- Boscaljon – Yes
- Northway – Yes
- Strutt – Yes
- Willrich – Yes
- Ostanik - Yes

The Commission recommends that City Council approve the revised ordinance as previously submitted but with this sentence removed.

Respectfully submitted,
Matt Ostanik
P&Z Commission Chair