

Zoning panel likes direction proposed industrial park taking

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Commission OKs land rezoning after resident expresses traffic concerns.

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WATERLOO

The northeast part of the city is the perfect spot for an industrial park, say zoning officials, but at least one resident expressed concerns over traffic problems the project could create.

The comments came at a Planning, Programming and Zoning Commission meeting Monday over plans for a 247.7-acre industrial park to be located between Newell Street and the proposed Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, east of the City View Heights area.

The commission voted to recommend changing the area's zoning from agricultural to a planned industrial district, over the objections raised by Ann Olsson, who lives at 1972 Newell St.

The issue now goes to the City Council.

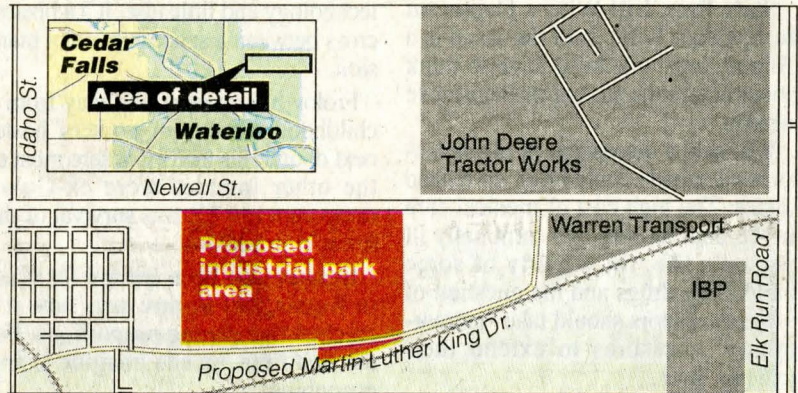
Commission Chairman Tom Langlas said the park's location is ideal because there has been little residential expansion to the north.

"So I think this is a perfect location for this because I don't see this ever developing upward," he said, pointing to the proposed rezoning plan.

"This area has been kind of dead for us. I think it's a good idea for us to use that property for something besides agriculture."

He added that the proposal is a change from past projects, many of which have been concentrated in the Crossroads area.

But Olsson wondered about increased truck traffic from existing nearby businesses. She also feared the industrial park would be constructed before completion of Martin Luther



King Jr. Drive, to be located 1/2 mile south of Newell Street.

"In the area where we live, we have a 30 mph speed limit to control traffic somewhat and no one pays attention to it," Olsson said.

But City Planner Don Temeyer said the park is dependent on construction of the road, which should be complete by 1998.

The park property is owned by the Waterloo Industrial Development Association, but the city will develop the park, partly with grant money.

Mayor John Rooff has said a number of prospective firms have inquired about development in the area. WIDA would own the land and would make it available to the city for development as needed. The city could, for example, request WIDA make 10 acres of industrial park land available for a business project as it materializes.

The city is buying the land for \$580,000 from the Friendship Village Foundation and the Thomas H. Williams estate. Local banks and WIDA are lending the city the money to finance the transaction. The money would be repaid at 6.5 percent interest over 15 years with revenue from the city's tax increment financing district, with the possibility of refinancing after five years.

Tax increment financing allows the city to use the additional property taxes generated by development to finance public improvements in a designated tax increment district.

Jeff Klein, a commission staff member, said there is both street and railroad access to the area. Besides Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Bishop Avenue is to be extended north of Independence Avenue.

Klein also said a "buffer" space will be established along the west side of the site, to provide a transition from the industrial park to the City View Heights neighborhood.

In other action, officials said site plans for a new car wash could lead to several other businesses locating in the Tower Park area, near San Marnan Drive and Kimball Avenue.

The commission voted to recommend a site plan for construction of the Waterfalls Car Wash, a 12,250-square-foot automated facility at 242 Tower Park Drive. The business will be operated by Rocky Loveland, who runs the U-Needa Car Wash outlets in Waterloo and Cedar Falls.

The site plan includes future spots for a banking facility and other businesses in the Tower Park addition. Temeyer said those are simply suggestions for now.