

Altoona Board of Adjustment Hearing – October 4, 2016 – 6:30 PM Altoona City Hall

Members Present – John Rullman, Mary Simon, Robert Hall, Lea Morris

Members Absent – Dale Sikes

Staff Present – John Shaw, Chad Quick, Susi Hoots

Others Present – Shannon Ferguson

Chairman Rullman called hearing to order at 6:30 p.m.

#1 Public hearing to consider a conditional use permit from Walmart Stores Inc. for property at 3501 8th Street SW. They are seeking permission to place five 40-foot long storage containers behind the building from October 1 thru December 31, 2016.

Shannon Ferguson, 422 Stonegate Court SW, Altoona, Iowa, Wal-Mart store manager, presented the request.

Ms. Ferguson explained the trailers will be behind the building to store customers' lay-a-way purchases.

Rullman asked about various exterior storage currently at the building. Ferguson said there are three small trailers on the west end for bike storage inside a block wall. Ferguson did not know the distance from red bollards at the rear of the building to the curb.

Rullman said it would be preferable for the proposed trailers to be on the north side of the road behind the building and noted that the fire hydrants are on the north side of that road. Ferguson said the main truck entrance is on the west side of the building and trucks travel this route to the loading dock. If the trailers were on the north curb line there would be very little room for delivery trucks and no way for trucks to maneuver through.

Morris asked about the time frame: length of time the trailers will be there; is this an every year occurrence? Ferguson said temporary storage trailers are used every year from October through December. Most of the store's temporary trailers have been eliminated, but on-site storage of lay-a-way items is necessary.

No public input has been received.

Rullman said that if this conditional use permit is granted, something needs to be done, besides temporary trailers, in the future. Ferguson indicated she is unable to address that as it is beyond the scope of her position.

Shaw pointed out that city staff has been pursuing this matter which is a zoning violation. Wal-Mart is to phase out and eliminate all trailers. At one time there were forty-some temporary storage structures, most have been eliminated. During the holiday peak season Wal-Mart has issues with lay-a-ways and merchandise moving in and out. In the off-season no temporary storage structures/trailers should be there. Permanent brick walls are needed. Wal-Mart may need to acquire additional ground for addition(s) to the building. At this time there should be no temporary storage structures/trailers on-site.

Ferguson stated that there is a cardboard compactor on the west side. There used to be two trash compactors on the east side but they have been replaced by a trailer storing fixtures. During the

Christmas season the store usually maxes out at fifty trailers for toys, seasonal merchandise, etc. Usually only five trailers are used for lay-a-way.

Hall asked if there is enough space on the backside of the building to place temporary trailers and not block fire hydrants, etc. Ferguson responded: Yes.

Hall asked how close to the building the trailers are proposed to be. Ferguson responded that placement of trailers within ten feet from the building still allows traffic to flow. Ferguson noted that indentations in the pavement show the locations of trailers from previous years.

Shaw stated that city regulations require a clear 24-foot width for traffic.

Hall said there does not appear to be sufficient space. Rullman agreed that it does not appear there is 24-foot width for traffic and noted traffic has to travel around bollards.

Morris asked if Wal-Mart has been using temporary trailers for a long time. Ferguson responded: Yes.

Morris: In the same location? Ferguson: Yes.

Ferguson said that all trailers will be gone by December 31, 2016, as all lay-a-ways are required to be picked up by December 20, 2016.

Hall asked that Staff verify proper locations for trailers if the conditional use permit is granted. Shaw said that staff will verify proper locations and verify that proper space remains for fire equipment etc.

Morris asked if Wal-Mart will have to apply for a conditional use permit every year if they continue the same practice. Rullman responded in the affirmative and noted that in the future it would be good for Wal-Mart to make other arrangements.

Morris moved to approve the Conditional Use Permit to allow five temporary trailers behind the Wall-mart store building from October 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016, with the condition that Wal-Mart Stores Inc. presents to the City plans and a specific timeline for a permanent storage structure that will eliminate all temporary storage at this site before October of 2017. Seconded by Hall. Votes: Yes – Rullman, Simon, Morris, Hall. No – None. Conditional Use Permit granted with stipulations.

#2. Minutes of the September 13, 2016 meeting. Simon moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Hall. Vote: Yes – Simon, Hall, Rullman. No – None. Pass – Morris.

Hearing Adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susi Hoots
Community Development Administrative Coordinator