



**STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Planning and Zoning Commission

**PREPARED BY :** Ben Landhauser, Senior Planner

**RE:** Waukeee Elementary School #8 - Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, & Site Plan

**DATE:** April 18, 2014

**GENERAL INFORMATION:**

**Applicant :** Waukeee Community School District

**Requested Action** Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, & Site Plan Approval

**Location and Size:** Property is generally located on the West side of Dartmoor Drive, North of Hickman Road, and West of Alice's Road containing approximately 20 acres more or less.

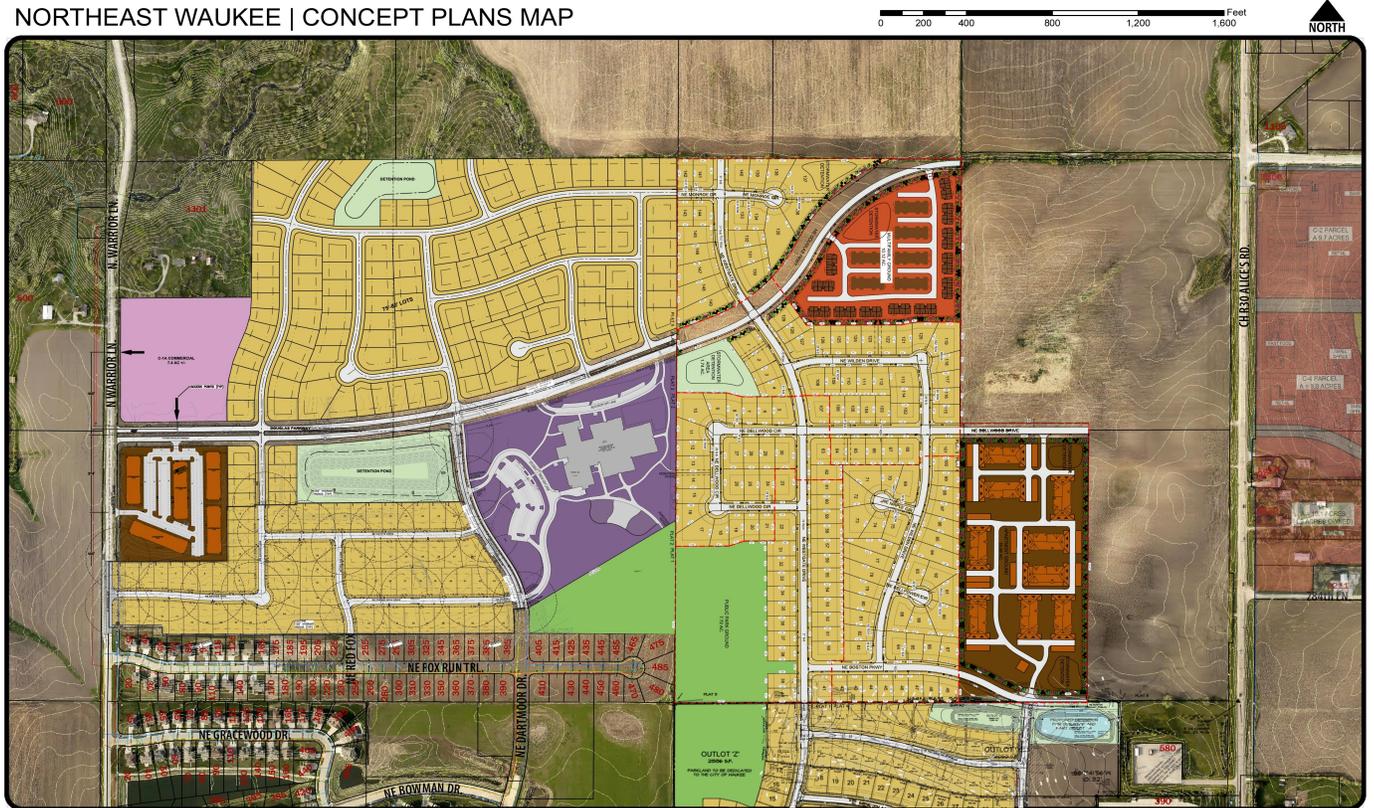
**LAND USES AND ZONING:**

| Location             | Existing Land Use                       | Comprehensive Plan       | Current Zoning |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------|----------------|
| Property in Question | Vacant - Undeveloped                    | Neighborhood Residential | R-2            |
| North                | Vacant - Undeveloped                    | Neighborhood Residential | R-2            |
| South                | Fox Creek Estates Plats 1-4<br>Parkland | Neighborhood Residential | R-4            |
| East                 | Vacant - Undeveloped                    | Neighborhood Residential | R-2            |
| West                 | Vacant - Undeveloped                    | Neighborhood Residential | R-2            |

**BACKGROUND:**

The property involved in the proposed development plan is located on the west side of NE Dartmoor Drive between Warrior Lane and Alice's Road. The School District intends on developing a new elementary school on the site that is similar to other elementary school the District has recently built. The subject property is 20 acres in area.

NORTHEAST WAUKEE | CONCEPT PLANS MAP



**ABOVE:** Aerial of the property in **PURPLE** in relation to the surrounding planned neighborhoods.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The proposed project includes the construction of a 96,142 square foot elementary school to be used by grades Kindergarten - 5<sup>th</sup>. At full capacity the proposed school could accommodate approximately 750 students. The school will consist of 39 classrooms, a gymnasium, and an auditorium. A playground for the school is proposed to be developed in the southeast corner of the property. Immediately to the south of this property is parkland owned by the City of Waukee. The location of the school playground will allow it to be utilized in conjunction with the City owned parkland.

**LOTS:**

The proposed final plat identifies the creation of one singular lot for the 20 acre property. Lot A identifies the permanent right-of-way for NE Douglas Parkway. Lot B identifies the permanent right-of-way for NE Dartmoor Drive.

A few easements are provided across the lot related to planned permanent and temporary storm water management facilities in addition to public utility easements necessary for the planned extension of other utilities around the property.

**ACCESS AND PARKING:**

Access to the site will be provided from NE Dartmoor Drive and NE Douglas Parkway. Parents will utilize the access off of NE Dartmoor Drive to drop-off students. School Bus drop-off will utilize the access off of NE Douglas Parkway.

The parking lot located on the west side of the site is for parent/visitor and staff parking and includes 129 spaces. The parking lot on the north side of the site is for staff and includes 36 spaces. The total

parking necessary for daytime activities is 104 stalls based upon the ordinance requirements for the number of employees and classrooms. Evening and weekend use is based upon the capacity of the largest single assembly area, which in this case is the gymnasium requiring a total of 45 parking stalls. The applicant is proposing to construct a total of 165 parking stalls (6 of which are handicapped accessible) which exceed the minimum necessary to accommodate the largest potential user group within the facility.

As part of the school development the District will be responsible for the construction of NE Douglas Parkway adjacent to their plat. At initial development, NE Douglas Parkway will be constructed as a 2 lane divided (boulevard) roadway. Designated left turn lanes will be installed at the intersection of NE Douglas Parkway and NE Dartmoor Drive. As part of the review and approval of the plans for Fox Creek Estates Plat 5, which borders the west side of the proposed school site, a center turn lane was planned on NE Dartmoor Drive at the intersection with Douglas Parkway in order to meet the anticipated traffic demands in this location. As traffic and development continues along NE Douglas Parkway, the street will be widened by the City to a 4 lane divided street similar to what exists in Clive and Urbandale to the east of Waukees corporate limits. In addition to the left turn lane being installed at the Douglas/Dartmoor intersection, a left turn lane specific to the bus drop-off lane will be installed by the School District for west-bound Douglas Parkway traffic.

#### **SIDEWALKS/TRAILS :**

As a part of the improvements required of this project to NE Dartmoor Drive a 10 foot trail will be constructed along the east side of the street consistent with our Major Streets plan which also identifies major trail locations. Pedestrian access to the school will be provided from this 10 foot public trail in two areas. A pedestrian access is proposed along the north side of the student drop-off exit. A pedestrian access is also proposed on the south side of the student drop-off entrance. A five foot sidewalk on the south side of NE Douglas Parkway will be constructed as part of the public improvements and pedestrian access points will be located and the entrance and exit of the School Bus drop-off.

Two additional pedestrian access points are provided. One access point will be from the adjoining City owned parkland on the south side of the property. The other access point will be on the east side of the property from the adjoining property proposed to be developed for residential use.

#### **UTILITIES:**

All utilities needed for the development of the school building are currently being installed as part of the public improvements associated with Fox Creek Estates Plat 5. Sanitary sewer, water, and storm water for this site generally are or will be accessible from NE Dartmoor Drive.

As part of the public improvements to Douglas Parkway discussed above, the School District will extend a 12 inch water main along the south side of the street and provide storm sewer to address the street drainage needs.

The majority of the site drains toward the large detention pond in the Fox Creek Estates development, but the east portion of the site drains to the north. The storm water directed north is being funneled to 2 detention ponds on the north east side of the building and will be released on the north side of Douglas Parkway.

#### **OPEN SPACE AND LANDSCAPING :**

There are no specific requirements for Schools to provide general open space or landscaping aside from provisions relating to the screening and plantings adjacent to parking stalls; however the District is generally using the requirements specified for a C-1 (commercial) district which is consistent with how many of the other school projects have addressed landscaping and site beautification. All of the parking areas have an earthen berm and shrubbery to aid in screening the parking stalls from the adjoining public roadway(s).

A 25 foot landscape buffer and associated plantings are proposed along the east side of the school site to provide an appropriate transition from the school to the planned single family homes in the Landing at Shadow Creek development. A 25 foot landscape buffer was approved and will be installed as part of the Fox Creek Estates Plat 5 improvements along the west side of NE Dartmoor Drive to satisfy the need for a buffer between uses off of Dartmoor.

#### **ELEVATIONS:**

Colored elevations have been provided for your review and are consistent with the Districts material palette for new schools. The use and color of the brick and architectural metal cladding systems on this building are different enough from the other new elementary schools that this structure should stand alone on its own as a very nice building. There is a special accent material proposed on the west elevation that will aid in making this building stand apart from its counterparts in the district. Material samples will be provided for your review at the meeting.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS :**

A trash enclosure has been proposed on the west side of the School and integrated with the building in similar fashion to Waukee Elementary.

Staff has been working with the School District to message the aesthetic boundary between the school site and the City's Park in order to create more of a common/unified space. To date the District has located their play structures in a closer proximity to the property line and have provided a trail connection from their site to the park with the intent that the trail would be extended and connected throughout the park and provide access to the play equipment for park users and play/field access to the school. Staff has reviewed and will be making a recommendation to the City Council of a 28E agreement for shared use and maintenance of the park and school playground facilities which is being modeled after several existing agreements the School District has made previously with the City of West Des Moines. The City Council will be considering a proposal to hire a landscape architect to design the City's 18+ acre park on Monday, April 21<sup>st</sup>. Pending approval of the agreement at that meeting, staff will further coordinate recreational programming of the park and school site.

As part of the review of this school site and its related improvements, staff utilized a traffic study that was conducted by the City of West Des Moines for the Woodland Hills Elementary School. This is the most recent elementary school in the district and provides a good reference for traffic as Woodland Hills has a similar roadway configuration adjacent to it with a Minor Arterial to the north and a Major Collector to the west. Based upon the traffic study and initial review of the site plan, staff is comfortable with the traffic queuing and stacking proposed internal to the site and has confidence that there would be minimal impact to NE Dartmoor Drive. The current stacking arrangement provides for stacking along the entrance drive in similar methods to the other district elementary schools. An additional stacking lane is provided within the first row of parking nearest to the school entrance. This location has been emphasized with a designated, and striped, pedestrian walk way to allow parents to pull through the parking drive aisle and pick up their children.

Staff is working with the District on an agreement related to the proposed timing of the Douglas Parkway improvements for City Council's approval as part of the planned approval of the final plat. As part of this agreement, staff will include provisions related to future traffic warranted improvements needed to adjoining public streets should future school traffic patterns cause issues with NE Douglas Parkway or NE Dartmoor Drive.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

At this time staff is comfortable with the status of the preliminary plat, final plat, and site plan for Waukee Elementary School #8 and would recommend approval subject to any remaining staff comments.

**CITY OF WAUKEE**

Ben Landhauser  
Senior Planner