



ROCK ISLAND
ILLINOIS

Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Agenda
April 6, 2026 - 5:30 PM
City Council Chambers, City Hall, 3rd Floor,
1528 Third Avenue, Rock Island, IL

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Michael Creger, Reshanda Johnson, Donald Mewes, Norm Moline, Samuel Odeyemi, Maureen Riggs, Bill Sowards, Tanja Whitten, Sarah Wright

3. Public Comment

4. Minutes

a. Approval of the March 2, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Move to approve the March 2, 2026 Meeting Minutes

VV Voice vote is needed.

5. Public Hearings

a. 2026-08: Public hearing request from Mary Gordon to consider a Special Use Permit from the Rock Island Zoning Ordinance for property at 702 20th Street in an R-2 (two-unit residential) district.

RC Roll Call vote is needed.

6. New Business

a. Community Session #2 — Proposed Land Purchase and Land Sale Policy

7. Old Business

8. Adjourn

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**City of Rock Island
Planning & Zoning Commission
City Council Chambers, City Hall, 3rd Floor
1528 3rd Avenue, Rock Island, IL**

March 2, 2026 Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Riggs called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM

2. Roll Call

Chair Riggs called the roll.

Mike Creger, Sarah Wright, Maureen Riggs, Tanja Whitten, Samuel Odeyemi, Norm Moline, Reshanda Johnson, and Bill Sowards were present.

Don Mewes was absent.

Staff present included Community Development Director Miles Brainard and Urban Planner Eunice Amissah-Mensah.

3. Public Comment

No members of the public wished to provide comment so the meeting continued.

4. Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes

Whitten moved to approve the minutes for February 4, 2026. Sowards seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 8 to 0.

Commissioner Moline requested that future minutes include more detail regarding commission discussions.

5. Old Business

None

6. Public Hearings

2026-06 Public hearing: Request from Mary Gordon to consider a use authorization from the Rock Island Zoning Ordinance for property at 702 20th Street in an R-2 (two-unit residential) district.

Amissah-Mensah read the staff report with the recommendation for approval of the request with stipulations. She noted that the Historic Preservation Commission had

suggested a Special Use Permit (SUP) rather than a permanent use authorization with the condition that the property remains owner-occupied.

Bill Gordon, owner of the property and Mary Gordon spoke on behalf of the request. Bill Gordon emphasized their 50 plus years of experience in real estate and stated that tenants would sign one-year leases and undergo background checks. Mary Gordon discussed her desire to live in the home and to maintain it.

Two interested parties, Ernie Cychosz and Jeremy Crafton asked the applicant a few questions regarding the use of the property. They raised concerns about tenant screening, property maintenance, and the nature of the business structure.

Bryan Pattschull opposed the request arguing that boarding houses are different from bed & breakfasts. He also cited the neighborhood's history of wanting to maintain the houses as single family to stabilize property values. Some residents of Broadway Historic District stood in agreement of his argument and position on the request.

Aldersperson Dylan Parker addressed the commission stating support for the request if it is approved under a Special Use Permit with stipulation that the property has a valid residential rental property license.

Joey Rose Allen expressed concern about setting a precedent for investors who do not make investments in the community.

Jen Phillis and Sanjana Yatu spoke in support of the request.

Commissioners debated the difference between a permanent use authorization and a Special Use Permit (SUP). Commissioners emphasized the need for there to be continued oversight on the use of the property, and potentially adding a stipulation regarding owner or applicant occupancy. Director Brainard suggested referring the item back to staff to perform a new analysis based on the seven criteria required for a SUP.

As there were no other questions or members of the public wishing to speak, Chair Riggs called for a motion.

Decision for Case 2026-06

Riggs moved to refer the item back to staff for a special use permit analysis. Whitten seconded the motion. The motion passed on an 8 to 0 vote.

2026-07 Public hearing: Request from the City of Rock Island's Community Development Department regarding a rezoning from C-2 (nature conservation) district to B-4 (Highway Business) district for properties with the following PINs 1603400003, 1610100002, 1610200003, 1610200001, 1610200002, & 1603400004.

Amissah-Mensah read the staff report. Director Brainard explained that the rezoning involves an 80 ft. by 2,228 ft. strip to create regular lot sizes for future business

development. The Kordik estate is selling a portion of the land to a third party and the city is squaring off its properties.

Loren Lassoule inquired about the potential for development and the status of the TIF district. Director Brainard confirmed the site is within an expanded TIF district and that any development would have to comply with flood plain regulations.

Commissioner Moline asked whether future development would comply with floodplain regulations. Director Brainard responded affirmatively.

Decision for Case 2026-07

Wright made a motion to recommend approval of the rezoning request to City Council. Odeyemi seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 8 to 0 vote.

7. Other Business

Presentation on Proposed Land Purchase and Land Sale Policy

Director Brainard introduced the new policy intended to create transparency and baseline standards for selling city-owned property. The policy categorizes lots into: side lot sales, neighborhood lot sales, infill housing lot sales, homestead sales and properties held for future development. Brainard noted that the homestead program is expanding as the city takes land banking efforts in-house.

No action was taken as this was an initial introduction of the policy for public feedback.

8. Adjournment

Chair Riggs adjourned the meeting at 6:57 PM.

Minutes submitted by Eunice Amissah-Mensah.

Memorandum



ROCK ISLAND
ILLINOIS

To: Rock Island Planning & Zoning Commission
From:
Subject: 2026-08: Public hearing request from Mary Gordon to consider a Special Use Permit from the Rock Island Zoning Ordinance for property at 702 20th Street in an R-2 (two-unit residential) district.
RC Roll Call vote is needed.
Date: April 6, 2026

Introduction and Background Information:

Case Summary Information:

Case Number	2026-08
Applicant/Property Owner	Mary Gordon
Request	Special Use Permit for a congregate living arrangement in an R-2 district
Property Address/Parcel Identification Number	702 20th Street, PIN 0735425008
Property Dimensions & Size	135' by 216', 29,160 square feet
Zoning District	R-2 (one- and two-unit residential)
Staff Recommendation	Approval
Decision-Making Body	Planning & Zoning Commission

Request Summary & Project Details:

Mary Gordon is requesting a special use permit to operate a congregate living arrangement at 702 20th Street. The residence contains eight (8) separate sleeping units. The applicant proposes to rent seven (7) rooms to individual tenants while occupying the eighth unit herself. Kitchen and living areas will be shared among residents, and each tenant will have access to a private bathroom. The property includes twelve (12) paved parking spaces in the rear yard, in addition to a garage (carriage house).

The property is zoned R-2, which permits one- and two-unit dwellings by right. Certain uses, including bed and breakfast inns and boarding/lodging houses, require special authorization. Although “congregate living arrangement” is not specifically defined in the City’s Zoning Ordinance, the City’s Building Code (International Building Code, 2021) defines it as:

“a building or part thereof that contains sleeping units where residents share bathroom or kitchen facilities, or both”

Staff find that the proposed use aligns with this definition and is functionally comparable to a boarding or lodging house. Additionally, congregate living and boarding houses share the same occupancy classification under the Building Code. For zoning purposes, staff recommend treating the proposed use similarly to a boarding/lodging house, which requires special approval in the R-2 district.

Description of Site & Surrounding Area

The subject property is located at the southwest corner of 7th Avenue and 20th Street. It has approximately 135 feet of frontage along 20th Street and 216 feet along 7th Avenue. The house, constructed in 1876, is 2

½ stories and contains approximately 5,710 square feet. The primary façade faces 20th Street. Access to the rear parking area is available from both 7th Avenue and 20th Street. A carriage house is located near the northwest corner of the property.

The site is zoned R-2 and was most recently operated as a bed and breakfast inn, a legal nonconforming use under the Zoning Ordinance. The City's 2014 Comprehensive Plan designates the property as Single-Family Residential on the Future Land Use Map.

Parking:

The Zoning Code requires one parking space per bedroom for Group Home/Halfway House/Boarding House. The applicant suggests 12 parking will be available onsite.

Signs:

The applicant has not proposed any signs for the property. Any signs, if provided, would follow the requirements of the Sign Ordinance for R-2 districts.

Property Background & History:

The property, commonly known as the Connor-Parker House, was designated a local landmark in 1987 and individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. It is also a contributing structure within the Broadway Historic District, listed on the National Register in 1998 and amended in 2024. Architecturally, the home is an early and uncommon adaptation of Queen Anne style, distinguished by its conical tower and ornate detailing incorporating Romanesque Revival and Greek Revival influences.

Originally constructed as a private residence, the property continued in residential use throughout the 20th century. A bed and breakfast inn was established during the mid-1900s and later recognized as a legal nonconforming use. In 1990, the property expanded by acquiring an additional 20 feet of land to the south to establish a driveway connecting the rear parking area to 20th Street. This driveway remains in use.

The following timeline details the property's zoning history on file.

- 1989 - Planning Commission Case 1989-09: The property, along with the rest of the Broadway Neighborhood, was downzoned from R-6 and R-4 to R-3.
- 1989 - Special Use Permit Case 1989-15: The City Council approved a request to allow catered receptions, business gatherings, and a gift shop on the property. The request was recommended for approval by both the Preservation Commission and Planning Commission.
- 1990 - Board of Zoning Appeals Case 1990-35: The board authorized a freestanding sign for the bed & breakfast inn at the northeast corner of the property. This request was also recommended for approval by the Preservation Commission.
- 2021 – Citywide Zoning Map Update: The City Council approved a citywide zoning map update. This reclassified the property's zoning designation from R-3 to R-2. This reclassification changed the name of the district, but not the underlying requirements.

The property sold in 2025. The new owner approached the City to register the property as a rental. During that process, staff determined that additional zoning approval would be required based on the applicant's proposed occupancy. Under the R-2 district regulations, the property may be occupied by up to five (5) unrelated individuals as an "unrelated group use," which is permitted administratively without special approval. Staff note that the building is currently registered as a rental and may operate within that limit.

However, because the applicant proposes housing more than five (5) unrelated individuals, the use exceeds the unrelated group threshold and requires special approval as a "congregate living arrangement" from the Planning & Zoning Commission.

Standards for Approval & Analysis:

The Zoning Ordinance states that a Special Use Permit should only be recommended for approval if it meets all the standards identified in Article 9, Section 7. The following table includes the standards for approval

with the corresponding staff analysis and conclusion on if the standard is met.

1. That the granting of a Special Use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, morals, comfort, or general welfare.

Staff Analysis: The subject property is zoned R-2, which is intended to maintain low to medium residential density while encouraging varied housing opportunities. The proposed congregate living arrangement is inherently residential, fully compatible with this intent and involves utilizing the existing structure without any new construction. Staff believe the proposed use will not impact adjacent properties or detract from future development efforts.

Meets Condition: Yes

2. That the Special Use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purpose already permitted, not substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.

Staff Analysis: The properties in the immediate vicinity are zoned a mix of residential and office. The proposed congregate living arrangement maintains the property's residential character without requiring any exterior expansion or other modifications. The structure will continue to function as a residential building. Staff reason that the intensity of the proposed use is comparable to, and in some respects less intensive than, the bed & breakfast, gift shop and event space previously allowed on the property.

Although the surrounding area is predominantly single-family residential, it includes a mix of residential densities and zoning classifications and is located adjacent to the downtown area. Given this context, along with the property's history, staff conclude that the proposed use is compatible with surrounding properties and will not substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.

Meets Condition: Yes

3. That the establishment of the Special Use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.

Staff Analysis: The Connor-Parker House is a large, historic structure that predates modern zoning regulations. While originally a private residence, its size, layout, and history of multi-occupant lodging distinguish it from other properties in the R-2 district. The presence of eight individual sleeping quarters with private bathrooms reflects a configuration that is well-suited to congregate living. Most properties within the R-2 district were not designed or constructed with this type of internal arrangement.

Additionally, the property has a documented history as a bed and breakfast, and other commercial uses. The exterior of the property has been improved with these uses in mind. This represents a unique history that is not typical of other residential properties.

The City's Comprehensive Plan directs the City to be "receptive to housing options/configurations to meet diverse needs and market desires," including consideration of atypical housing types. While the proposed use is not typically found in the R-2 district, it represents a needed housing option and one

for which the property is already physically designed.

Meets Condition: Yes

4. That adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and/or other necessary facilities have been or are being provided.

Staff Analysis: The site is fully developed and currently meets the infrastructure standards for its zoning district. The site provides twelve (12) paved off-street parking spaces and a two-car garage, which exceeds the required parking. Parking access is available from both 7th Avenue and 20th Street, which provides adequate flow.

Meets Condition: Yes

5. That adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.

Staff Analysis: As noted, the property fronts along two City streets. This allows for adequate access to and from the property.

Meets Condition: Yes

6. Restrictions for the use should be consistent with the district in which the use would normally be located except as may be modified by the City Council.

Staff Analysis: Staff is recommending approval of the request and includes a draft ordinance with stipulations recommended by staff is provided.

Meets Condition: n/a

7. That the Special Use shall, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located, except as such regulations may in each instance be modified by City Council.

Staff Analysis: The use proposed will be required to comply with all other applicable City Ordinances if approved.

Meets Condition: n/a

Based on the staff analysis, the SUP request meets the standards for approval.

Previous Council Action (if any):

See above "Project Background & History."

Budget Impact:

NA

Additional Information as applicable (i.e. provide alternative options, community or staff input, staffing impact; resident impact; etc.):

Planning & Zoning Commission Review: At their March 2nd meeting, the Planning & Zoning Commission

reviewed the request from Mary Gordon to allow up to eight residents in a congregate living arrangement within an R-2 district. Staff presented the request and noted the Historic Preservation Commission's recommendation to approve it as a Special Use Permit (SUP) with an owner-occupancy condition. The applicant described management practices, including leases and background checks, and the owner expressed commitment to maintaining the property. The public raised concerns about tenant turnover, neighborhood impact, and precedent, while some supported the request if limited to a SUP tied to the owner. Following discussion, Commissioners directed staff to conduct a SUP analysis and voted unanimously (8-0) to refer the item back to staff for further review.

Council Goal (if applicable):

NA

Recommendation:

The Community Development Department recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission pass a recommendation to the City Council that the Special Use Permit be approved. Staff also recommend the following stipulations for approval.

1. No more than eight (8) residents shall reside on the property.
2. A minimum of twelve (12) parking spaces shall be maintained for tenant use.
3. The property shall be registered as a long-term rental under the City's Registration and Management of Rental Housing ordinance.
4. The use shall comply with all other applicable codes and ordinances.

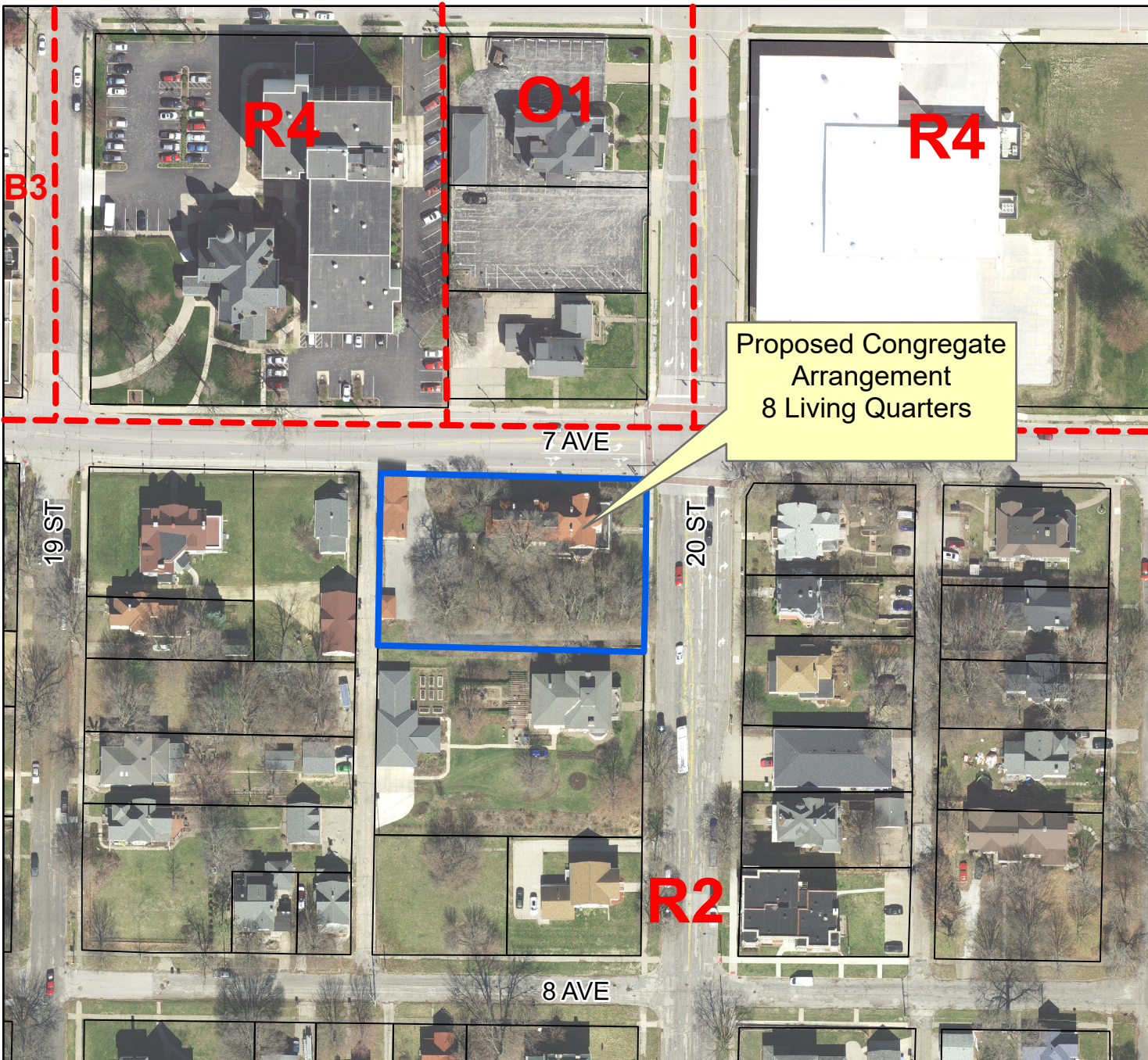
Additionally, staff understand that the Commission is interested in approving the special use with a stipulation regarding applicant/owner occupancy. Staff do not recommend this stipulation; however, if the Commission chooses to include it, staff recommend the following language:

1. The property shall be occupied by the applicant, owner, or designated property manager.




Submitted by: Eunice Amissah-Mensah, Urban Planner


Approved by:

Special Use Permit at 702 20th Street



PZC Case 2026-08

-  Subject Property
-  Parcels
-  Zoning District




0 25 50 100 150 Feet

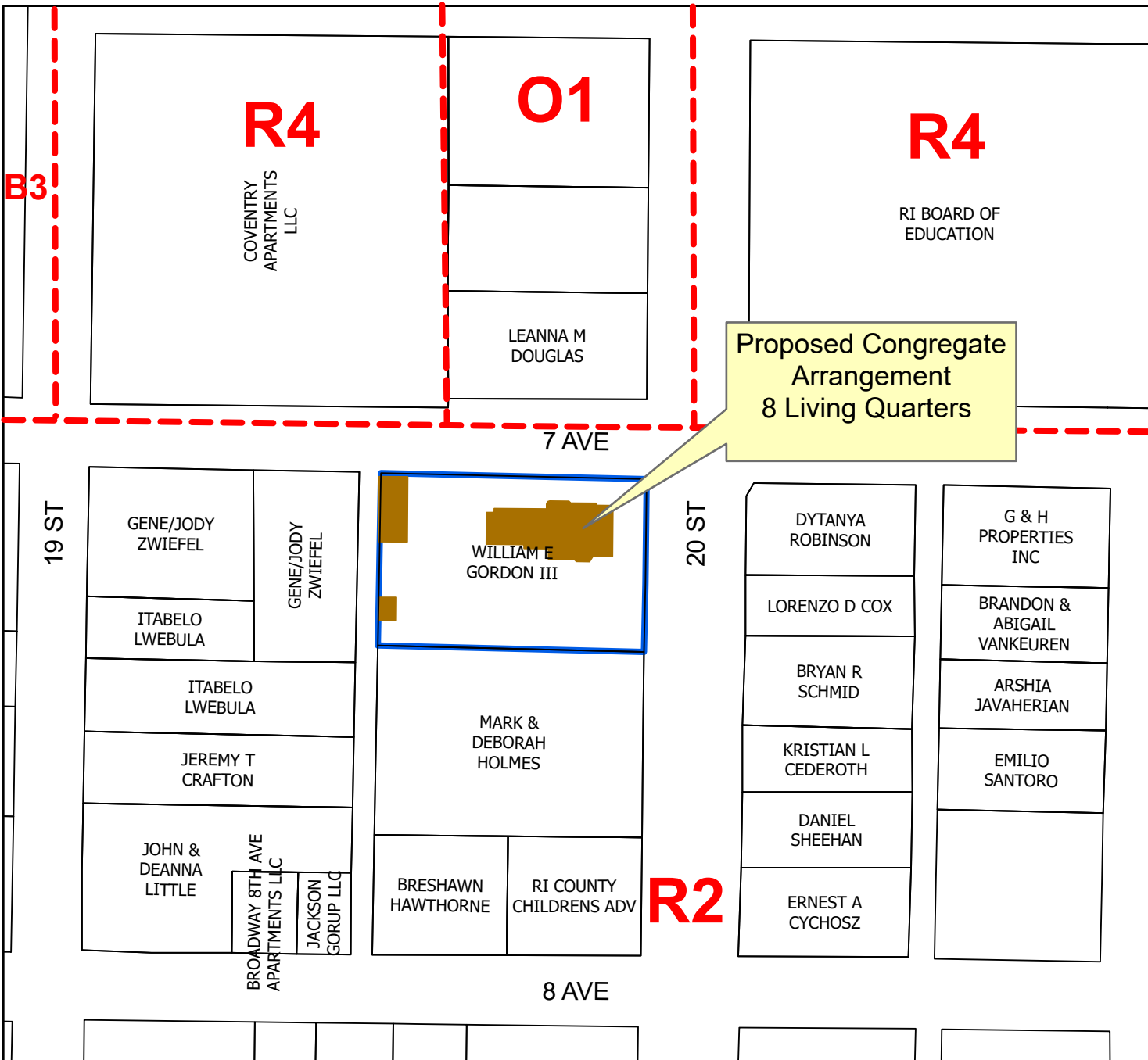
Note: The information presented is not survey accurate and is for illustrative purposes only.

City of Rock Island

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT




Special Use Permit at 702 20th Street



Proposed Congregate Arrangement
8 Living Quarters

PZC Case 2026-08


- Subject Property
- Parcels
- Zoning District



0 25 50 100 150 Feet

Note: The information presented is not survey accurate and is for illustrative purposes only.

City of Rock Island
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



ROCK ISLAND
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Figure 1: Photo showing the property from along 20th Street



Figure 2: Photo showing proposed parking area for use by tenants



Figure 3: Photo showing proposed parking spaces along the alley



Figure 4: Photo showing parking garage to be used as parking space



Figure 5: Photo showing proposed parking space next to the house



Figure 6: Photo showing access to the property and parking spaces from along 20th Street

**A SPECIAL ORDINANCE GRANTING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT
IN THE CITY OF ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCK ISLAND,
ILLINOIS:

Section One: This ordinance grants and serves as a special use permit to Mary Gordon for the property known as 702 20th Street, PIN 0735425008. The property is zoned R-2 (one and two unit residential) district and legally described as:

Lot Number Four (4) and the North Half of Lot Number Five (5) in Block Number One (1) in that part of the City of Rock Island known as and called John W. Spencer's Third Addition to said City.

Section Two: The use granted by this special use permit is for the grantee to operate a congregate living arrangement in the existing building on the property. The building contains eight (8) bedrooms with private bathrooms, and shared kitchen and living areas. The use granted by this special use permit shall correspond with the occupancy classification "Residential Group R-3" as identified in the 2021 International Building Code.

Section Three: This permit is subject to the following additional stipulations:

1. No more than eight (8) residents shall reside on the property.
2. A minimum of twelve (12) parking spaces shall be maintained for residential use.
3. The property shall be registered as a long-term rental under the City's Registration and Management of Rental Housing ordinance.
4. The use shall meet all other applicable codes and ordinances.

Section Four: All ordinances and parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed insofar as they do so conflict.

Section Five: This ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its passage and approval, as required by law.

Mayor of the City of Rock Island

Passed: _____

Approved: _____

Attest: _____

DRAFT