

TO: The Sycamore Plan Commission

FROM: Bill Nicklas
City Administrator

DATE: November 6, 2002

RE: November 11, 2002 Plan Commission Meeting

The Plan Commission agenda has one action item and one workshop item.

I Action Item

A. Consideration of a Request from Dale and Anita Cappel for a Recommendation With Respect to the Applicability of Paragraph 4.13 of the Sycamore Zoning Ordinance to the Temporary Parking of Recreational Vehicles in an M-2 Heavy Manufacturing District.

Prior to the joint meeting, the Plan Commission will have one action item to consider. This item was placed on the agenda because the closing winter weather might have an impact on action that the petitioners might take, if the Commission favorably received their request.

Paragraph 4.13 of the Sycamore Zoning Ordinance gives the Plan Commission the authority to render a judgment about uses not specifically listed in the zoning district regulations that might be similar to and not more objectionable than those listed. If the Commission believes such specific uses conform to the intent of the district regulations, then they may be permitted without further action. The Commission considered such a circumstance in August, 2002 in connection with a request from Charlie Laing to stage construction materials on his developing property.

As Zoning Officer Lyle Doty's background memorandum explains, Dale and Anita Cappel, owners of Sycamore R.V. Resort at 375 North Avenue have requested direction under the same Zoning provision. Much of their resort is on unincorporated land adjacent to the City limits. The southwest corner of their property is within the City limits, as depicted on the attached map. This land area falls within an M-2 Heavy Manufacturing zoning classification. At one time, the area in question was used for the outdoor storage of corn by Dicken Grain when their bins were full. For that purpose, the area was once

leveled and topped with gravel. The Cappels have requested permission to locate 20 pads for recreational vehicles on this land area.

The land area in question is also generally within the 100-year flood zone. However, the City's floodplain ordinance permits travel trailers within the floodplain (but not the floodway) for up to 180 days per year. It should also be noted that the area can be served by City water and sewer. It is the intent of the petitioners to create paved driveways and off-street parking areas for users of the trailer sites.

The question for the Plan Commission to consider is: do the Cappels propose a use that is consistent with the highest and best use of the subject property, and consistent with other uses in the area, even though recreational vehicles are not explicitly permitted in M-2 zoning districts?

Plan Commission direction is requested. If the Commission decides in the affirmative, no further Commission or Council action would be necessary. Building permits would be required and the grading of the site would need to be supervised by the City Engineer.

II Workshop Item

A. Joint Meeting of the Plan Commission, City Council, and Economic Development Commission to Participate in the Construction of an Image Preference Survey for Public Presentation.

On September 16 the City Council approved a contract with Land Vision to perform mapping services associated with our comprehensive planning process and to lead the City through a "visioning" process that focuses us on certain planning objectives. The tool the consultants will use is called an "image preference survey." This survey is a consensus-building technique that helps a community articulate its core values and acceptable images it wants to project to others. It also serves as an educational tool to expose community members to ideas and images they may not have considered. The heart of the survey is a public presentation or two in which a series of photographic images of various development features including buildings, streets and parking, sidewalks, civic amenities, landscaping, open spaces, and signs are shown to an audience and rated on survey forms. Such images will include both local and non-local examples of development features. In all, about two hundred photographic images will be projected.

Prior to their preparation of the final set of images, the consultant team will perform fieldwork in our area to compile a photographic inventory. They will also present a preview of the survey to the Council, the Plan Commission, and the Economic Development Commission for comment and evaluation at the regular Plan Commission meeting of November 11. They will be interested in knowing if the collection of images is expansive enough and they will want to be sure that all conceivable land use or development issues have been covered. In other words, they do not want their preferences to dictate the range of responses from the general public. Walter Magdziarz and Chuck Hanlon of Land Vision will lead the assembled officials through this exercise.