
SYCAMORE PLAN COMMISSION - REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 10, 2003

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairman John Lewis called the meeting to order and Secretary Candy Smith called the roll. Those Commissioners present were: George Bridgewater, Tom Brotcke, Pat David, Steve Doonan, Dave Hamilton, Bill Lorence, John McBride, Dick Wagley, and Chairperson John Lewis. Those Commissioners absent were Pam Blickem Bill Davey and Cindy Henderson. Other staff members present were City Administrator Bill Nicklas, City Engineer John Brady, Building Commissioner/Zoning Officer Lyle Doty and Commission Attorney Brett Brown.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of minutes of the meeting of January 27, 2003.

Motion

Commissioner Lorence moved to approve the minutes of January 27, 2003 and Commissioner David seconded the motion.

Commissioner McBride asked Secretary Smith to change the word commercial to high density on page 2, paragraph 3 of the Workshop item.

Voice Vote

Chairman Lewis called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 9 - 0.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Lewis added comments regarding the map of the school district under Reports.

Commissioner McBride reported that Reston Ponds ads and signs were titled Enclave at Reston Ponds and Mr. Nicklas said the permanent signage would read simply Reston Ponds.

Motion

Commissioner David moved to approve the agenda and Commissioner Hamilton seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

Chairman Lewis called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 9 - 0.

CONSIDERATONS

A. Consideration of a Petition from Milan Krpan for a Recommendation With Respect to a Final Plat for Phase III of the Grandview Townhouse Planned Unit Development.

Administrator Nicklas explained that in 2001 an 18-acre parcel was annexed and approved for the development of Phase III of the Grandview Townhouse Planned Unit Development. He said the plan would include 74 townhouses at a gross density of 4.17 units per acre. Mr. Nicklas said the final plat showed three lots and the dedication of the cul-de-sac at the end of Foxpointe Drive. Mr. Nicklas said the future subdivisions needed to establish the individual townhouse lots for sale in fee simple would be done through the Plat Officer.

Commissioner Lorence asked that Mr. Krpan be reminded that any birms along the road must be 10 feet from the right of way and Mr. Nicklas said the City would enforce that.

Commissioner McBride inquired about the reporting of the Plat Officer and Mr. Nicklas said there would be a report in April 2003. Commissioner Lorence recommended providing quarterly reports.

Motion

Commissioner Lorence moved to recommend to the City Council approval of the Final Plat for Phase III of the Grandview Townhouse Planned Unit Development and Commissioner Hamilton seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote. Those Commissioners voting aye were Bridgewater, Brotcke, David, Doonan, Hamilton, Lorence, McBride, Wagley, and Chairperson Lewis. Motion carried 9 - 0.

B. Consideration of a Petition from Steven G. Glasgow for a Recommendation With Respect to a Preliminary Plat for the Bethany Business Campus.

Administrator Nicklas explained that the petitioner was proposing a 16-acre parcel zoned M-1 (Light Manufacturing) and C-1, C-2, C-3 giving much flexibility for uses of the site. Mr. Nicklas said the plan proposed 17 lots that would bring commercial business to the City of Sycamore. Mr. Nicklas said a commercial street shown on the plan would connect with the easement through the Menard's Subdivision and ultimately provide a connection to Mercantile Drive. Mr. Nicklas said Mr. Glasgow would be obliged to loop the water and sanitary sewer mains to the north and south in order to provide adequate service to the 17 lot owners.

Commissioner Lorence asked if they wanted two lots to face Bethany or have those two lots face the side streets. Engineer Brady said there was an easement to give them access.

Commissioner Brotcke said he thought it looked like a swale through the property and inquired if a bridge would be necessary. Mr. Nicklas explained that Engineer Brady had reviewed that area and said there was a culvert there and there was no need for a bridge.

Commissioner Brotcke inquired if they could force the north south road to go east toward Prairie and Mr. Nicklas said it was not known what the next developer might want. Mr. Brotcke asked about a curb cut to Peace Road and Commissioner Lorence said a cut was already dedicated for the extension of Prairie.

Motion

Commissioner Brotcke moved to recommend to the City Council approval of the Preliminary Plat for the Bethany Business Campus and Commissioner David seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote. Those Commissioners voting aye were Bridgewater, Brotcke, David, Doonan, Hamilton, Lorence, McBride, Wagley, and Chairperson Lewis. Motion carried 9 - 0.

C. Consideration of a Petition from ARC Design Resources, Inc. for a Recommendation With Respect to a Final Plat of Townsend Woods, Unit Two, Phase One.

Administrator Nicklas said the plan depicted twenty-four lots on which 4-unit townhouses would be built. Mr. Nicklas reminded the Commissioners that ARC Design had submitted a concept plan in December and the Commission declined to offer planning judgments until the comprehensive plan revisions were made, but ARC was made aware they could simply re-submit a final plat that conformed to the approved preliminary plan. Mr. Nicklas explained this proposal conformed to the approved preliminary plan so the staff was obliged to recommend approval.

Commissioner McBride asked how much they could vary from the preliminary plan and Mr. Nicklas said the subdivision of lots was slightly altered because of the struggle to conform to density.

Commissioner McBride said they needed to rename some of the streets and Engineer Brady said he would address that with the developer.

Commissioner McBride said that part of the development was in the flood plain and Engineer Brady said ARC had worked with FEMA on that issue.

Commissioner David said she would like to see the layout of the entire portion because if the design had the garages in front, that was not what the community desired. Mr. Nicklas explained that this was a creature of the City's making and they must live by the rules of what was prescribed when annexed.

Commissioner Lorence said that one good thing was the area was rather isolated near the river.

Jim Tuneberg, 2601 Reed Farm Road, Rockford, attorney for the petitioners, said the plat was presented for plat compliance and this was not the time for the developers to argue the appearance of the structures themselves.

Chairperson Lewis said Mr. Nicklas' point was well taken, that some decisions were made without realizing what the future impact would be. Mr. Lewis said they were carrying out a position of a previous Plan Commission.

Motion

Commissioner McBride moved to recommend to the City Council approval of the Final Plat of Townsend Woods Unit Two, Phase One and Commissioner Bridgewater seconded the motion.

Commissioner McBride inquired if the easements needed to be updated and Engineer Brady said they would.

Commissioner Brotcke inquired if the buildings would be placed to run along the road and Mr. Nicklas said they would spread across the frontage. Mr. Brotcke thought they would not fit and Chairperson Lewis said they would need to conform to zoning setbacks.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote. Those Commissioners voting aye were Bridgewater, Doonan, Hamilton, Lorence, McBride, Wagley, and Chairperson Lewis. Voting nay were Commissioners Brotcke and David. Motion carried 7 - 2.

Chairperson Lewis called a five-minute break before the workshop.

WORKSHOPS

A. Consideration of a Draft Plan for the Future Growth of the City of Sycamore.

Administrator Nicklas said it was not his intention to hammer out a consensus on a land use plan, but to move along in the process to at least tackle some of the issues that were dealt with at the Charrette. Mr. Nicklas asked for direction to draw a map or write some precepts.

Chairperson Lewis said the Charrette was interesting, but one of the strategic issues that concerned him was the question of whether the resulting mix of residential, industrial, and commercial would provide financial stability to the community. Mr. Lewis said he thought they needed to be cognizant of the impact on the City and School resources when drawing the map.

Mr. Nicklas said after they accomplished some mapping Land Vision could do some quantitative work regarding the land use percentages. Mr. Nicklas said there was more to developing than land use. He said other issues were access and capacity and accessibility of utilities.

Commissioner David said she wanted to look at a smaller area before the whole planning area and inquired if it would be more economical to grow as a mushroom or better to grow out in finger-type projections. Ms. David also wanted a time frame for the plan. Mr. Nicklas said it would be more efficient to grow out tight from the corporate limits and this would be a three to five year plan.

Commissioner Lorence said that the City should be mindful about setting boundaries because the County could allow development outside those boundaries as long as the developers could provide sewer and water. Mr. Lorence stressed that the City would still have to provide services.

Mr. Nicklas asked the Commission to concentrate on the NE quadrant.

Chairperson Lewis asked if it would make any sense to put industrial in the NE quadrant and if not, then they would stick with industrial already zoned. Mr. Lewis said that growing north and east would increase the ratio of residential to non-residential.

Commissioner Lorence said it would increase rooftops that will drive the commercial. Commissioner David inquired if it had yet and Mr. Lorence said soon DeKalb would use up their commercial space forcing commercial interests to Sycamore. Mr. Nicklas said the City's market was broader than our corporate limits and was about 150,000 people bounded by Route 47, the Illinois River, and Dixon. Mr. Nicklas said that industrial was a different story because of transportation and competition of land uses.

Chairperson Lewis said commercial growth created low-paying jobs for high-end residences resulting in a bedroom community. Mr. Nicklas said the current land use percentages were 72.5% residential, 22.4% commercial, and 5.1% industrial.

Mr. Nicklas asked how to show Sycamore at the east entrance. He said presently it was commercial and industrial and that was an earlier trend, but today the desired look is greenways and a softer mix of commercial and residential.

Commissioner McBride said he was not interested in a Randall-Road appearance.

Mr. Nicklas returned to the northeast quadrant because it did not have a natural hindrance to growth.

Commissioner McBride said he saw the reduction of high density heading north and said there seemed to be a need for townhomes. Chuck Hanlon of Land Vision suggested sprinkling townhomes throughout a development.

Chairperson Lewis said putting an extreme on the table they had the ability to determine the destiny of the community. He said that if the Plan Commission chose to make estate residential, 3 to 5 acres, north of North Grove Road that would define the boundaries and the community would not be able to grow beyond that. Mr. Nicklas said they were already at North Grove Road. Mr. Nicklas said that they would have a session with Genoa officials for the possibility of an agricultural preservation area above Whipple Road and south of Genoa's logical extension. Mr. Hanlon said that Genoa had their Charrette and stopped their planning at Baseline Road. Mr. Hanlon said that the agricultural zone between Baseline and Whipple could easily be negotiated.

Commissioner Lorence said there was a demand for rural residential and the County had no zoning for that because they wanted to preserve farmland. Mr. Lorence said currently forty acres must be owned for a home to be built in the County. Chairperson Lewis said we could define the 3 to 5 acre farmette. Commissioner David said maybe that would force development toward the City corporate limits. Commissioner Lorence said maybe they should look at agri-business zoning, since the quarry already exists on Lloyd Road.

Mr. Hanlon explained that they did not need to stop their planning at the mile and a half; he said that was the legal jurisdiction of the City for plat signing.

Administrator Nicklas said the current 1.5 mile planning area, based on the land uses, could generate 17,000 to 59,000 people. He said that realistically they projected a population of 15,500 by 2010.

Chairperson Lewis said he felt once Bethany Road was developed, east of Airport Road south of Route 64 was a logical area of growth.

Commissioner Lorence said there was pressure to develop in the northeast quadrant. Mr. Nicklas suggested getting back to drawing that planning area. Mr. Lorence asked where the sewer limits were and Engineer Brady said it would depend on the timing and type of growth. Mr. Nicklas said there were two types of capacity - the treatment plant and the trunkline. Engineer Brady said the current plant flow was averaging 1.5 million now and treatment plant was good for 2.97 million, so there was room for growth, depending on the type.

Commissioner David said she would like to see more green colored on the map.

Chairperson Lewis asked for comments from other Commissioners to color in the map.

Commissioner Hamilton inquired if the City was considering another cemetery site and Mr. Nicklas said there would not be any public ownership of one. Commissioner Lorence said the trend was toward crematoriums.

Commissioner Brotcke said he observed that nobody from the Charrette went further than North Grove Road and he thought it seemed impractical to plan any further north. Commissioner Lorence said the development pressure was there and if we did not plan further north the County could develop it and possibly another community could form there.

Commissioner Bridgewater said he did not want to see another community form outside Sycamore's planning area.

Chairperson Lewis said he thought they needed to create the new land use plan before sub-planning the Plank Road corridor.

Administrator Nicklas said the rural subdivisions north of the City were not necessarily desirable for annexation. He said the problem with annexing those developments was they would need to be connected to the City's infrastructure. Mr. Nicklas said that area could be considered rural residential.

Administrator Nicklas said they needed to set some practical limits. Chairperson Lewis said self-contained communities could develop if the City did not define outside boundaries.

Mr. Nicklas established a special meeting date of February 24, 2003 and said he would have a revised draft plan to work with at that meeting.

REPORTS

PERSONS TO BE HEARD FROM THE FLOOR ON OTHER THAN AGENDA ITEMS.

None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Commissioner Hamilton moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m. and Commissioner Bridgewater seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a voice vote. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried .

Approve:

Chairman – John Lewis

Attest:

Secretary - Candy Smith