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**SYCAMORE PLAN COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING**  
**MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 24, 2003**

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**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, Cindy Henderson, John McBride, and Chairperson John Lewis. Those Commissioners absent were Pam Blickem, Bill Davey, Dave Hamilton, Bill Lorence, and Dick Wagley. 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 February 10, 2003.

**Motion**

Commissioner David moved to approve the minutes of February 10, 2003 and Commissioner McBride seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote**

Chairman Lewis called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 7 - 0.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion**

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

**Voice Vote**

Chairman Lewis called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 7 - 0.

**CONSIDERATONS**

None

**WORKSHOPS**

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

Chairperson Lewis said this was the Commission's third workshop and hoped they would give enough direction for the Administrator to bring back a final draft at the next meeting.

Administrator Nicklas distributed a packet with the January 2003 update of residential construction and the 2002 Comp Plan map showing 6,865 residential acres, the January draft plan showing 7621 residential acres, and the revised February 24 plan reducing the residential acres to 5809. Mr. Nicklas thanked Chuck Hanlon of Land Vision for his work on this project.

Mr. Hanlon explained the maps represented acreage north of Route 64 taking into account only potential new residential acreage. He said the acreage was developable, but sewer limitation was not considered. Mr. Hanson explained the proposed residential acres could be single-family or multi-family.

Administrator Nicklas said they looked at the acreage and the definition of the north side of town taking sewer limitation into account. He said they reduced the acreage and left a green belt along Whipple Road to soften the community's edge.

Commissioner David asked what the life of the plan was and Mr. Nickas said it should last about 3 to 5 years. Chairperson Lewis said if they did not review the plan in 3 years they could lose control of it. Mr. Hanlon said it was also important to review inside the corporate limits routinely for any possible changes the might be desired. He said for instance a factory may close down allowing that area to be rezoned.

Commissioner David inquired what would trigger a second look at the plan and Mr. Nicklas said a change of direction or sense of discomfort.

Mr. Nicklas said there had only been minor departures from the 2000 plan over the past 3 years and said the Commission had shown a lot of discipline in plan enforcement. He said it was a dynamic document that served as a guide.

Commissioner McBride expressed concern regarding Commissioner Lorence's scenerio the previous meeting about large subdivisions developing outside the corporate boundaries creating their own separate communities. Mr. Hanlon said he did not think DeKalb County would approve such a development.

Commissioner David inquired if the City should plan further than the 1.5 mile planning area in order to maintain control. Mr. Nicklas said they would always be looking at the fringe and if they wanted to remain true to the heart of the plan which was a "small town" atmosphere they would have to set limits.

Commissioner David said her concern was the rate of growth and how to control it. Mr. Nicklas said that would be the regulatory arm and thus far the pace had been dictated by the City's capacity to inspect and the narrative would write the rules to limit buildout. Mr. Nicklas said that first they needed provisional consensus on the map.

Commissioner Doonan inquired about the 5-acre rural housing and Mr. Nicklas said at this time the County did not allow it.

Commission Attorney Brett Brown said if the goal was to preserve the small town they should look at population and driving time. Administrator Nicklas said if all the residential would build out the population would increase by 17,000 to 59,000. He said they had reduced the residential plan area by 1,800 acres from the 2000 Comp Plan.

Commissioner Henderson said the numbers were overwhelming and Mr. Nicklas said they could routinely readjust the map or the pace of growth.

Commissioner McBride said he liked the proposed map painting the planning area all one color, but did not quite understand how that would work. Mr. Nicklas said they would spell the specifics out in words. Mr. Hanlon said the description would give the message the Commission would entertain interesting proposals and when reading that it would not prohibit multi-family building. Commissioner David wanted to define percentages of housing densities and Mr. Nicklas said he would be hesitant to quantify. Mr. Nicklas said they could be unique by looking at density by starting with a map that shows low density and let somebody make a better pitch.

Commissioner Henderson commented that the yellow residential area was a large area to consider no neighborhood businesses. Commissioner McBride said that would not preclude a P.U.D. from proposing it. Mr. Hanlon said they were still in the process of getting consensus for the boundaries and for the land use map, but he said access issues were the key to identifying commercial areas.

Chairperson Lewis inquired how many square miles were in the corporate limits and Mr. Nicklas said about 7. Mr. Lewis said they were looking at another community the size of Sycamore in the planning area.

Commissioner Doonan expressed concern that the plan was being revised because of a sense of out of control, yet by painting the map all yellow he felt there were no restrictions. Chairperson Lewis said that it really gave more flexibility to the Council and Plan Commission. Mr. Doonan said he saw a diminishing power to limit developers and Mr. Lewis said Council and Plan Commission would have to work hard at sifting through the proposals. Mr. Nicklas said it proved that Sycamore wanted to remain a small town and they would take each development one at a time.

Chairperson Lewis said the narrative would address some of the specific desires of the City. Administrator Nicklas said that the narrative would add weight to the plan and the Commissioners would have to trust themselves to make the decisions.

Chuck Hanlon said of the 5 – 10 other plans he was helping develop, Sycamore's was the most restrictive. He said while the other towns were showing developmental areas eight times larger than ours, Sycamore was downsizing. He thought this looked very responsible.

Commissioners McBride and Brotcke said they were ok with the boundaries and Commissioner David agreed, but insisted they would be diligent with the language.

Chairperson Lewis said they would need to take time to read the narrative and remain diligent about future decisions.

Mr. Nicklas said he hoped to have the new plan ready for publication in two to three months and said the next step would be transportation issues.

The Commissioners took a straw pole of 7 – 0 for Mr. Nicklas to continue with the direction of the map presented.

Mr. Nicklas asked the Commissioners to adapt the language of the Bethany Sub Regional Plan to the northeast quadrant before the next meeting March 10. He also asked them to outline key topics to address regarding the northeast quadrant. Administrator Nicklas said they would continue to have this item on the agenda until it was completed.

**REPORTS**

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

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion**

Commissioner David moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. and Commissioner Bridgewater seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote**

Chairperson Lewis called for a voice vote. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 7 - 0.

Approve:

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Chairman – John Lewis

Attest:

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Secretary - Candy Smith