
SYCAMORE PLAN COMMISSION - REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF MARCH 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, Bill Davey, Pat David, Steve Doonan, Dave Hamilton, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, John McBride, Dick Wagley, and Chairperson John Lewis. Commissioner Pam Blickem was absent. Other staff members present were City Administrator Bill Nicklas, City Engineer John Brady, and Commission Attorney Peter Smith.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of minutes of the meeting of February 24, 2003.

Commissioner McBride asked Clerk Smith to change the heading from Regular meeting to Special meeting.

Motion

Commissioner McBride moved to approve the minutes of February 24, 2003 with the change and Commissioner Davey seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

Chairman Lewis called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 11 - 0.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion

Commissioner Lorence 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 11 - 0.

CONSIDERATONS

A. Consideration of a Petition from Menard, Inc. Regarding the Second Re-Subdivision of the Menard's of Sycamore Subdivision.

Administrator Nicklas explained that in response to market interest Menard's was requesting to re-subdivide to create lots 8, 9, and 10. Mr. Nicklas said lots 8 and 9 would be frontage lots along Route 23 and lot 10 included the Menard's store, the vacant area between the store and Peace Road, two retention areas south of Mercantile Drive and one retention area at the north end of the frontage along Route 23. Mr. Nicklas said the proposal met all City codes and ordinances and recommended a favorable recommendation.

Commissioner Brotcke asked about access to lots 8 & 9 and Mr. Nicklas said there was egress from Mercantile Drive and cross easements would need to be established for driveways.

Commissioner David inquired who would be responsible for those accesses and Mr. Nicklas said it would not be the City's responsibility.

Sean VanKampen from Hanna Surveying, DeKalb, said he was there to answer questions.

Motion

Commissioner Lorence moved to recommend to City Council approval of the re-subdivision of the Menard' of Sycamore Subdivision and Commissioner Hamilton seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairman Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners David, Doonan, Hamilton, Henderson, Lorence, McBride, Wagley, Bridgewater, Brotcke, Davey, and Chairperson Lewis voted aye. Motion carried 11 - 0.

Commissioner Lorence asked Mr. VanKampen to tell the Commission about Bill Hanna. Mr. VanKampen explained Mr. Hanna passed away the previous evening after suffering a heart attack while vacationing in Florida. Chairperson Lewis said it would be a loss to the Community.

B. Consideration of a Petition from Dahlko, LLC for an Amendment to the Annexation Agreement Dated March 27, 1996 and for the Annexation of Property Along the West Side of Hopkins Lane, South of Mt. Hunger Road.

Administrator Nicklas said there were two parts to this proposal – the annexation of an undeveloped 3.71-acre strip at the east end of the conceptual Phase Five of the subdivision and the amendment to the annexation agreement to include that strip. Mr. Nicklas explained it was the City's understanding this was anticipated in the annexation agreement. Mr. Nicklas said that in anticipation of filing a final plat for Phase Five, the developer recently asked City staff about the necessary pre-requisites and found they must widen and reconstruct Hopkins Lane and amend the annexation agreement to include Hopkins Lane and the undeveloped parcel on the west side of the lane.

Commissioner Lorence expressed concern that the size of the proposed lots lacked any transition to the existing lots on the east side. Engineer Brady said the east side was in the County and the proposed lots met the standard for City lots. Mr. Nicklas said the existing lots were large rural lots and the proposed lots were within the parameters of the City Code. Mr. Nicklas said this subdivision would not be desirable under the current standards, but was acceptable according to the standards of the annexation agreement. Mr. Nicklas explained the proposed parcel was not annexed at the City's request in 1996 because the City did not think that part of the subdivision would be developed for many years and the City did not want to assume maintenance of Hopkins Lane.

Attorney Smith explained that the City was contractually obligated to honor their commitment according to the annexation agreement. Mr. Nicklas read from the agreement "it is in the City's best interest that Hopkins Lane annexation be delayed until the developer was ready or the City demanded it."

Chairperson Lewis said the single-family proposal met current density requirements as well as those from 1996.

Mr. Nicklas said the parameters were different in 1996 and the annexation agreement bound the City to that criteria. He said today the City would not leave an agreement open-ended like this.

Commissioner McBride said the Plan Commission had been sensitive to transition and expressed concern there was none between the existing homes and the proposed homes.

Chairperson Lewis opened discussion to the audience.

Jim Stoddard, Attorney for Dahlko LLC, said the annexation agreement stated that once the development was contiguous to Hopkins Lane the annexation could occur. Mr. Stoddard said the developer was following the annexation agreement.

Bert Eisenhour, 530 Hopkins Lane, said he had recently purchased property on Hopkins Lane and inquired if the annexation would infringe on his property.

Kurt Klein, 640 Hopkins, said he was in the audience in 1996 when the annexation agreement was voted on. He said it was a controversial issue because the adjacent landowners did not think the subdivision was compatible with the existing neighborhood. Mr. Klein said the existing properties were all at least 3-acre lots and it was his understanding that the property in question was not annexed because it would act as a buffer zone. Mr. Klein asked that the Commission honor that understanding. Mr. Nicklas said unfortunately that intent was not put in writing because nothing was noted about a buffer zone. Mr. Nicklas said that he was obliged to follow through as the annexation amendment read.

Mr. Klein asked if since the area was not plotted, did the Commission have to approve single-family housing. Mr. Nicklas said that it was shown as green space on the original plat.

Commissioner David asked if this could be held over to review minutes for proof or understanding.

Mr. Stoddard said Mr. Dahl was not the original developer and bought the subdivision with the understanding that this was a developable parcel.

Mr. Nicklas asked City Attorney Peter Smith to provide a written ruling and to review any documents associated with this agreement.

Motion

Commissioner David moved to hold over their recommendation until the April meeting to review Council and Plan Commission meeting minutes, background, and get a written ruling from Attorney Smith regarding the annexation agreement as it pertained to property along the west side of Hopkins Lane and Commissioner McBride seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairman Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners David, Doonan, Hamilton, Henderson, Lorence, McBride, Wagley, Bridgewater, Brotcke, Davey, and Chairperson Lewis voted aye. Motion carried 11 - 0.

WORKSHOPS

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

Administrator Nicklas explained he had met with Chuck Hanlon, County Engineer Bill Lorence and City Engineer John Brady to depict collector streets and two gateway features in the northeast quadrant. Mr. Nicklas said the two gateways were to create inviting entryways.

Chuck Hanlon, Land Vision, distributed the most current map revision delineating collector roads and pointed out possible neighborhoods and streets. Mr. Hanlon said there might not be enough sewer trunkline to service the entire yellow area so that would be developed on a first-come-first-serve basis. Mr. Hanlon illustrated gateways along Whipple & Route 23 and Plank & North Grove Roads to accentuate an attractive entryway. He said the gateway would allow for birms and separations and no direct driveway access would be permitted in that area. Mr. Hanlon said that north of North Grove Road would be an unnamed east-west collector roadway that would intersect Plank and could be a spine road, which is a road that ties neighborhoods together. Mr. Hanlon said it was a purposeful effort not to direct roadways to Whipple in order to maintain Whipple's rural character. Mr. Hanlon moved east and talked about the removal of the curve from Plank Road near Moose Range routing Plank behind the line of houses south of the curve. Mr. Hanlon said Airport Road would also intersect Plank.

Commissioner Henderson inquired if the new bend in Plank Road was already proposed and Commissioner Lorence said it was designed and ready to go.

Mr. Nicklas said the proposed roadways were by design saying the City was not growing further than Whipple Road therefore, pushing development back toward the center of town. Mr. Hanlon said Geneva, St. Charles and Batavia had all drawn the line for their boundaries.

Chairperson Lewis expressed concern regarding the elimination of residential from the east side of the Airport Road extension and south of Swanson Road. Mr. Nicklas said that currently there was a prohibition by the EPA of residential in that area because of the existing hog farm.

Commissioner McBride asked what information the Commission needed from the school district, such as maintaining a one-high-school population. Mr. Nicklas said that was a little beyond what was expected in this revision. Mr. Nicklas said at this level the Commission should define the boundaries and the road networks and that could set the tone for the School and Park Districts' planning process. Mr. Hanlon said they might consider an elementary school in the northeast quadrant.

Mr. Nicklas said there would be no special meeting in March and asked Mr. Hanlon to work on a map including hub or regional parks, retention, and schools.

Chairperson Lewis said they should be careful not to specify a school site because that might impact a property owner's market value. Mr. Lewis said it was not the Commission's responsibility to dictate school sites and Mr. Hanlon said they could put that in the narrative.

Commissioner David said she thought it was the Commission's responsibility to establish benchmarks and in order to do that they needed school capacities.

Chairperson Lewis asked the Commission if they were comfortable enough with the current map to have Mr. Hanlon add more detail.

Commissioner Doonan asked to have the map expanded to see the surrounding County area.

Commissioner McBride said the exercise to write the northeast sub-regional plan was practically a cut and paste of the Bethany Sub-Regional Plan and Commissioner Brotcke concurred.

Administrator Nicklas said three meetings earlier a realtor commented there was nothing unique about Sycamore's entryways. Mr. Nicklas said the gateways were a departure, and if they were going to define the City, they must have a special look.

Commissioner Davey said he thought they gave in too easily to Wiseman-Hughes by giving them five years to develop the commercial area at the corner of Bethany and Somonauk before they were allowed to develop as residential.

REPORTS

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

None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Commissioner Davey moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. and Commissioner McBride seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a voice vote. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 11 - 0.

Approve:

Chairman – John Lewis

Attest:

Secretary - Candy Smith