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**SYCAMORE PLAN COMMISSION MEETING  
MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2003**

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**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chairman John Lewis called the meeting to order and Clerk Candy Smith called the roll. Those Commissioners present were: Tom Brotcke, Bill Davey, Pat David, Dave Hamilton, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, John McBride, Chuck Stowe, and Chairperson John Lewis. Commissioners George Bridgewater, Steve Doonan, and Larry Steczo were absent. Other staff members present were City Manager Bill Nicklas, City Engineer John Brady, Building Commissioner/Zoning Officer Lyle Doty and Commission Attorney Kevin Buick.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approval of minutes of the meeting of August 11, 2003.

**Motion**

Commissioner Lorence moved to approve the minutes of August 11, 2003 and Commissioner Davey seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote**

Chairman Lewis called for a voice vote to approve the motion. Eight Commissioners voted aye with Commissioner McBride abstaining. Motion carried 8 – 0 - 1.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion**

Commissioner David moved to approve the agenda 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 9 - 0.

**CONSIDERATONS**

**A. Consideration of a Petition From Ann Busse and James Tucker for a Rezoning of the Property at 1121 Somonauk Street.**

Manager Nicklas reminded the Commissioners that this was the old single-family brick house surrounded by the planned townhouse development, Somonauk Gardens. This lot was zoned "C-1" and the petitioners bought the property and requested to change the zoning to "R-2" to permit some flexibility in the remodeling for a one or two-unit structure.

James Tucker, 631 DeKalb Avenue, said their intention was to renovate the building back into a home.

Commissioner McBride asked if they were aware it was not listed on the State Historical Register because of the white addition. Mr. Tucker said they were aware and planned on leaving the addition, but were going to take down the garage.

Commissioner David asked if they were going to make it a two-flat and Mr. Tucker said that was not their plan.

Chairperson Lewis said if it was to be used as a single-family home, why were they rezoning to "R-2"? Mr. Tucker said "R-2" zoning surrounded them and they wanted to leave their options open.

Commissioner Lorence said the existing plat showed two driveways and he said the Somonauk Street driveway should be eliminated.

Commissioner Brotcke said it should be zoned as single-family, if that was how they were going to use it. Zoning Officer Lyle Doty said he had recommended the "R-2" zoning because the surrounding area was "R-2".

Commissioner David was concerned that "R-2" zoning would change the character of the home.

Commissioner McBride inquired about the driveway on Somonauk and Commissioner Lorence said Engineer Brady should make the decision.

Chairperson Lewis opened discussion to the audience.

J.C. Roach, 319 Borden, said he appreciated the care the Plan Commission and Council had taken when approving the development surrounding the property in question. Mr. Roach said his concern was for the future if the property was converted into rental property.

Commissioner Brotcke expressed concern about the driveway issue and Engineer Brady said it would be a good idea to eliminate the driveway onto Somonauk. Mr. Tucker asked who would pay for the driveway to be removed and Mr. Nicklas said it would fall to the property owner. Mr. Tucker said he would withdraw his request.

The Commission was directed to act on the request as presented.

### **Motion**

Commissioner David moved to recommend approval to the City Council of the rezoning to "R-2" with the elimination of the Somonauk Street driveway and Commissioner Lorence seconded the motion.

Commissioner Stowe said Mr. Tucker was requesting to downzone the property and the Plan Commission was placing stipulations.

### **Withdrawal of Motion**

Commissioner David withdrew the motion and Commissioner Lorence withdrew the second.

### **Motion**

Commissioner Stowe moved to recommend approval to the City Council to rezone from "C-1" to "R-2" and Commissioner Lorence seconded the motion.

### **Roll Call Vote**

Chairman Lewis called for a voice vote to approve the motion. Commissioners Stowe, David, Davey, Hamilton, McBride and Chairperson Lewis voted aye. Commissioners Brotcke, Henderson, and Lorence voted nay. Motion carried 6 - 3.

**B. Consideration of a Petition From John Kuna for a Special Use Permit for a Subdivision of the Property at 1515/1519 Willow Street to Permit the Sale of the Two Units in Fee Simple.**

Manager Nicklas explained this address did not fall under the authority of the Plat Officer because the older neighborhoods did not have the required Special Uses.

John Kuna, 128 W. Roosevelt, DeKalb, IL, said he was the landlord of the property. He said he was doing improvements to the property and thought they might sell best as single units to first-time homebuyers.

Commissioner Bridgewater arrived at 7:20 p.m.

**Motion**

Commissioner Lorence moved to recommend approval to the City Council for the subdivision of property and Commissioner Hamilton seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote**

Chairman Lewis called for a voice vote to approve the motion. Commissioners Stowe, Brotcke, Davey, David, Hamilton, Henderson, Lorence, McBride and Chairperson Lewis voted aye. Motion carried 9 - 0.

**WORKSHOPS**

**A. Consideration of a Concept Plan Submitted by Roncon Development for 41 Acres That Are Zoned R-3 at the Northwest Corner of Peace Road and IL Rt. 23.**

Manager Nicklas listed the highlights of Ron Stonebreaker's concept plan for the residentially zoned area behind the commercial subdivision as follows:

- A gross area of 41.12 acres.
- A gross density of 5.98 units per acre.
- A mix of single-family detached units (52) and attached townhouses (a total of 194 units).
- Guest parking for the attached housing in the ratio of about 2.5 spaces per unit.
- Shared access to Peace Road through the commercial subdivision at the entry approved on the Peace Road plan.
- A central park of less than 1 acre.
- A large retention area to the northwest of the site.

Ron Stonebreaker, 9N807 Koshare Trail, Elgin, IL said the property was currently zoned R-3 and his goal was to provide diversity. He said the single-family lots would average 10,500 sq.ft. and the multi-family 4-plexes each had 2 bedrooms plus a basement. There would be 2.5 parking stalls per unit. The multi-family streets would be private and the single-family streets would be public.

Commissioner Lorence asked if they would have access before Ward Drive was built and Mr. Stonebreaker said DeKalb Associates was currently seeking easements.

Commissioner Lorence said traffic signals must be installed after completion of the gas station and the second commercial lot or the buildout of the residential area. Engineer Brady asked if the signals had to be in place or the money needed to be accounted for, because he did not think the signals would be warranted. Mr. Lorence said the agreement was in place with DeKalb Associates.

Commissioner Stowe expressed concern that there was not access to the east.

Commissioner Henderson asked what would go between the commercial and the multi-family and Mr. Stonebreaker said either the commercial developer or he would place birms.

Commissioner David asked if bike paths were planned and Mr. Stonebreaker said they would consider putting in 10-foot paths to the west and north of the public streets. Ms. David asked if there would be paths in the private area and Mr. Stonebreaker said they could create an area between the single-family and multi-family homes. Chairperson Lewis said that would give access to the park.

Commissioner Brotcke asked if they had met with the Park District and Mr. Stonebreaker said the park was designed as private for the multi-family area. Mr. Brotcke did not think the park was large enough and Mr. Stonebreaker said they had room to expand.

Commissioner Hamilton asked the price of the single-family homes. Mr. Stonebreaker said the single-family homes ranged from \$230,000 to \$300,000 and the townhomes were \$140,000 to \$160,000.

Commissioner Brotcke asked when the project would be buildout and Mr. Stonebreaker said he expected the single-family homes to sell quickly, but the market would drive the townhomes.

Commissioner Doonan arrived at 7:45 p.m.

Chairperson Lewis summarized the directives as the potential for more open space, separate bike paths that provide access, more parking spaces, and the overall density was a bit high.

Commissioner Stowe suggested placing the parking nearer the homes.

## **Special Meeting of the Plan Commission and City Council 7:30 P.M.**

Further Consideration of Planning Issues Opened in the Joint Meeting of the Plan Commission and City Council on September 2, 2003

Mayor John Swedberg called the meeting to order and Clerk Candy Smith called the roll. Those Alderpersons present were: Alan Bauer, Terry Kessler, Andrew Larson, Barbara Leach, Cheryl Maness, Pete Paulsen, Chuck Stowe, and Janice Tripp.

Chairperson Lewis said there appeared to be a number of issues raised at the last meeting and they needed to get at the underlying issues behind the concerns for the rate of growth and the size of the municipality. He wondered what was driving the concerns – the size of the community or the threat of high taxes.

Mayor Swedberg said the concerns were about taxes, congestion, losing the hometown feel and said the City needed to identify numbers that could control and perhaps eliminate concerns. He wanted to talk about an overall ceiling.

Commissioner David said she was happy to hear nobody say no growth and felt that ceiling and boundaries needed to be set.

Commissioner Davey said no growth was as bad as unbridled growth and they needed to find a middle ground. He said the market would dictate that.

Commissioner McBride said the ceiling was provided by the ability of staff. Mayor Swedberg said if they looked at voluntary impact fees they could be used to fund staff.

Aldersperson Kessler said she was the 4<sup>th</sup> generation Sycamore raising the 5<sup>th</sup> generation in Sycamore. Ms. Kessler said in the fifties Turner Addition and Somonauk Meadows were new subdivisions creating anxiety to existing residents. She said there were 198 in her graduating class nearly 30 years ago and 210 this past year and she emphasized there was not that much difference in the numbers. Ms. Kessler spoke with Steve Glasgow and Dave Juday, two of the biggest industrial developers in Sycamore, and they both said that recruitment was based on growth. She said the City had spent money on the downtown streetscape and this year Home Street was being reconstruct so money was being spent on the existing town. She said Mr. Juday told her that the City had to invest so he could invest. Steve Glasgow said he and Kishwaukee Hospital were expanding the healthcare system with the goal of not needing a helicopter in order to see a cardiologist. She said in order to get there growth was required.

Aldersperson Leach asked how much was enough to bring what we need? Aldersperson Kessler said according to Mr. Juday we were close, because of the location and growth activity many times we were one of the finalists in many areas. She said Dr. Glasgow said we were 30 physicians short of what was needed. She said the hospital wanted to bring in 40 more physicians in the next 7 to 10 years.

Commissioner Bridgewater said he was picturing Delnor in St. Charles, but he did not want to see a Randall Road in Sycamore.

Commissioner Henderson said she wanted to be sure that growth was managed and developers came in the way Sycamore wanted.

Commissioner Stowe said he thought the Comp Plan was a good plan, but should be revisited more often than five years. Mr. Stowe said he was concerned with the large development, but felt the large operation would be easier to work with regarding infrastructure.

Chairperson Lewis said the Comprehensive Plan set outer growth boundaries especially at Whipple Road to the north. He said the west was set by floodplain and the south bordered DeKalb and Cortland. He said the southeast boundary was set by topography and sewer access. He said the Plan projected a population of 18,000 to 20,000 in 20 years. Mr. Lewis said the advantage of the large proposal, as in B & B's, was the delay of the buildout start along with the pacing ordinance.

Aldersperson Maness said this Plan established good limits, but suggested they might revisit density to create bigger lots with fewer homes. Ms. Maness said homes in older sections of town sell quickly and she wondered where those people were from. She said the older homes needed buyers so the senior citizens could buy the new townhomes and remain in the area.

Commissioner Lorence said that Sycamore's Comprehensive Plan was the most restrictive and most thought through of any in the County.

Commissioner David said that fear was a lack of knowledge and asked the press to help inform the community.

Commissioner Davey said the City can be proud and he was as Plan Commissioner of the subdivisions approved with all the amenities like bike paths, streets, and open space. He said he thought the new development was good.

Aldersperson Larson said he thought this was a good education process for the public and encouraged people to stay involved. He said at first he was receiving calls desiring no growth and now he is hearing slow growth.

Mayor Swedberg said he learned through the Northern Illinois Mayors Association that many communities are giving incentives for residential growth. He said he thought that 3% to 5% growth was plenty. Chairperson Lewis said he thought they were only growing at 2% to 3% and Mr. Nicklas said during the 1990's growth averaged 2%. Mr. Nicklas said the City was surveying new homebuyers at the time of occupancy to get some basic information like where they lived before and number of children.

Commissioner David said she was surprised at the lack of attendance at the meeting and Aldersperson Leach said she thought it was made clear that controlled growth was a common concern for Council, Plan Commission, and the public. Ms. Leach said she thought the lack of attendance reflected more faith in the authorities than apathy of the public.

Chairperson Lewis said the City had a Comprehensive Plan in place for growth control.

Manager Nicklas asked for a sense of the next step in the process and a projected time for regulation.

Chairperson Lewis asked the Plan Commission if they felt the Comprehensive Plan and the Regulation Ordinance were sufficient tools to control growth.

Commissioner McBride said he thought the Mayor's Committee would provide insight on future costs.

Chairperson Lewis said that by design impact fees and exactions were not under the Plan Commission's charge.

Mayor Swedberg said his Committee would look at future growth 15 to 20 years out.

Aldersperson Maness said the impact fees go through the City Council and Plan Commission would go forward with the Comprehensive Plan guidelines. Mr. Nicklas said the developers want to know what the policy makers will do. In other words, what are the rules and when will they change.

Chairperson Lewis said he felt the Plan Commission was comfortable with the Comprehensive Plan and the regulatory controls recently written, but the question was whether City Council was comfortable with them?

Commissioner Stowe said he thought they needed to look at the regulation of growth as well as how the growth should pay for itself. He said the Plan Commission could look at the regulation of growth.

Aldersperson Leach asked who would make the regulation decision and Mr. Nicklas said it would be a revision of the Zoning Ordinance, which would start at the Plan Commission. Chairperson Lewis said that would be October before total clarity could be reached.

Mayor Swedberg asked for a consensus from Council if they were satisfied with the Comprehensive Plan and they were. Mayor Swedberg then asked if there was a consensus on the revised growth table. Aldersperson Maness suggested they could put the table into Ordinance Committee to go on the next Council agenda. Manager Nicklas said he thought they should open up the meeting for public comment. Chairperson Lewis opened the meeting for public comment while reserving the right to open the regulation item for discussion before adjourning.

Tom Meyer, 1318 John Street, urged City Council to go along with increases in impact fees to ensure that new subdivisions fund themselves. He said he did not want to pay for schools for a new subdivision.

Ken Andersen, 680 Hopkins, representing DeKalb County Building and Development Association, applauded the Council and Commission for good discussion and comment. Mr. Andersen said they needed to look at a different source of revenue to fund schools, such as an income tax, because impact fees would not cover the cost.

Chuck Shephard, 169 Buena Vista, DeKalb, asked how they would divvy out the limited number of building permits. He suggested asking Dave Juday to produce less because that was what permit regulation was doing to his industry.

Grace Adee, 1469 Longwood, asked who was going to pay the bills for the schools needed with future growth.

John Kuhny, 113 Janet Street, said he moved to Sycamore five years ago. He said he was an attorney who represented builders and developers and was concerned about placing caps on permits. He said annexation agreements were not long enough to cover buildouts of some developments. Mr. Kuhny said that impact fees set too high would invite undesirable issues.

Tom Meyer said impact fees would not cover the impact of new development. He said he was disappointed the impact fees were so low when he built his home. He said impact fees do make a difference and if schools are kept in good shape, people will be willing to pay more to live in your town. Mr. Meyer said the market would define the impact fees.

Chairperson Lewis asked if Plan Commission wanted to review regulated growth or wait until the next meeting.

Commissioner McBride said he wanted to wait for input from the school board.

Plan Commission consensus was to agenda the discussion of growth control for the October meeting.

Commissioner Brotcke asked if there would be a report from the Mayor's Committee and Mayor Swedberg said his Committee would not meet until after October 1, 2003.

## **REPORTS**

None

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

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

**City Council Adjournment**

**Motion**

Aldersperson Stowe moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. and Aldersperson Leach seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote**

Mayor Swedberg called for a voice vote. All Alderspersons present voted aye. Motion carried 8 – 0.

**Plan Commission Adjournment**

Before adjourning Chairperson Lewis said impact fees were not part of their charter, he said the Plan Commission's charge was the life and safety of the Community.

**Motion**

Commissioner Lorence moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 p.m. and Commissioner Doonan seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote**

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

Approve:

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Chairman – John Lewis

Attest:

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Clerk - Candy Smith