
SYCAMORE PLAN COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES OF MAY 9, 2005

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairperson John Lewis called the meeting to order and City Clerk Candy Smith called the roll. Those Commissioners present were: George Bridgewater, Tom Brotcke, Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, Cheryl Maness, Michelle Schulz, Larry Steczo and Chairperson John Lewis. Other staff members present were City Manager Bill Nicklas, City Engineer John Brady, Building Commissioner/Zoning Officer Lyle Doty, and Commission Attorney Kevin Buick.

Chairperson Lewis welcomed new board members Cheryl Maness, Lowell Evans, and Michelle Schulz.

Mayor Mundy welcomed the new and reappointed commissioners and thanked them for serving to plan for the betterment of Sycamore. He said a School Board representative has not yet been recommended.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 11, 2005.

Motion

Commissioner Lorence moved to approve the Minutes of April 11, 2005 and Commissioner Steczo seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion

Commissioner George moved to approve the agenda and Commissioner Davey seconded the motion.

Commissioner Henderson corrected Item D from City Council to Plan Commission approval.

Voice Vote

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

CONSIDERATIONS

A. Consideration of a Petition from John L. Castle Builders for a Final Plat for Unit II of the Heron Creek Townhomes P.U.D.

Manager Nicklas said this plat has some minor changes to the plat approved February 2004. He said some lots have been shifted while keeping the same number of units.

Motion

Commissioner Lorence moved to approve a favorable recommendation to Council and Commissioner Schulz seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners George Bridgewater, Tom Brotcke Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, Cheryl Maness, Michelle Schulz, Larry Steczo, and Chairperson John Lewis voted aye. Motion passed 11-0.

B. Consideration of a Petition from Dahlko LLC for a Final Plat for Phase One, Unit 5 of the Townsend Woods Planned Unit Development.

Manager Nicklas explained that in July of 2003 Council approved the annexation and rezoning of a 3.71-acre strip of land to the west of Hopkins Lane. He said that led to the approval of a revised preliminary plan of Unit Five with the understanding that the following conditions would be met before the final plat for Unit Five was approved:

- a) the traffic signals at Maplewood Drive would be permitted by IDOT and the reconstruction of the intersection begun;
- b) the first asphalt lift on Mt. Hunger Road would be installed; and
- c) all Landahl Streets would be completed and accepted.

He said that to date conditions (a) and (b) have been met and (c) is scheduled to be completed. Mr. Nicklas said there is an easement that should be shown on the map.

Commissioner Lorence said there should be no vehicular access to Hopkins Lane and that should be shown from lots 222 through 232.

Jim Stoddard, 2045 Aberdeen Court, said he was representing the petitioner and he noted the changes requested and will incorporate those into the final plat.

Motion

Commissioner Davey moved to approve a favorable recommendation to Council with the easement of Hopkins and no access from lots 222 through 232 shown on the plat and Commissioner Lorence seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners George Bridgewater, Tom Brotcke Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, Cheryl Maness, Michelle Schulz, Larry Steczo, and Chairperson John Lewis voted aye. Motion passed 11-0.

C. Consideration of a Petition from Jeffrey A. and Colleen N. Overton and Hickory Terrace LLC for the Annexation and Rezoning of the Property at 1510 Freed Road to “R-1” One Family Residence District and “R-3” Multiple Family Residence District with a Special Use Permit for a Planned Unit Development.

Manager Nicklas said at the time of the annexation of the Hickory Terrace P.U.D. there was a single-family parcel contiguous, but not annexed at that time. He said a condition of the approval of the subdivision was the annexation of this parcel within a two-year period.

Commissioner Lorence asked if the access would remain on Freed and Engineer Brady said it would.

Jim Stoddard, 2048 Aberdeen, said he was representing the petitioner and was available for questions.

Motion

Commissioner George moved to approve a favorable recommendation to Council and Commissioner Schulz seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners George Bridgewater, Tom Brotcke Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Cheryl Maness, Michelle Schulz, Larry Steczo, and Chairperson John Lewis voted aye. Commissioner Bill Lorence voted nay. Motion passed 10-1.

D. Consideration of a Petition from Hickory Terrace LLC for a Final Plat for the Hickory Terrace Townhomes Planned Unit Development.

Manager Nicklas said the final plat for the entire Hickory Terrace development area of about 30 acres was approved September 2004 and at that time the final plat showed 49 single-family detached lots, retention areas, and a larger Lot 50 dedicated to the townhouse development with the expectation that the townhome area would be platted at a later date. He said this plat shows six buildings that would account for the 26 attached townhomes. Mr. Nicklas said since the units will be sold in fee simple, the plat officer will define the lot lines. He noted that the previous item, the Overton annexation, shows a delineation of a 30-foot space transferred to the Hickory Terrace development to provide a wider common area and buffer.

Jim Stoddard, 2048 Aberdeen Ct., said he was representing the petitioners and was available for questions

Motion

Commissioner Brotcke moved to approve a favorable recommendation to Council and Commissioner Davey seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners George Bridgewater, Tom Brotcke Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, Cheryl Maness, Michelle Schulz, Larry Steczo, and Chairperson John Lewis voted aye. Motion passed 11-0.

E. Consideration of a Petition from the Sycamore Community Unit School District #427 to Rezone a Portion of the Property at 245 West Exchange Street from R-2 Two Family Residence District to "R-3" Multiple Family Residence District.

Manager Nicklas explained that the Board of Education owns to linked parcels and they are proposing to rezone these parcels to R-3 presumably to look for a greater return if there is to be a sale of these parcels. He said under the zoning regulations for R-3 lots a total of two 11 two-bedroom apartments or

condominiums could be constructed on the property which comprises about .72 acres. He said the off-street parking requirement for two-bedroom units is 2.75 spaces per unit. He said a smaller building would be necessary to afford the requisite off-street parking for the maximum gross density. He said the issue before the Commission is whether they consider the R-3 zoning compatible to the neighborhood. Mr. Nicklas said the staff did not make a recommendation because he thought this kind of zoning request would invite the widest opinion from the surrounding property owners. Mr. Nicklas said the Superintendent called to say he would not be able to make the meeting.

Glenda Stowe, 314 N. California St., said she has lived in the neighborhood for 47 years. She said it is a quiet neighborhood and Sycamore Street is a very narrow street. She would like to see the zoning remain R-2.

Fred DeWitt, 217 N. Maple St., said he has lived in the neighborhood for 11 years and has 3 children that use the area in question as a playground every day. He said that multi-family is not a good idea and the property should be turned into a park.

Brian Corr, 309 N. California St., said a multi-family dwelling is not in keeping with that neighborhood and he would like to keep the character of the neighborhood.

Mike Matuszeski, 304 N. California St., said Sycamore Street is not wide enough to travel through and suggested one-sided parking. He said the proposed multi-family dwellings would add 11 to 22 cars.

Commissioner Davey asked if there were other apartment houses in the area and Mr. DeWitt said there is a 6-unit apartment house on the corner of Maple and Sycamore.

Commissioner Brotcke said he is familiar with the neighborhood and the street is not sufficient to support more traffic.

Commissioner Henderson asked if there had been dialog between the neighbors and the School District.

Motion

Commissioner Lorence moved to recommendation to deny to Council and Commissioner Steczo seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners George Bridgewater, Tom Brotcke Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, Cheryl Maness, Michelle Schulz, Larry Steczo, and Chairperson John Lewis voted aye. Motion passed 11-0.

F. Consideration of a Petition from EFS Bank for a Temporary Office Building at 245 West Peace Road.

Manager Nicklas said the intersection of Route 23 and Peace and Plank is beginning to develop for commercial purposes. He said at the northwest corner there is a shell of a building for a dentist and to the west is the site for EFS Bank. He said the bank is requesting permission to install a temporary office trailer customized to service as a retail bank office, with adjacent paved parking for fifteen vehicles, two drive-through lanes and two handicap toilet rooms. He said such temporary buildings were permitted under Section 4.12 of the Sycamore Zoning Code which was still in effect at the time this petition was filed.

Chairperson Lewis asked if there is a time limit on the temporary building.

Building Commission/Zoning Officer Lyle Doty said the petitioners requested 9 to 12 months.

Commissioner Lorence asked if the pavement would be removed as well.

Joseph Stanczak, 38W373 Heatherfield Dr., Elgin, said he was representing EFS Bank and they would remove the trailer 10 days after the opening of the permanent building. He said they will do some temporary landscaping around the trailer.

Mr. Nicklas said they need a time limit for removing the paving and Mr. Stanczak said they would do that within 30 days of opening of the permanent building. He said the estimated building time is 10 months.

Commissioner Henderson asked if the temporary facility offered only drive-thru service.

Mr. Stanczak said they will have 2 new account stations a private office, 2 tellers windows, a night drop and 2 handicap washrooms.

Motion

Commissioner Davey moved to approve a favorable recommendation to Council with the amendments that the temporary facility will be removed 10 days after opening of the permanent building and the paving around the temporary building be removed within 30 days and the site restored and Commissioner Bridgewater seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners George Bridgewater, Tom Brotcke Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, Cheryl Maness, Michelle Schulz, Larry Steczo, and Chairperson John Lewis voted aye. Motion passed 11-0.

G. Consideration of a Petition from T&D Properties of DeKalb County to Rezone Property at 235, 245, 251, 255 and 265 North Sacramento Street from "M-1" Light Manufacturing District to "R-3" Multiple Family Residence District with a Special Use Permit for a Planned Unit Development.

Mr. Nicklas said the properties are currently under construction and were originally designed to establish commercial condominiums on the ground level with residential condominiums on the second level, as permitted in "M-1" zoning districts under former zoning provisions. He said that Mr. Bowen would like to re-design the units so they are "stacked" residential condominiums, with the ground level spaces devoted to garages, utility rooms and possibly recreation rooms and the second floor spaces devoted to the kitchens, living areas and bedrooms. Mr. Nicklas said Zoning Officer Lyle Doty noted that the proposed zoning and residential uses would likely be more compatible with the adjacent properties than the original zoning and uses and the Commission might consider suggesting some sort of natural buffer between the industrial use to the north and the nearest residential units.

Jim Stoddard, 2048 Aberdeen Ct., said he represented the petitioner and since his client is not in attendance could not speak on the buffer. He said he thought the rezoning would be an advantage to the neighborhood with owner-occupied housing.

Gene Ege, 427 W. Exchange, said this backs up to his property to the north and he and his immediate neighbors feel it would be better for the units to be sold as condos. He said he was concerned that the retaining wall is 3 feet higher than his property and wondered what protection he would have from vehicles rolling onto his lot. Mr. Ege asked if the existing fence would continue on to the west to the retention pond area.

Building Commission/Zoning Officer Doty said early on in the project, Mr. Bowen indicated he intended to keep and repair the fence.

Paul Anderson, 221 May St., said he was concerned about foot traffic through his back yard and his neighbors yards. He said he thought that should be addressed by Plan Commission and Council.

Chairperson Lewis listed the concerns as protection from cars rolling down into yards of residents to the south, placement of fence on the west end of the property and protection from foot traffic throughout backyards from the west and south.

Mr. Anderson asked if there will be an association.

Mr. Stoddard said if the property is approved as condominium, there would be an association to address the common areas. He said the concerns don't really affect zoning, he said there will be people there either way.

Commissioner Henderson asked if there had been dialog between the developer and the neighbors.

Mr. Nicklas asked whether the Commission felt the change of use will be an advantage to the neighborhood and if that is the case the concerns are a matter of detail and obligation.

Commissioner Lorence said he heard the neighbors say that home ownership is better than rental property.

Commissioner Maness said by changing they will see less traffic because previously separate people would rent the bottom portion of the building. She encouraged planting the entryway similar to Foxbriar.

Chairperson Lewis said he was hearing general agreement to change the zoning and asked how best to ask the petitioner to address the other issues.

Mr. Nicklas said you can't conditionally rezone, but there is a special use on the table. He said fencing the whole compound might address the issues.

Motion

Commissioner Brotcke moved to approve a favorable recommendation for rezoning from "M-1 to "R-3" to Council and Commissioner Steczo seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners George Bridgewater, Tom Brotcke Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, Cheryl Maness, Michelle Schulz, Larry Steczo, and Chairperson John Lewis voted aye. Motion passed 11-0.

Attorney Kevin Buick said there were two issues – rezoning is the use and the special use permit is a different consideration and can attach provisions.

Amendment to the Motion

Commissioner Maness moved to amend the motion to add the approval of a special use of the Planned Unit Development to include the provision of fencing and landscaping and Commissioner Bridgewater seconded the motion.

Brian Corr, 304 N. California, said it would be appreciated if the landscaping could face Sacramento St.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners George Bridgewater, Tom Brotcke Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, Cheryl Maness, Michelle Schulz, Larry Steczo, and Chairperson John Lewis voted aye. Motion passed 11-0.

WORKSHOP ITEMS

A. Consideration of a Concept Plan for “Sycamore Senior Village” Presented by the Robert Arthur Land Company.

Manager Nicklas said Arthur Zwemke would present a proposal for an 840-870 unit active senior subdivision on the Palazzolo farm north of Old State Road and east of the Willows P.U.D.

Art Zwemke, a partner in the Robert Arthur Land Company of St. Charles, said they have worked with 4 different communities with this type of active adult development. He said this is a 112-acre parcel and they are proposing single-family, two-family, and townhomes on the east side of the property. He said that generally the age range for this type of community is 55 to 75-years-old. Mr. Zwemke said that school districts generally accept this type of development because they produce real estate taxes without requiring school services. He said on the west side they envision rental units for independent living with assisted living available and a licenses nursing home.

Commissioner Steczo asked how much of this would be rezoned from commercial to residential.

Mr. Zwemke said he thought the property was on the edge of the Comp Plan and would go from ag to residential.

Manager Nicklas said the future land use plan shows most of this area as commercial.

Commissioner Schulz said she thought the City should maintain the commercial zoning.

Commissioner Lorence said they had drawn the Airport Road extension incorrectly. He suggested it should be the requirement of the developer to improve the intersection at Airport and Route 64.

Commissioner Henderson said she would really need to be convinced to deviate from the Land Use Plan.

Commissioner George said the idea is great, but he was not sure about the location.

Commissioner Bridgewater said they need to define how Sycamore will look at its entrance.

Commissioner Davey said there is a problem getting to the development because the Airport Road extension is a long way off.

Commissioner Maness said they should be careful to keep the frontage property as commercial.

Commissioner Evans said he is not sure the community is ready for this at this time.

Commissioner George said that Oak Crest is on its second expansion in 8 years.

Commissioner Steczo said over the last 15 years, even though the Park District has been aggressive in acquiring park land, we are still getting more people per park acre and this adds 2 people per acre.

Mr. Zwemke said they have observed if they create a walking path and clubhouse the residents will typically use those facilities.

Commissioner Schulz said the assisted living facility is filled and asked if Oehlert's active senior community was not filled because it was too far from downtown and Mr. Nicklas said that might be part of it.

Mr. Nicklas said that access seems to be the biggest issue to address for this proposal and there is no budget for public participation with Route 64. He asked Commissioner Lorence as capacity as County Engineer if they brought the road down could that be done without the reconfiguration of Airport Road south of Route 64.

Commissioner Lorence said the offset would be state construction. He said at one point IDOT would have built that intersection if they could have gotten the right-of-way. He said in order to build one leg they would have to have the ultimate design completed and approved by IDOT and an interim solution built and approved by IDOT – which would include elimination of Old State Road and signalization of the Old State Road intersection.

Mr. Nicklas said he needed to give the petitioner as much definition to direct the petitioner.

Commissioner Lorence said the parking access for the Great Western Trail would need to be moved from the west side to the east side.

Chairperson Lewis said the issues he was hearing were the loss of commercial space and access to the development. He asked the Plan Commission how comfortable they were to have the company incur more expense with the project.

Commissioner Lorence said he could consider commercial along Old State with residential behind it, but access is critical and there will be upfront costs.

Mr. Nicklas said if the project goes further they must show what the entrance is going to look like coming in from the east.

Mr. Zwemke said they would be happy to do that and what they wanted to accomplish tonight was to get an idea if the Plan Commission had any interest in this project.

B. . Consideration of a Request from Rick Ericson to Rezone the 2.8-Acre Parcel at the Southeast Corner of N. Fair Street and Crosby Avenue.

Manager Nicklas said the petitioners wish to rezone a 2.8-acre parcel across from the entrance to Sycamore Containers from "M-2" to "R-3."

Rick Ericson said the land is owned by Sycamore Containers and they felt the parcel was too small for industry so they want to build some commercial with residential in the back.

Commissioner Brotcke said he would retain the "M-2" status.

Commissioner Maness said the long range goals for this area are to continue Crosby to Peace with access to Route 64 and to keep that area industrial.

Commissioner Evans said he wanted to retain the industrial zoning.

Commissioner George said he thought the commercial would be okay and the residential would be a good transition to the existing neighborhoods.

Commissioner Henderson said to keep the industrial zoning.

Commissioner Lorence said he did not want to lose any industrial and there was already access planned for Peace Road.

Commissioners Schulz, Steczo, and Bridgewater all said they would like to stick to the Comprehensive Plan.

Chairperson Lewis said the consensus was to keep the zoning as industrial.

REPORTS

None

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

None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Commissioner Lorence moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 p.m. and Commissioner Steczo seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

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

Approve:

Chairperson – John Lewis

Attest:

Candy Smith, City Clerk