

TO: The Sycamore Plan Commission

FROM: Bill Nicklas
City Manager

DATE: September 6, 2006

RE: September 11, 2006 Plan Commission Meeting

The Plan Commission agenda has three action items and one workshop item.

I Workshop Item

A. “Open House” at The Stone Prairie Rental Community Developed by Charlie Laing.

The Commission regularly wrestles with planning questions with long-term impacts. In the case of most residential, commercial, and industrial developments a drive-around will give members a feel for the changes in the physical landscape. However, it is seldom that a planned development remains under single ownership and provides a window to both the built environment and the economic impact of earlier planning decisions. As a result, the City Manager has accepted developer Charlie Laing’s invitation to view the Stone Prairie Rental Community, which is now under development on the east side of Sycamore, and north of the Doty & Sons plant. At 6:00 p.m. on September 11, Mr. Laing, his family, and staff will conduct a tour of the Stone Prairie Rental Community, originally known as “The Willows” planned development. Commission members will meet at the development’s Club House at 6:00 p.m. Please enter the main gate on Illinois Rt. 64 (just east of Swedberg & Associates) and follow the main drive around to the Club House.

Background

On August 20, 2001 the City Council annexed a 63-acre parcel at the northwest corner of IL Route 64 and Airport Road. The major portion of the property was zoned “R-3” Multiple Family Residence District, but an 8-acre section with frontage on Illinois Rt. 64 was zoned “C-3” Highway Commercial. The Council also approved a preliminary plan depicting a planned residential development featuring 90 attached townhouses plus 288 one or two-bedroom apartments for a density of 6.85 units per gross acre. Following the annexation and rezoning, the developer, Charlie Laing,

worked several years to grade and shape the land to create storm water detention for the property as well as the runoff from about 2.8 square miles of farm property to the north and east. The observer will notice two very large detention areas and a reconfigured water course. In January 2004, a final plat (see attached) was approved for the entire property and the first rental units were begun. None of the rental units will be sold to occupants and all units will be leased through Mr. Laing's family firm.

The Plan Commission and City Council have been invited to this open house to see the outcome of public and private decisions that were made five years ago. This is an opportunity for an in-depth view of the impact of such decisions. Mr. Laing will conduct a tour of the townhouse and apartment units and discuss the rental pricing of each type of residence.

II Action Items

A. Consideration of a Petition from Jim Herrmann to Rezone the Westerly 48.60 Feet of the Property at 545 East Sycamore Street from "R-3" Multiple Family Residence District to "R-1" Single Family Residence District and the Easterly 100 Feet of said Property to "M-1" Light Manufacturing District in the City of Sycamore, Illinois.

The petitioner, Jim Herrmann, wishes to re-zone the property at 545 East Sycamore Street in line with the predominant zoning of nearby or adjacent properties. The lot is presently zoned "R-3," Multiple Family Residence District. Mr. Herrmann proposes to down-zone the westerly 48.60 feet to "R-1," Single Family Residence District in line with the properties across the street, and re-zone the easterly 100 feet to "M-1," Light Manufacturing, which is compatible with the adjoining Erhler property. Mr. Herrmann plans to build a small single family home on the west portion and a storage building on the east portion for vehicle storage.

Both proposed uses would blend with the adjacent uses and would be preferable to an apartment building or other use presently permitted. A favorable Plan Commission recommendation is requested.

B. Consideration of a Petition from Theresa Lynch for an Annexation Agreement and Annexation of the Property at 1679 Brickville Road with a Rezoning to "R-1" Single Family Residence District in the City of Sycamore, Illinois.

This item, and Item "C," below, relate to a proposed house move from a lot in the Heron Creek subdivision to a lot to be created in what has heretofore been the County's planning and zoning jurisdiction. The building in question is a small 1-1/2 story house formerly situated on the Engh family homestead. The house is presently within the Country Estates phase of the Heron Creek subdivision on Merry Oaks Drive. Moving the house will require the removal of the porch and garage, and the towing of the house on a trailer from its location on Merry Oaks Drive to IL Rt. 23, then north to the intersection of IL Rt. 23, Plank and Peace Roads, then south on Peace Road to Brickville Road, and then east on Brickville Road to the former Overton property, which is adjacent to the 11-lot Brickville Estates planned

development owned by Norm Adshade. Mr. Adshade's 6.17-acre single-family housing development was approved on July 6, 2004 and a final plat for the entire subdivision was approved on December 20, 2004. The proposed new location of the single family house is on property once owned by Ms. Shirley Overton at 1691 Brickville Road.

The proposed annexation concerns the front .64 acres of the Overton property. The existing Overton home is set back considerably from Brickville Road, leaving room for two full-sized single family lots of 13,000 to 14,000 square feet each. The Overton property would remain in the County and would have the shape of a "flag" with frontage on Brickville Road. The petitioner proposes to move the house to Lot 1.

The Commission will find several relevant attachments including a plat of annexation, a final plat, and an elementary annexation agreement. By a previous annexation (in 1999), the road right-of-way along Brickville Road was annexed to the City. The petitioner specifically requests a waiver of the application of Ordinance 2005.60 to the proposed occupancy of the two single family lots. As the Commission will recall, Ordinance 2005.60 would prohibit building permits for any new residential subdivisions before 2010.

A favorable Plan Commission recommendation is requested.

C. Consideration of a Petition from Norm Adshade to Move a Single Family Residence from 361 Merry Oaks Drive, Sycamore, Illinois to 1679 Brickville Road, Sycamore, Illinois, According to the Provisions of Title 9, "Building Regulations," Chapter 6, "Moving Buildings," Section 9-6-1, "Permit Required; Application," in the City of Sycamore, Illinois.

The City of Sycamore's building regulations (see attached) require the review of the Plan Commission prior to any Council consideration of a request to move a building over any public way. As described in Item # B, above, Mr. Norman Adshade is seeking a permit to move a 1-1/2 story home from 361 Merry Oaks Drive to 1679 Brickville Road. The path of the proposed move includes public ways within the City, County, State of Illinois and Sycamore Township jurisdictions, and written approvals are needed from each taxing jurisdiction. For the City's part, it must be established that the proposed move will not jeopardize the public safety, and will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood to which the building is to be moved. Prior to any action on this permit application, the Council awaits the review of the Plan Commission.

It should be noted that a key private party involved in this process is Com Ed, which has not yet determined whether, and at what price, it will temporarily move high voltage lines in the proposed path. The utility's approval and commitment to a specific work plan and date is a further requirement for the issuance of a City permit.