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**SYCAMORE PLAN COMMISSION MEETING**  
**MINUTES OF JANUARY 8, 2007**

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**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, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Bill Lorence, Cheryl Maness, Michelle Schulz, Dave Shipley, Larry Steczo and Chairperson John Lewis. Commissioners Cindy Henderson and Bill Davey 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 OF NOVEMBER 13, 2006.**

**Motion**

Commissioner Steczo moved to approve the Minutes of November 13, 2006 and Commissioner Schulz seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote**

Chairperson Lewis called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 10 - 0.

Commissioner Bill Davey arrived at 7:02 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion**

Commissioner Evans moved to approve the agenda 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.

**CONSIDERATIONS - None**

**WORKSHOP ITEMS**

**A. Consideration of a Preliminary Plat for the "Tradition of Sycamore" Planned Unit Development (Herst Farm).**

City Manager Nicklas said that John Hall Homes team has provided a revision to the preliminary plan tonight, which the staff has not reviewed, so they will walk everybody through it. He said this is the second Workshop before it will go to a formal public hearing in February.

John Hall, Jr., John Hall Homes, 4030 River View Dr., St. Charles, said one of the item changes is they have lowered the number of courtyard homes and added a larger alleyway in the back to give more access for emergency vehicles and garbage pickup. He said they would like to address side-yard setbacks, street names, and street alignment. He said here to present with him were John Hall, Sr. of John Hall Homes,

Paul Hasser of Acorn Properties, and their attorney John Reagan and an engineer from Wendler Engineering.

John Hall, Sr. asked the Commissioners if they would consider allowing them to rename the portion of Presidential Parkway that enters their subdivision from Lindgren Road to Tradition Blvd, because the name of the subdivision will be Traditions of Sycamore. He said if that does not work, they would like to change it to Tradition Way at the first intersection in the subdivision and they would like to keep the name of the street the same around a curve.

City Engineer Brady said he thought they could probably make the short stretch of the east-west street the same name as the north-south street in question.

Paul Hasser, Acorn Properties, asked the Commissioners if they approved of changing the name of Presidential Parkway to Traditions Way.

Mr. Nicklas said that Engineer Brady said he was agreeable to that.

Mr. Hasser corrected the proposed setbacks for the Zero Lot Line houses as follows: front yard 10 feet, corner side yard 10 feet, side yard 7 feet on one side and 0 feet on the other side, and rear yard 22 feet. He said the courtyard homes are built very close to the sidewalk and create a look of an old downtown.

Commissioner Maness asked if the garages for all the courthouse homes are all in the alley.

Mr. Hasser said the corner lots have side-loaded garages.

Mr. Hasser said they are proposing the single-family detached houses on corner lots at 20 feet to make the garages side-loaded, too. He said he thought they might have to increase that to 22-feet.

Commissioner Evans asked if the zero-lot line houses would have no windows on one side.

Mr. Hall, Jr. said that was correct because it allows for privacy in the courtyard that separates the houses.

Commissioner Lorence asked if those would be brick walls.

Mr. Hall, Jr. said they would be built to code and it would depend on the cost of materials.

Mr. Nicklas said this is an alternative to a 4 or 6-unit townhouse where you are looking at drywall between neighbors.

Commissioner Steczo asked if the garages are right up to the alley.

Mr. Hall, Jr. said there would be 22 feet from the garage door to the alley curb.

Chairperson Lewis asked how deep the traditional single-family lots were.

Mr. Hall, Jr. answered 130 feet deep and the back yard would be about 70 feet deep, but a little less with a side-loaded garage.

John Reagan, attorney for the developers, said he would like to clarify the variation in the C-4 zoning to permit 50 % of the square footage over the commercial to be 2-story residences. He said in order to create varied roof lines, they would require 3 stories.

Mr. Hall, Jr. said this would also allow flexibility for businesses and residents.

Commissioner Brotcke asked if those buildings would have to be sprinkled.

Mr. Reagan said they would if the code required that.

Building Commissioner Lyle Doty said he would have to review that.

Mr. Nicklas said they are treading on uncharted waters and said they might require a variance with conditional zoning. He asked for clarification that the 2-story residence would be the same unit and not two separate residences.

Mr. Reagan said the second and third floors would be the same unit.

Mr. Hall, Jr. said the streetscape they are proposing is for different character with different heights and different colors.

Mr. Nicklas said they would have to comply with the building code.

Mr. Hall, Jr., said they would like the flexibility to work with the market.

Mr. Nicklas said they may want to memorialize what has been discussed in the annexation agreement.

Mr. Reagan said he would speak with the City Attorney.

Commissioner Shipley asked how many bedrooms they were proposing.

Mr. Hall, Jr. said he thought they would be 2 or 3-bedroom units.

Commissioner Brotcke emphasized his concern about sprinkling.

Chairperson Lewis said they would be bound by the building code.

Mr. Reagan said another item they would like to work on with staff before the next hearing are the uses permitted under C-1 and C-4 zoning. He said the difficulty is there are 15 acres of proposed commercial zoning and C-1 and C-4 zoning have a limited number of uses allowed. He said they would like to propose an additional list of uses that is more generic so they would not have to return for special use for each particular use. He said for instance hobby shops and art shops are not permitted under C-1 zoning.

Chairperson Lewis asked if they could have a special list for this P.U.D. without setting precedent for other commercial developers.

Mr. Nicklas said he thought they could, because they shortened the list for the Reston Pond commercial area.

Mr. Reegan asked for a sense of the body if they would entertain expanding the list.

Commissioner Davey said he saw no problem doing that.

Chairperson Lewis said the risk is allowing the Plan Commission to review the list before taking public action.

Mr. Nicklas said that for instance drive-thru's are not allowed in C-1 and C-4 zoning. He said it was usually thought of as part of the fast food industry, but has become prevalent with dry cleaners and other businesses that would not create as much traffic.

Mr. Reegan said he would like to get the sense of the body on what the objectionable elements are for drive thru's.

Commissioner Schulz said there are rules in place and asked why this developer was not conforming to those rules. She said she thought that this looked like it was better for John Hall Homes to make money than for the good of Sycamore.

Mr. Hall, Jr. said he has been in the custom homes business for many years and the draw to Sycamore is the beauty of the downtown, not the residential neighborhoods. He said he thought the newer neighborhoods with front-loaded garages and monotony of design negatively affect the City of Sycamore. He said he thought the things they are asking for will create a better neighborhood that will help invite more people to Sycamore and to spend money in Sycamore. He said the list of uses in the UDO is restrictive to people's intreprenuerism and they are trying to enhance Sycamore and the lifestyles of people who live in Sycamore. He said it is their intention to create a good impression as part of the gateway to Sycamore.

Chairperson Lewis said it is difficult to conceptualize what will be added to the list.

Mr. Reegan said they would like to make the list more generic.

Mr. Nicklas said that when writing the Comprehensive Plan they wrestled with language that would allow for flexibility in the scale and appearance for new development in order to avoid boxy buildings. He said when putting together the UDO which enforces the Comp Plan, they did not take into account how to create a more residential style commercial building.

Commissioner Lorence questioned the private roads between National and Plank and suggested a raised median so there would not be any turning movement out. He said unless they can get cars in immediately, traffic would get backed up.

Mr. Hall, Jr. said they are looking at a right-in and right-out.

Mr. Lorence said he would prefer a ramp so the traffic does not slow and they would need an additional right-of-way south of Lindgren for a right turn.

City Engineer Brady said they would want to extend the right turn and perhaps make an additional lane along Plank Road.

Commissioner Brotcke asked who will use the private roads.

Mr. Hall, Jr. said those people using the commercial area and some residents.

Commissioner Lorence explained that private roads are public streets, but are maintained privately.

Chairperson Lewis said the private road into Schumaker is another access into Schumaker.

Commissioner Evans said he was 100% against the setback change and said he thought the developer could design the homes to meet our standards. He said he was also opposed to the zero-lot line housing and said Sycamore should not lower their standards. He said that people do come to Sycamore and look beyond the downtown.

Mike Liszka, 470 Lincolnshire Dr., said this development does not follow the “tradition” of Sycamore. He said this development has one goal and that is to lower the development standards of Sycamore. He said this development is offering no parks or retention and is counting on surrounding developments to provide such. He asked this developer to be rejected in this current form.

Mr. Nicklas said there is nothing in this proposition that is diluting Sycamore’s standards of safety, light, and air. He said this is a different type of housing proposed not a standard being proposed. He said this is not about diminishing the quality of development in Sycamore.

Commissioner Lorence said that during the Comprehensive Planning process there was overwhelming desire to have some of this type of housing.

## **B. Consideration of a Concept Plan for the Thanks America Subdivision.**

City Manager Nicklas explained that with the opening of the Oakland Drive extension to Peace Road via Dosen Drive and Wirsing Parkway, there is renewed commercial and industrial interest in the largely unplatted acres that remain in the Thanks America subdivision. He listed some of the issues for consideration in the concept plan as follows:

- Commercial Zoning. A copy of the concept plan is marked to reflect the present zoning. The proposed lots, excluding Lots 1-4 of the Thanks America Professional Subdivision and Lots 1-3 of the Thanks America Commercial Subdivision, are presently zoned “M-1” Light Manufacturing District. The businesses developing in the Kishwaukee Health Services subdivision are primarily commercial office uses and it is logical that this type of use would continue eastward on Gateway Drive, on both sides, based on the proximity of the new hospital. A rezoning of the lots along the Gateway Drive corridor to “C-3” would be appropriate in this light.
- Industrial Zoning. The City’s need for industrial-zoned lots of varying sizes is addressed by retaining the “M-1” zoning of Lots 8-24. The larger unsubdivided area gives the developer and the City flexibility in attracting one or more larger industrial users to this industrial park.
- Unincorporated Land. Based on the Sycamore-DeKalb boundary agreement of 1995, the land east of the Com Ed right-of-way and the former Thorald Anderson property will be split among the communities upon annexation, but the entire un-annexed area falls under the revenue-sharing provisions of that agreement. The former Anderson property would be annexed to Sycamore, and the parcel to the south (the former Swiatek parcel) would be annexed to DeKalb, once development interest is identified. Under these political conditions, it appears

that the 13.2 acre parcel abutting Peace Road that straddles the future Sycamore-DeKalb boundary may need to be re-drawn.

- The proposed roadway that runs along the west side of the Anderson property and the east side of the Voluntary Action Center would pass through a significantly sloped terrain and would require careful engineering, but would align with a logical entrance to the Ideal property behind the houses on Bethany Road, if re-development of the northwest corner of Peace and Bethany Roads were to occur.

Mr. Nicklas said in order to maintain some manufacturing along that area, staff would prefer that lots 20 and 21 be zoned light manufacturing.

Jim Stoddard, 740 W. State St., said he was representing Milan Krpan, and said they felt that it made sense that lots 20, 21, and 22 be zoned C-3 as well as those lots north of Oakland Drive.

Shawn VanKampen of William E. Hanna Surveyors said they are looking for additional access along Bethany Road. He said he spoke to DeKalb's Planning Department about the property that was in the shared-revenue area and DeKalb said it was natural to go to Sycamore and Sycamore would maintain that road.

Jim Sparver of Renke-Shark and Associates said there was concern about traffic in that access to Bethany Road and they are studying that to see if that intersection will function properly.

Chairperson Lewis asked if the revenue sharing was 50-50.

Mr. Nicklas said it was 50-50 and said he was sure that DeKalb City Council would have to weigh-in on boundary changes. He said when the agreement was made in the 1990's that area was envisioned as retail, but the development is leading toward non-retail. He said that agreement may need to be revisited. He said originally the City hoped that Mediterranean Drive might be extended with the Three Sula development. He said he thought this should be brought back as a second workshop because the new documents presented needed further review.

Commissioner Lorence said he acceded to the intersection on the basis that Sula was a long ways off and Mr. Krpan was getting ready to build something. He said they may want to build something on a temporary basis. He said he thought the City might talk with the Sulas.

Mr. Nicklas said the lot sizes south of lots 20 and 21 will need to be deeper in most cases in order to attract industrial uses. He said the frontage would not have to be as wide, but the depth would need to be more significant.

Milan Krpan, developer, said they would like to do something that is good for the community and for themselves. He said he did not buy the additional property before talking with City Engineer John Brady. He said he compared the entrances he is requesting to those businesses on Randall Road and felt there was no problem with traffic.

Mr. Stoddard suggested they might make the lots on the east side deeper and leave the lots on the west side as is for commercial.

Chairperson Lewis said there were two or three concerns raised that the developer could work out with staff before coming back for a second workshop.

**REPORTS**

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion**

Commissioner Lorence moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 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:

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Chairperson – John Lewis

Attest:

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Candy Smith, City Clerk