

Town of Thompson's Station
Board of Zoning Appeals
Minutes of the Initial meeting
Held On May 17, 2004

Board Members Present

Archie Buttrey
Dale Stevens
Martha Irwin

Staff Members Present

Mike Wood, City Planner
Larry Craig, City Attorney
Tom King, City Engineer
Doug Goetsch, City Recorder

The initial meeting of the Municipal Planning Commission was called to order on May 17, 2004 at 6:15 p.m. by City Recorder Doug Goetsch at the Thompson's Station Community Center.

The floor was opened for nominations for officers. Martha Irwin nominated Archie Buttrey for Chairperson of the commission, with Dale Stevens seconding the nomination. Nominations were closed and Mr. Buttrey was unanimously elected as Chairperson.

Mr. Buttrey nominated Mr. Stevens for Vice-Chairperson of the commission, with Ms. Irwin seconding the nomination. Nominations were closed and Mr. Stevens was unanimously elected as Vice-Chairperson.

Mr. Stevens nominated Ms. Irwin for Secretary of the board, with Mr. Buttrey seconding the nomination. Nominations were closed and Ms. Irwin was unanimously elected as Secretary.

City Attorney Craig discussed the various functions of the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA). These functions include considering granting variances to the zoning ordinance for specific instances requested by the property owner. It also includes considering conditional uses allowed by the zoning ordinance with approval by this board.

The only items to be considered in this meeting of the BZA were requests made by Palmer Engineering on behalf of their client, SouthStar LLC for a development known as Heritage Commons, located on Highway 31 on the southernmost edge of the Thompson's Station town limits. These items included:

1. Curb cut separation on Lot 1 fronting Highway 31.
2. Drainageway protection.
3. Natural resource calculations.

Mr. Jim Chambers of SouthStar, LLC and Mr. Randy Perry of Palmer Engineering represented the applicant.

City Engineer King described the curb cut issue. The zoning ordinance has a 400-foot separation between curb cuts fronting an arterial road. The applicant had requested a variance to reduce this to a 210-foot separation. The purpose of this variance would be to

Allow a right-in-right-out access from Lot 1 to Highway 31. The board discussed the merits of a curb cut. Mr. Stevens asked if a deceleration lane could be included in the design of the right-in-right-out curb cut. Mr. Chambers stated that he was open to that suggestion, but it would require TDOT approval since Highway 31 is a state roadway. Mr. Stevens made a motion to allow the curb cut variance to 210 feet conditioned with a state-approved deceleration lane to access Lot 1. Ms. Irwin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

City Engineer King explained the drainageway situation next. The applicant had requested that 200 linear feet of drainageway on the southeast corner of the site be encapsulated into a pipe drainage system. The zoning ordinance states that drainageways be protected in such a way that the entire length can continue to function and be used for drainage functions. TDEC has designated this to be an "intermittent" drainageway and the applicant has requested that TDEC allow this encapsulation. TDEC posted the public notice for this request, which has now expired, and final approval by TDEC is expected. City Engineer King stated that this drainageway has been previously altered by both the development directly south of Heritage Commons as well as the school property directly north of this property. Mr. King asked the applicant for some additional water detention calculations, but otherwise had no concerns about this request. After discussion, Ms. Irwin made a motion to grant the drainageway variance to allow 200 linear feet of drainageway to be encapsulated into a pipe drainage system. Mr. Stevens seconded the motion and it was unanimously adopted.

The last item to be considered was the natural resource calculations, specifically the hilltop protection aspects of this site. Mr. Chambers described the need to grade sections of the site to use fill from one area to use in another area of the site. There is a small hilltop area that could be reduced and the fill dirt used in other sections of the site. The applicant has offered an additional 1.2 acres of landscaping above what is required by the zoning ordinance to be used at the direction of the Planning Commission on this site. City Planner Wood described the reasons for natural resource calculations in the ordinance. After discussion, Mr. Stevens made a motion to approve a variance in the resource calculation on the amount of hilltop and slope to be preserved conditioned on the applicant providing an additional 1.2 acres of landscaping at this site to be installed at the direction of the Municipal Planning Commission. Ms. Irwin seconded the motion and it was unanimously adopted.

City Planner Wood stated that he was preparing a training class for the planning commissioners and BZA members to be held on May 24th at 6:00 p.m. at the Thompson's Station Community Center.

City Attorney Craig stated that there many changes in land-use planning being developed across the nation and these changes were being implemented in new models for zoning ordinances in many municipalities.

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There being no further business, the meeting was duly adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Signed: _____
Archie Buttrey, Chairperson

Attest: _____
Martha Irwin, Secretary