

Town of Thompson's Station
Municipal Planning Commission
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Held On February 26, 2007

Commission Members Present

Brown Daniel, Chairman
Sarah Benson
Nina Cooper
Tom Evans
Marcia Franks
Millie Halvorson
George Ross

Staff Members Present

Greg Langeliers, Town Administrator
Larry Craig, Town Attorney
Doug Goetsch, Town Recorder
Shane McNeill, Town Engineer
Lisa Stewart, Town Clerk

The regular meeting of the Municipal Planning Commission was called to order on February 26, 2007, at approximately 7:00 p.m., at the Thompson's Station Community Center with the required quorum.

Chairman Daniel introduced the new members of the Planning Commission as follows:
Marcia Franks; Millie Halvorson; and George Ross.

Minutes

The minutes of the January 22nd, 2007, meeting were previously submitted; and were approved upon a motion by Commissioner Benson, seconded by Commissioner Evans, and passed unanimously.

Staff Announcements

Mr. Langeliers made the following announcements:

- The Finance Committee had its first meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 20th, 2007.
- Several have expressed an interest in serving on the Design Review Commission and the ordinance to establish this commission was adopted at the last Board meeting. The Town is in the process of engaging contracted assistance in setting up the by-laws and guidelines for this group.
- Continuing education class on Planning and Zoning at Ag Expo Center on April 5th, 2007.

Old Business

There was no Old Business at this time.

DEVELOPMENT / CONCEPT PLAN AND RE-ZONING REQUEST:

Item 1 – The Grove at Littlebury located on Columbia Pike, Station South Drive, and Thompson's Station Road East on approximately 118.2 acres.

Mr. Langeliers reviewed the report, noting that several issues were discussed relative to possible modifications in the proposed development plan at the work session that was held the evening of February 8th, 2007. Those issues are identified as follows:

1. The provision of adequate buffer areas along adjacent residential uses and along the agricultural use to the east. *With the exception of one or two lots in the Village the proposed buffers appear to address most of the concerns regarding that issue.*
2. The transition of lot sizes between Station South and the Village. *The lot sizes do not provide the necessary transition. To provide for the necessary transition it is only possible to create four lots between the two subdivisions.*
3. A reduction in the amount of proposed nonresidential development and the incorporation of façade designs that present a more residential look along the Columbia Pike Corridor. *The proposed nonresidential has been increased by almost 70,000 square feet and no additional architectural renderings have been submitted.*

4. Look at open space requirements and if inadequate, determine an intensity bonus strategy that is acceptable. The proposed plan is approximately twenty acres short of the required 45% open space. *A four acre site off Thompson's Station Road East is being proposed for public use. Acceptance of this strategy would allow for the proposed amount of open space.*

It is Staff's opinion that the proposed revisions fall short of the expectations generated via the work study session. Therefore, Staff is not prepared to recommend that this body forward a positive rezoning recommendation to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen.

The applicant, John Munding with Church Development Partners, stated that he has worked with the Lutheran congregation to understand their mission and their desires to become a part of the community; and to devise a master plan that will fit into the community with a mix of residential and commercial. He said that he has not seen Staff's comments so is not aware of what is specifically needed in relation to buffers, density, setbacks, drainage, etc., but is looking forward to addressing those in detail.

Bill Lockwood, landscape architect with Barge Waggoner, stated that he thought they had addressed most of the issues that were brought up at the work session; however, have heard since that the amount of retail shown is still too extensive. They are willing to reduce the amount of square footage requested and limit the buildings to one- and two-stories; but would like the buildings facing the highway to appear residential in character. Mr. Lockwood stated that the primary function is the church as a focal point in the center of the development. He discussed the options of buffers and screening, Columbia Highway improvements, trails, and open space; adding the offer of a lot for the Town's use for a library. He stated they are trying to create a community in relationship to the church.

Chairman Daniel stated that, after five (5) years of reviewing various projects submitted to this Commission, this is most complicated piece of property submitted for development that he's seen - with two (2) different subdivisions to the north, farms to the south and east, and touching two (2) of the major thoroughfares through the Town; and he said that he is not comfortable with the way this first submittal has turned out. He noted how crowded the commercial area appears and that the applicant suggested taking a floor out, rather than removing a building.

Commissioner Ross expressed concern over the commercial square footage also, pointing out the comments at the work session of not wanting as much commercial. However, the applicant has returned with approximately 77,000 square feet more than before, but tells them tonight they are willing to reduce it. He thinks there are too many concerns left un-addressed and too many changes made to be comfortable making a decision on this tonight.

Mr. Munding noted that the intention in the commercial buildings is a majority of office spaces, and the two-story buildings would be retail with offices upstairs. He stated that it was not made clear to them in the work session what the density should be and would like this Commission to tell them what to do, but has not gotten good answers from this body.

Chairman Brown pointed out that, as a Commission, it is not their job to design the development for them. He thinks there is too much being proposed on the property, already between two (2) existing subdivisions, that will only create more of a traffic problem.

Commissioner Halvorson stated that she does not like the plan to connect subdivisions Station South and The Village from Columbia Highway to Thompson's Station Road East.

Commissioner Franks asked who will be responsible for the road improvements, and Mr. Lockwood replied that it will be the developers responsibility.

Commissioner Cooper thanked Mr. Lockwood for addressing the boundary issues, but stated that her thoughts on less commercial was less buildings, not less floors. She reminded them of the suggestion at the work session of the commercial having a more residential feel, and had hoped some renderings would have been provided depicting that.

Commissioner Benson referenced the commercial issues raised at the work session, and has a great deal of concern about the placement of the road being problematic on Thompson's Station Road East. She stated that it seems the applicant is relying on State improvements on Columbia Highway, but that is not going to be forthcoming within their development timeframe.

Commissioner Franks also pointed out the two (2) churches already on Columbia Highway and a third will have further impact on the traffic when they all let out on Sundays, Wednesdays, etc.

Commissioner Cooper referenced the traffic light suggested at the proposed entrance and questioned it being too close to the existing the light at Columbia Highway and Thompson's Station Road East.

Mr. Langeliers explained the difficulty of having the public work session on the 8th and the aggressiveness of the applicant to make revisions and meet the deadline on the 20th to make this meeting agenda. He pointed out that this created a tight time line without the standard review time for Staff.

The applicant, Mr. Lockwood, requested that this item be deferred to next month's Planning Commission meeting to allow them time to address the concerns and issues brought to their attention.

MULTI-LOT RESIDENTIAL SITE PLAN:

Item 2 - Tollgate Village Condominiums, Section 6.

Mr. Langeliers noted that this was deferred from last month's meeting primarily because there was no applicant here to represent the item. He reviewed the report, stating that this plan meets requirements and its approval is recommended pending final approval of the grading and drainage plan by the Town's Engineer.

The applicant, Ron Meyers with Newmark Homes, was present to address any questions or concerns.

Commissioner Cooper asked if the units will be accessed from the inside, rather than outside stairs / doorways. Mr. Meyers said the center doors will open to a common space in the middle with stairs and elevators to access the units.

Commissioner Ross asked about sprinklers, and Mr. Meyer replied that they will be sprinkled for the benefit of the residents even though it is not a requirement.

Commissioner Franks recused herself from this agenda item.

Commissioner Ross made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cooper, to accept and approve Staff's recommendation. The motion passed 6 - 0, with Commissioner Franks being recused.

NON-RESIDENTIAL SITE PLAN:

Item 3 - Thompson's Station Baptist Church Addition / Renovation located at 2604 Thompson's Station Road East.

Mr. Langeliers reviewed the report, recommending approval pending the following:

1. Final approval of the grading and drainage plan prior to issuance of a grading permit;
2. Final approval of a lighting and signage plan prior to issuance of a building permit;
3. The posting of a performance bond in the amount of \$100,000 to insure proposed landscaping;
4. Payment of all applicable sewer fees; and verification that the existing landscape surface ratio meets requirements.

He also noted other issues to be discussed such as a notation in the submitted traffic plan to reduce the overall number of curb cuts on Thompson's Station Road East to two (2) and when they intend to do that; and the connection of the two (2) parking lots furthest east on Thompson's Station Road East.

Commissioner Benson questioned the possibility of re-orienting the entrance on Columbia Highway, and Mr. Langeliers agreed that it comes in a bit angled / skewed, and would be safer if it could be adjusted to become perpendicular.

The applicant, Mike Evans, stated that they feel, for the short term, that all three (3) entrances / exits are critical; and is proposed in the next phase to remove the entrance on Thompson's Station Road East that is closest to Columbia Highway. The most eastern entrance will be re-located further east at some point.

Commissioner Halvorson asked at what phase the portables will be removed, and Pastor Murray replied that it depends on their growth, but possibly in the next phase in approximately three (3) to four (4) years, but could be as late as the next phase after.

Commissioner Franks referenced the need for more right-of-way should Columbia Highway be widened, and asked that the applicant make a commitment to this Commission that the right-of-way will come from the church property rather than her property across the street from the church. She stated that her property is a historical site and is now in a conservation easement and it could be harder to obtain the right-of-way from the Land Trust. Mr. Evans stated they would be open to suggestions and would like to determine how much would actually be needed before making a commitment.

After further discussion, Commissioner Evans made a motion to accept and approve Staff's recommendation. Commissioner Benson seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

FINAL PLAT – RESIDENTIAL:

Item 4 - Tollgate Village Amenity Area located on approximately 16.04 acres in open space. Mr. Langeliers reviewed the report, recommending approval.

Mr. Craig asked if this will be vested in the association and Mr. Carbine replied yes.

Commissioner Franks recused herself from this agenda item.

Commissioner Benson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ross, to accept and approve Staff's recommendation. The motion passed 6 - 0, with Commissioner Franks recused.

FINAL PLAT – NON-RESIDENTIAL:

Item 5 - Tollgate Village Commercial Center located on approximately 11.66 acres on 7 lots in Section 20.

Mr. Langeliers read the revised report (distributed earlier), indicating the revision to be an adjustment in the sewer bond amount *, and recommended approval pending the final approval of the grading, drainage and erosion control plans and the posting of the following performance bonds (Irrevocable standby letters of credit):

1. Roads, drainage and erosion control (\$300,000);
2. Sewer collection system (* \$ 400,000); and
3. Recordation of all necessary easements to provide for the provision of sewer service.

Mr. Langeliers also indicated a minor correction needed relating to the public utility and drainage easement in the corner of lot 5; and a call is incorrect that will need to be corrected on the mylar.

Commissioner Ross made a motion to accept and approve Staff's recommendation.

Commissioner Franks recused herself from this agenda item.

Commissioner Evans seconded the motion, which passed 6 - 0, with Commissioner Franks recused.

UPDATES FROM STAFF:

Mr. Langeliers informed the Commission that the Town has entered into an agreement with Collier Engineering to do survey and design work on Critz Lane, and are anticipating some of that work within the next 10 days.

Smith, Seckman and Reid are working with the Town on short-term plans for the sewer and long-term comprehensive plans.

Commissioner Evans asked where we are on the sign ordinance, and Mr. Langeliers noted that we have adopted a revised sign ordinance and it is basically what Williamson County has. Mr. Langeliers stated it to be a good and simple document, and is similar with Franklin and Spring Hill's. Commissioner Evans asked if the ordinance will give diagrams and pictures to refer to, and Mr. Langeliers indicated that as one of the issues with the zoning ordinance, which is getting the pictures and diagrams put in for us by the State and then published.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Langeliers referenced the Subdivision Regulation requiring all utilities to be underground, with the understanding when it was adopted, that some variances for three-phase power may be granted to some due to the cost of going underground. In the Bridgemore Village development, for a short section down Pantall Road, a new three-phase power line with about four poles has been run in the open space. Mr. Langeliers contacted Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation (MTEMC) and they are looking to try to make a circuit connection, loop, or tie-in all the way to Thompson's Station Road down Pantall Road. Now there is a three-phase line running on the opposite side of the road of a single-phase line, and neither are buried. We have received calls and complaints, and he is now trying to determine how to handle this. Is it a violation of the Subdivision Regulations since a variance has not been granted? Can the single-phase line come down now? Mr. Langeliers had hoped the survey information would be back on Critz Lane since MTEMC has talked about putting a sub-station on Critz Lane near the Fields of Canterbury development. He met with a representative of MTEMC to try to determine exactly who will be served by the next sub-station and if their intentions are to extend service into Spring Hill.

Mr. Langeliers informed the Commission of a MTEMC meeting this week to discuss condemnation of approximately five (5) acres of the Ferrari property for their sub-station site.

Mr. Langeliers stated that it defeats the purpose of the Subdivision Regulations if they continue with overhead lines. He noted this may need further study, but at some point, an action will need to be taken to either grant a variance for the lines across Bridgemore Village, or not. If the answer is not grant a variance, then it must be determined if the Town can force the developer to put them underground. The Mayor has suggested a letter be sent to MTEMC requesting a meeting to express the Town's concerns and try to determine their directions.

Mr. Langeliers noted that we are modifying the procedure on submittals and how they will be accepted. In order to submit something for consideration on the Planning Commission agenda, you must schedule a meeting with Staff on the agenda deadline date so that we can ensure that the necessary paperwork is filled out, all fees are paid, the required number of plat copies are received, etc., and any problems can be addressed then with the applicant.

Mr. Langeliers indicated the paperwork distributed earlier sent in from LandDesign that will require an action from this Commission. There are some typographical errors found on the setbacks that was previously approved by this body for Roderick Place, and this is to revise the text for those corrections. This will not change the Concept Plan, but is merely a text correction / revision; and it is Staff's opinion that it is a minor correction and recommends approval.

Commissioner Benson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ross, to accept and approve the text revisions. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Langeliers referenced the letter from counsel in response to a request by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen regarding a suggestion for a moratorium.

Commissioner Benson recognized Mayor Heron to address the Commission. Mayor Heron stated that he thinks this is a matter of great importance and was brought up by Alderman Napier at the Mayor and Aldermen meeting. He noted the issues the Town is faced with such as Middle Tennessee Electric and developing a comprehensive sewer plan; and only this body can declare a moratorium. There must be considerations of property rights and entitlements, but we must also be concerned with the protection of the residents and taxpayers of the Town. Mayor Heron stated that he thinks it is appropriate to ask that this Commission consider a limited moratorium on any re-zoning requests for a certain period of time.

Discussion / suggestions continued regarding new Planning Commission members and their education; infrastructure issues; sign ordinances; establishing the Design Review Commission; better synchronize the Subdivision Regulations, Design Guidelines, and Zoning Ordinance; consider storm-water regulations; a master sewer plan; etc.

After further discussion, Chairman Daniel made a motion that the Municipal Planning Commission declare a moratorium on any re-zoning requests (with the exception of The Grove at Littlebury on tonight's agenda) to be effective immediately and not to extend past August 20th, 2007. Commissioner Halvorson seconded the motion.

Commissioner Evans amended the motion to include that this is to provide the Town an opportunity to prepare a comprehensive sewer plan, major thoroughfare plan, and make modifications to the existing regulations. Commissioner Benson seconded the amendment.

The motion, as amended, passed by unanimous vote.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:45 p.m.

Signed: _____
Brown Daniel, Chairman

Attest: _____
Tom Evans, Secretary