



PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING OCTOBER 11, 2005

The Planning and Zoning Commission met in regular session at Stafford City Hall at 7:30 p.m. on October 11, 2005.

Commissioners

Alma Birdwell, Chairman
Johnny Nunez
Joseph Olickan, Vice Chairman
Christine Rector
Joe Rome, Secretary
Felix A. Vega
Fred Woolridge

City Staff

Mayor Leonard Scarcella
Lawrence Vaccaro, Jr., Public Works Director
Jo Ann Holloway, P & Z Recording Secretary
Cheryl Wilson, City Attorney
Gene Bane, Zoning Administrator/Building
Permits/Nuisance Abatement

1. Roll call.

All commissioners were in attendance except Johnny Nunez.

2. Discussion and consideration of the September 13, 2005 Planning & Zoning Commission Minutes.

Joe Rome made a motion to grant approval of the September 13, 2005 Planning and Zoning Commission minutes. Christine Rector seconded the motion with all present voting in favor.

3. (a). Presentation, discussion and action on an application for a Specific Use Permit to allow the development and operation of an Assembly Group A-3 Occupancy, specifically, a religious facility at 650 Brand Lane, located within the City in Zoning District MU.

Gene Bane displayed an enlarged architectural rendering of the site, gave a presentation of the application where he indicated the location of the site and pointed out where the site would be located on an enlarged zoning map. Mr. Bane also noted that the proposed 95 parking spaces and landscaping exceed the City's requirements.

Mayor Scarcella asked what the occupancy capacity would be. Mr. Bane replied that it would be approximately 250.

Joe Rome asked how many cars can be expected to be on the roadway with a capacity of 250. Mr. Bane replied that there would be approximately 100 cars on the roadway.

Fred Woolridge asked if the church's current location involved an SUP application.

Mr. Bane stated that no formal submittal had been done prior to the SUP ordinance; therefore, the church must go through this process.

Mayor Scarcella asked that if full occupancy occurs, how many parking places would be needed.

John Hefner, Treasurer of the Henry David Thoreau Congregation, gave an overview of the church's history in Stafford.

Robert Hoover, the architect designing the church, stated that total occupancy of 252 is based on Stafford's occupancy code. Mr. Hoover stated that on any given Sunday, the church feels confident that the 95 parking spaces proposed would handle the church's parking needs and that the anticipated total occupancy would be approximately 300. Mr. Hoover also noted that drainage issues have been addressed with Lawrence Vaccaro, Jr. and that the site was designed around the detention pond for aesthetic and energy efficient reasons. Mr. Hoover elaborated on the architectural amenities, landscaping and structural layout of the proposed site.

Alma Birdwell requested that future expansion expectations be addressed.

Mr. Hoover stated that the congregation anticipates growth and that the building of this new facility would allow them room for this anticipated growth and the 95 parking spaces are included in the expansion plans. Mr. Hoover also noted that the facility is designed according to the State of Texas' standards.

Felix Vega asked if the ingress/egress shown on the site plan was the only access to the facility.

Mr. Hoover stated that the only access to the facility was shown on the site plan and indicated that the church owned the tract to the north, which may be developed into parking and/or access options in the future. Mr. Hoover also noted that the playground area is structured to not have access from the outside.

Cheryl Wilson asked about the property description site plan acreage and whether there was a plat done for this property.

Mr. Hoover stated there was an error in the acreage description.

Glenn Laird, a charter member of the church and resident of Grove West Subdivision, stated that the property had not been platted, but was purchased by deed.

Joe Rome asked for an explanation of utility easements referenced on the site plan.

Mr. Hoover stated that the utility easements noted on the plan were included for future requirements.

Mr. Laird elaborated on the proposed landscaping plan, which included irrigation and expectations of having an environment indicative of the area vegetation.

Minister Paul Beedle of Settlers Way in Sugar Land gave an overview of the church's history, activities, youth programs and the church culture of love and devotion. Minister Beedle elaborated on the church structure, financial support and the church's efforts to build a safe community.

John Speer of 1156 South Kirkwood, chairman of the Government Department at HCC and a member of the church described community outreach activities. Mr. Speer also noted other projects to rebuild houses, prison outreach programs, youth social activities, family health center involvement, classes for residents and elaborated on the church's connection to the Stafford community.

Valorie Tolman, of Missouri City and charter member of the church commented on scholarship programs and the self-sufficient ideas to help students who have turned around their lives. Ms. Tolman also noted that a Stafford school is on the list for a scholarship this year.

Ron Hammons of Houston and a charter member of the church gave an overview of his participation with the church and history of the church's move to Stafford. Mr. Hammons also noted how the church turned the acreage into an aesthetically pleasing environment and noted his approval.

Fred Woolridge commented on the excellent presentation given and noted his concern about the traffic on Brand Lane and the number of religious facilities already in that area.

Mayor Scarcella stated that the congregation is very dedicated and sincere, but that there is a traffic flow issue and a congestion situation that could be caused by this proposed use.

Felix Vega made a motion to adopt the application package as the Preliminary Report and to include the Commissioners' concerns over the congestion traffic on Brand Lane and the number of religious facilities already in that area. Christine Rector seconded the motion with all present voting in favor.

3. (b). Public Hearing on the application described in item 3(a).

Alma Birdwell officially opened the Pubic Hearing.

Gene Reed of Southwest Houston and a charter member of the church noted that the church has three Sunday services; 9 a.m., 10 a.m. and 11:15. Mr. Reed stated that after each service, most members leave immediately, which keeps the attendance

staggered, so the impact on traffic should be minimum. Mr. Reed spoke in favor of the application request.

Minister Beedle spoke in favor of the application request and noted that of the seven religious facilities on Brand Lane, two do not hold services on Sundays.

No one spoke in opposition.

Alma Birdwell officially closed the Public Hearing.

3. (c). Discussion and possible action to adopt a final report and approve a recommendation to City Council on the adoption of an ordinance amending Chapter 26 of the Code of Ordinances to grant a Specific Use Permit to allow the development and operation of an Assembly Group A-3 Occupancy, specifically, a religious facility at 650 Brand Lane, located within the City in Zoning District MU.

Felix Vega made a motion to approve as the Commission's Final Report that the Commission finds and determines that this particular use at this particular location in the City creates concerns regarding traffic in the area and that there is already a substantial number of religious facilities in the City and a concentration along this corridor and to recommend to City Council to adopt an ordinance granting the Specific use Permit in accordance with the application. Fred Woolridge seconded the motion with all present voting in favor.

Mayor Scarcella noted that if there's going to be a solution to Brand Lane, all seven churches along with surrounding businesses should show up in Commissioner's court to discuss options.

Lawrence Vaccaro noted that 40% of Brand Lane is in the City.

4. City Engineer's Report and discussion of:

- (a). Progress of developments on US 90A and railroad relocation project.**
- (b). Stafford/Staffordshire Road project and update on Fort Bend County Mobility projects.**
- (c). Local street and drainage improvements including Fifth Street, Avenue E, Corporate Park Detention Ponds and Missouri City Estates Drainage.**
- (d). Consideration of appropriate action on items (a) – (c).**

Lawrence Vaccaro gave an overview of the Engineer's Monthly Status Report and commented on the phasing efforts of the US 90A project. Mr. Vaccaro also noted the upcoming monthly meetings to track progress and discuss any problems that may occur on the project.

5. Adjournment

Joseph Olickan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Christine Rector seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved to adjourn.

Alma Birdwell, Chairman

Jo Ann Holloway, Recording Secretary