



**REGULAR PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2008
CITY HALL, 2610 SOUTH MAIN, STAFFORD, TEXAS
7:30 P.M.**

The Planning and Zoning Commission met in regular session at Stafford City Hall at 7:30 p.m. on November 11, 2008.

Present:

Alma Birdwell, Chairman
Lali Castillo
Joseph Olickan, Vice Chairman
Joe Rome
Virginia Rosas
Felix A. Vega
Fred Woolridge

Mayor Leonard Scarcella
Lawrence Vaccaro, Jr., Public Wks Director
Pam Madrigal, City Engineer
Gene Bane – Zoning Administrator
Jo Ann Holloway, P & Z Recording Secretary
Art Pertile, Attorney – Olson & Olson

Absent:

1. Roll Call.

All Commissioners were in attendance.

2. Discussion and consideration of the August 13 and 20, 2008 Special Joint City Council and Planning & Zoning Commission meeting minutes and the October 7, 2008 Regular Planning & Zoning Commission meeting minutes.

Commissioner Rosas made a motion to approve the August 13 and 20, 2008 Special Joint City Council and Planning & Zoning Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Woolridge seconded the motion, and it carried 7 – 0.

Commissioner Rosas made a motion to approve the October 7, 2008 Regular Planning & Zoning Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Vega seconded the motion, and it carried 7 – 0.

3. (a) Presentation and discussion of a proposal to adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 102 of the Code of Ordinances, the same being the City's Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, by granting a Specific Use Permit to Midwest Hospitality Group, to allow the development of a four-story, 94-room hotel on a 2.231-acre tract of land located within the City in Zoning District MU-1, and further identified as being located at 11121 Fountain Lake Drive.

Gene Bane gave a presentation of the SUP request describing its geographic location noting that in the MU zoning districts, the maximum height for hotel construction is two-stories; therefore an SUP is needed to allow the construction of a four-story hotel. Mr. Bane stated that the proposed project complies with all of the City's ordinance requirements.

Mr. Llarance Turner, R.P.L.S. with Kelly R. Kaluza & Associates, Inc. on behalf of Midwest Hospitality Group, gave an overview of the owner's proposed hotel site and assured the Commission that all infrastructures will be designed and built in accordance to the City of Stafford's rules and regulations.

Discussion ensued regarding parking space concerns.

Mr. Bane indicated the City requirements for this particular SUP was 90 parking spaces and the developer has provided for 98, which is 8 additional spaces.

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

Commissioner Birdwell officially opened the Public Hearing. No one spoke for or against the SUP.

3. (c) Discussion of comments received during the Public Hearing on ordinance as described in item 3(a).

Commissioner Birdwell officially closed the Public Hearing.

3. (d) Consideration of appropriate action on items 3(a) – 3(c).

Commissioner Woolridge stated that after viewing the site over the weekend, there did not appear to be any reason to not approve the SUP.

Commissioner Castillo stated that the site was too close to a park facility and a jogging trail, which could lead to possible conflict with the transient community and asked where the security cameras would be located.

Mr. Turner stated that all ingress and egress locations would have security cameras and also noted the emergency door locations.

Commissioner Rosas stated that this particular SUP presentation was exceptional and should hold future applicants to a higher standard of presentation layout(s).

Mayor Scarcella noted that regarding hotel spaces, with Sugar Land having passed their referendum for a Community Complex to raise their hotel taxes and with Houston having higher hotel taxes, it is not surprising that Stafford is being observed for hotels. The also stated that for a lot of people and companies that are watching and budgeting carefully, this might be an inducement to choose the City of Stafford.

Commissioner Woolridge made a motion to approve the SUP as presented and to include Public Works' summary of review memo. Commissioner Rosas seconded the motion, and it carried 6 – 0. Commissioner Castillo did not concur.

4. (a) Presentation and discussion of a proposal to adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 102 of the Code of Ordinances,

the same being the City's Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, by granting a Specific Use Permit to Sugar Creek Hospitality, Inc., to allow the development of a four-story, 83-room hotel project on a 2.765-acre tract of land located within the City in Zoning District MU-1, and further identified as being located at 12460 Southwest Freeway.

Gene Bane gave a presentation of the SUP request describing its geographic location noting that in the MU zoning districts, the maximum height for hotel construction is two-stories; therefore an SUP is needed to allow the construction of a four-story hotel. Mr. Bane stated that the proposed project complies with all of the City's ordinance requirements.

Mr. Norman Qamar, President and CEO of Integrated Hotel Solutions (developer of proposed site) gave an overview of their InterContinental Hotels Group and its world-renowned brand of resorts. Mr. Qamar noted the attraction to Stafford was the obvious need for more hotel space in this area.

Commissioner Rosas commended the developer on his description of The Candlewood Suites and asked where the dumpsters would be located.

Mr. Qamar stated that the dumpsters would be enclosed in an area behind the building.

Commissioner Woolridge asked if there would be fencing.

Mr. Qamar pointed out where to find the dumpster, fencing and handicap parking information in the presentation booklet.

Commissioner Birdwell noted that the SUP description on the agenda for 83 rooms was different from his comment regarding 83 rooms.

Mr. Qamar stated that the SUP description was not correct and it should be changed to 81 rooms.

Commissioner Castillo asked how much of the structure would be synthetic stucco vs. brick.

Mr. A.B. Blonski of Blonski Architects stated that section 6 in the presentation booklet described the building materials in-depth. Mr. Blonski also noted that the structure would be all stucco and that no changes are anticipated unless required by the City of Stafford.

Commissioner Woolridge commended the developer on the landscaping proposed.

4. (b) Public Hearing on the proposed ordinance described in item 4(a).

Commissioner Birdwell officially opened the Public Hearing. No one spoke for or against the SUP.

4. (c) Discussion of comments received during the Public Hearing on ordinance as described in item 4(a).

Commissioner Birdwell officially closed the Public Hearing.

4. (d) Consideration of appropriate action on items 4(a) – 4(c).

Commissioner Rosas and Commissioner Woolridge commended Gene Bane on how well each SUP was presented and noted that the review process was easier because of it.

Commissioner Rosas made a motion to approve the SUP as presented and to include Public Works' summary of review memo. Commissioner Woolridge seconded the motion, and it carried 7 – 0.

5. Report and discussion of progress of designating a committee and setting guidelines and parameters for pursuing zoning ordinance amendment on non-conforming site improvements.

Mayor Scarcella stated that City Council discussed this matter Wednesday, November 5, 2008 regarding an option for City Council to conduct workshops and it was also an option to get the views of others that would be affected. Therefore, City Council is selecting seven (7) citizens to be a part of workshop sessions. Upon the completion of a final report that has been approved by City Council and the Ad Hoc Committee, it will be brought before the Planning and Zoning Commission for review; then the Commissioner's comments will be considered by City Council.

The Mayor went on to say that in view of the holidays, these workshops would start after the first of the year. Due to the potential for the Planning and Zoning Commission to have a quorum, these meetings will be structured similar to the minutes reviewed at the beginning of tonight's meeting.

Art Pertile noted that the format of the workshops will be prepared so that Planning and Zoning Commissioners in attendance can also participate. Mr. Pertile also explained that there would not be an artificial process in place for selecting the seven (7) Ad Hoc Committee members; a selection process based on at least four votes of City Council will do it.

Mayor Scarcella noted that these open workshops would involve extensive discussion and would be an open process allowing citizens to participate, so it will take some time and quite a few meetings. Each matter will be fully addressed and the Commissioners will be informed of the complete agenda or any documentation that will be utilized by City Council and the Ad Hoc Committee at least 72 hours before each meeting.

6. Request of Commissioners to attend a seminar entitled Planning, Zoning and Property Rights in Plano, Texas on December 10-12, 2008.

Commissioner Birdwell asked if seminar tapes could be purchased in lieu of attending the seminar.

Art Pertile gave an overview of the seminar and noted that for 12 consecutive years, he has attended this particular seminar due to its comprehensive planning and zoning coverage, which included the basic principles. Mr. Pertile emphasized the usefulness of attending this particular seminar and noted that although he did not plan on attending this year, he would look into someone in his firm attending and providing the Planning and Zoning Commission with the handouts and literature provided to attendees.

The Commissioners agreed to consider attending the seminar and to let the recording secretary know by November 26, 2008.

7. Report on engineering matters:

- (a) **Stafford/Staffordshire Road project including progress of right-of-way acquisition and status of agreements between Fort Bend County, Harris County and TxDOT.**
- (b) **Fifth Street Improvement project.**
- (c) **Progress of developments on US 90A Improvement Project including construction activities, current mobility situation and proposed landscape enhancements.**
- (d) **Progress of development of US 59 Enhancement Project including proposed landscape plantings and monument design and installation.**
- (e) **Status of Fort Bend County Mobility Projects, including Brand Lane, Dulles Avenue and Kirkwood Road Improvement Projects including status and timing of funding from Fort Bend County.**
- (f) **Local street and drainage improvements.**
- (g) **Consideration of appropriate action on items (a) – (f).**

Lawrence Vaccaro, Jr. gave an overview of the Monthly Status Report regarding engineering matters.

8. Adjournment.

Commissioner Rosas made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9 p.m. Commissioner Vega seconded the motion, and it carried 7 – 0.

Commissioner Birdwell, Chairman

Jo Ann Holloway, Recording Secretary