



**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING BOARD**

**May 9, 2017**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Paul Ritz-Chairman, Danny Grundhoefer, Jared Moore, Kurt Larson, Kyle Owens, Nathan Monk

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Nina Campbell

**STAFF PRESENT:** Brandi Deese, Assistant Planning Services Administrator, Leslie Statler, Planner

**OTHERS PRESENT:** David Del Gallo, Rob Working, Jimmy E. Jones, J. M. Novota, Tom Paux, Alexis Bolin, Victoria D'Angelo, Christian Wagley, Robert Rick, James Holden, Jeff Helms, Jason Rebol, Robert Rice, Mandy Bills

**AGENDA:**

- Quorum/Call to Order
- Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 11, 2017
- Request to Rezone 1103 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue & 1400 Blk E. Gonzalez from SSD to R-1AA
- Request for Final Plat Approval for Hallmark Subdivision
- Request for Preliminary & Final Plat Approval for La Feliciana Subdivision
- Request for Aesthetic Approval of 700 Block of Commendancia Street - Ferry Landing Project
- Request for Variance for Signage at 350 W. Cedar Street (Community Maritime Park)
- Request for Aesthetic Approval of Signage at 350 W. Cedar Street (Community Maritime Park)
- Open Forum
- Adjournment

**Call to Order / Quorum Present**

Chairman Ritz called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm with a quorum present. He gave instructions to the audience on the rules and procedures of the Board.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Larson made a motion to approve the April 11, 2017 minutes, seconded by Mr. Moore, and it carried unanimously.

**Request to Rezone 1103 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue & 1400 Blk E. Gonzalez from SSD to R-1AA**

David Del Gallo is requesting to rezone the property located at 1103 N 15th Avenue & in the 1400 Blk of E. Gonzalez Street from Site Specific Development (SSD) to One & Two Family (R-1AA). The current Future Land Use Map designation of MDR (Medium Density Residential) remains unchanged; it supports this rezoning and would accommodate development consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. The property identified as 1103 N 15th Avenue is currently developed as "Carlieanna Garden Apartments", a multi-family residential development and will remain as such. The applicant intends to develop the vacant lot identified within the 1400 Blk of E Gonzalez Street residentially according to the R-1AA standards.

Chairman Ritz advised that being a neighbor a block or so away, he had no issues with the change in zoning.

He pointed out that he was notified through the mail of the rezoning request and could attest that the system for notification did function in this case. He was aware of the vacant lot and would appreciate something residential at that location.

Mr. Del Gallo stated the project would be constructed as either single family or duplex conforming to the East Hill character. **Mr. Grundhoefer made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Moore, and it carried unanimously.**

#### **Request for Final Plat Approval for Hallmark Subdivision**

349 LLC has submitted a request for Final Plat approval for "Hallmark" subdivision. The proposed development, identified as 115 South E Street, is a 5.09 acre parcel bounded by W. Romana Street on the north, South "E" Street on the east, W. Government Street on the south, and South "F" Street on the west. The site is the location of the former Hallmark Elementary School.

The Preliminary Plat was granted approval by this Board in March 2017. The proposed Final Plat is consistent with the approved Preliminary Plat which contained 76 lots measuring 20 feet in width. This development is located within the C-3 zoning district, which has a maximum density of 35 dwelling units per acre. The proposed development complies with this standard. Additionally, the provisions of the district eliminate the building setbacks, allowing for zero-lot lines on all sides. The minimum parking required for townhouse developments is 2 parking spaces per unit; the developer intends to meet this requirement with a garage and driveway space. The developer has opted to pay into the park escrow in lieu of dedicating a park within the project.

Jason Rebol stated a few comments on the project had been addressed, but it was mostly the same presentation. The concerns from ECUA regarding an easement had been addressed with only service meters located on the property. Mr. Rebol advised that access to the back area would be private for the residents and would be an open park area. He stated the parking would be garage, driveway or across the street in the right-of-way. Mr. Grundhoefer questioned front garages, and Ms. Deese stated the Board had no aesthetic review since there was no overlay district requiring Board approval, and the plat process was separate from those issues.

Christian Wagley pointed out great cities were investing in walkability as part of their infrastructure. He stated the front loading of garages on townhomes are rated the lowest for visual appeal; it translates into a street where people will not want to walk. He explained we need the density downtown, and if we get the parking in the rear, bringing the buildings forward, this would be an immensely better project. He indicated hopefully there would be some changes to the Code in the future.

Chairman Ritz pointed out the laws presently in place do not call for aesthetics in the requirements, and the Board could only review the plat. Mr. Grundhoefer had expressed the same sentiment at the last review and asked if there was a push to have this citywide. He questioned whether we should push to have more districts in the downtown historic areas or sensitive areas where there is development that the Board should be controlling? Mr. Wagley stated it would probably not be citywide, and maybe the determining factor would be parcel size. He advised there was an epidemic with cars blocking sidewalks, and enforcement would only come through design. He suggested a broader ordinance covering several issues.

Ms. Bolin, a real estate agent, advised she would have loved for Mc Donald's and Krispy Kreme to fit aesthetically in to the surrounding historical district.

She asked that the Board consider when projects come before it, require the project to fit in with the surroundings. With some of these issues beyond the scope of the Board, **Mr. Moore made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Larson. The motion carried with Mr. Grundhoefer dissenting.**

**Request for Preliminary & Final Plat Approval for La Feliciana Subdivision**

D12 Capital has submitted a request for Minor Subdivision approval for "La Feliciana"; this request includes both the Preliminary Plat and the Final Plat for the development. The proposed development, identified as 520 W. Intendencia Street, is a 0.258-acre parcel on the northeast corner of the intersection of S. Donelson Street with W. Intendencia St. The site is currently vacant and has been for at least a decade.

The proposed subdivision consists of 4 lots which measure 31 feet in width. This development is located within the C-3 zoning district and within the Dense Business District. The maximum allowable density is 135 dwelling units per acre. The applicant's intent is to develop single family residences on the lots and has significantly reduced the density allowed. Additionally, the provisions of the district eliminate the building setbacks, allowing for zero-lot lines on all sides. Both the Preliminary Plat and Final Plat have been routed thru the various City departments and outside agencies for review and comments. The City Engineering division has provided surveying comments for *both* Plat submittals. Given the overall size of the development area and the minimum area required for park dedication, the developer will pay into the park escrow in lieu of dedicating a park.

Ms. Deese indicated simultaneous approval of the preliminary and final plat was allowed by the LDC if the project was four lots or less.

Mr. Working, a land surveyor, addressed the Board. He advised this project was very much in character with the surrounding developments. He indicated corrections on the PDF had been made. Mr.

Grundhoefer asked the result if the developer did not pay into the city park fund. Ms. Deese explained they would be required to provide a quarter acre minimum. **With no other discussion, Mr. Moore made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Larson, and it carried unanimously.**

**Request for Preliminary Site Plan Approval of 700 Block of Commendencia Street - Ferry Landing Project**

In full disclosure, Chairman Ritz indicated the project was being designed by his employer, and he would not participate in the discussion or voting, but would remain as Chair to maintain order.

Mr. Helms with Atkins addressed the Board and stated his firm was designing the water side and civil site, with Bullock-Tice performing the vertical construction design. Mr. Rice with Bullock-Tice discussed the land side of the two-phase project, with the left side being the ticketing office and bathrooms, and the right or east side being a concession building. Because of the flood plain, the elevations were raised. Equipment would be screened with some mechanical equipment on the roof. A shelter at the water's edge would be provided for embarking and disembarking from the ferry.

Mr. Grundhoefer questioned the type of wood material. Mr. Rice advised they were considering natural wood slab for the screened enclosures. Mr. Monk explained some sort of synthetic material which looks and feels authentic would hold up better because of the location to water and high tourism traffic. Mr. Rice stated they designed a louvered system to let the light in for the canopy on the water's edge and the canopy above the ticket office, so some areas are not necessarily a rain shelter but a sun shelter. Mr. Grundhoefer did not have a problem with the design fitting into the historic district.

Mr. Monk was concerned with the look in ten to fifteen years. Mr. Grundhoefer stated it appeared to be a high maintenance building and suggested using more permanent materials such as precast concrete which could be pressure washed instead of painted. The maintenance of the wood would also be a concern down the road.

Mr. Rice stated an item they did address was the tongue in groove deck under the standing seam roof which is fairly durable. The columns are steel painted with high performance coatings. Everything from the deck down would be cast in place concrete with the stairs and the ramp. The exterior is an EFIS system with durable products. He did agree the natural wood should be addressed.

He also clarified the funding was from Natural Resource Damage Assessment.

Ms. Deese clarified that this item was preliminary site plan review and part of the development plan requirement since it is new construction within the district. She indicated the applicant had some issues to address with variances and right-of-way vacations before the final Board review.

Ms. Bolin questioned why the materials were not brick to avoid high maintenance, but if they must use wood, it should be hardie wood for low maintenance.

Mr. Larson questioned the signage, and Ms. Deese explained that the signage could go through an abbreviated review process or it could be included in the final package. Mr. Rice advised the signage would be backlit and be located at the top of the left side. Mr. Larson advised they had been trying not to have backlit signage near the waterfront or anything projecting out to the street. Mr. Rice stated the light would be contained in the lettering and not projecting to the street. **Mr. Monk then made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Owens. Mr. Grundhoefer suggested consideration be made for more permanent materials with low maintenance. Chairman Ritz requested the suggestion by Mr. Grundhoefer be incorporated into the motion as an amendment; it was agreed to by Mr. Monk and Mr. Owens. The motion then carried unanimously.**

#### **Request for Variance for Signage at 350 W. Cedar Street (Community Maritime Park)**

The Community Maritime Park, represented by Kelly Wieczorek, is seeking a Variance to increase the maximum allowable freestanding signage. The Variance request is to increase the allowable freestanding signage from 50 sf to 280 sf. This property lies within the WRD, Waterfront Redevelopment District, and is subject to the specific sign regulations outlined within Sec 12-2-12(C) (4). Within the district, the regulations for freestanding signage allow a maximum of 50 sf per sign face, regardless of the number of establishments being served by the signage. The applicant is seeking to increase the freestanding sign face area to identify the entire development as a whole with the understanding that the individual buildings within the Park can have attached wall signage unique to their establishment. Additionally, the proposed signage is to be set further away from the right-of-way on the southern bank of the water feature/retention pond.

Ms. Wieczorek pointed out the preliminary design, which resembled a billboard, was presented to this Board previously. Because of the opposition, the signage was revised from 50 sf to 280 sf. to designate the entire park. Letters of support were included in the Board packages. One suggestion was to consider landscaping at the rear of the sign so offices would not be directly viewing the back of the signage. She clarified the overall size was the same as the rendering. Chairman Ritz explained the application included supporting information identifying the park and not individual businesses and also honored Vince Whibbs, Sr. Chairman Ritz pointed out in order to see the sign from the street, the size was an appropriate approach, and the variance responses to the rationale were appropriate. Ms. Wieczorek advised the font was changed to Non-Serif which was cleaner to read. The Vince Whibbs lettering would be mounted to a beam at the top of the Maritime Park lettering. The colors for the Maritime Park logo will be replicated, and explained the logo would be reverse channel with ground lighting for the remainder of the sign.

Mr. Grundhoefer explained the split face block would be high maintenance. Ms. Wieczorek agreed they could use a coating or a lighter brick.

Ms. Bolin advised she was a member of the CMPA. She stated because this is a city park, the variance is necessary. A sign is needed to delineate the park for visitors and residents alike and asked for Board approval. She pointed out the park was the only one in this area to win an award, being recognized nationwide in various magazines. She asked for the signage to identify the park with the playground and not just an office or ball park.

Mr. Jones is also a member of the CMPA and stated they need a sign large enough to tell others there is a park at this location and to identify it as the Vince Whibbs, Sr. Maritime Park.

Mr. Paux explained that the letter style would be better in Non-Serif font.

Mr. Grundhoefer approved of the sign but did not like the landscaping behind it; he explained landscaping would ruin the simplicity. Ms. Wieczorek advised the sign would be moved down the slope which would help with the visibility to the offices.

Chairman Ritz stated the first item to approve would be the variance. **Mr. Grundhoefer made a motion to approve the variance, seconded by Mr. Owens. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Request for Aesthetic Approval of Signage at 350 W. Cedar Street (Community Maritime Park)**

Ms. Wieczorek indicated the materials would be very low maintenance. There would be a small base to protect the sign letters from lawn maintenance. **Mr. Monk stated we should have had a sign five years ago and made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Larson.** Ms. Deese asked for a clarification of approval as submitted or with other materials. Chairman Ritz explained there was an option to have the materials as a part of the motion. **Mr. Grundhoefer amended the motion to suggest it be brick or precast material of a permanent nature that does not require ongoing maintenance. Mr. Monk and Mr. Larson agreed with the amendment.** Ms. Wieczorek stated they would price the materials. **The motion then carried unanimously.**

**Open Forum** - None

**Adjournment** – With no further business, Chairman Ritz adjourned the meeting at 3:26 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brandi C. Deese', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brandi C. Deese  
Secretary to the Board