

BENTON PARISH METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

Monday, March 2, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.  
Police Jury Chambers  
204 Burt Boulevard, Benton, Louisiana 71006

MEMBERS PRESENT

John Bokenfohr  
Grace Jenkins  
Sam Merritt  
Martha Reyenga  
Shonta Neal

OTHERS PRESENT

Sam Marsiglia  
Carlotta Askew-Brown  
Michan Holbrook  
Robert Daigle  
Allen Warren  
Ken Wade  
Sean Kemp  
David Rains  
Michelle France  
Cliff Davis  
Jacob Wyatt  
Hayden White  
Colton Ryan  
Danielle Cage  
Cliff Davis  
Kyle Sawyer  
Brett Thomas  
Lola Jones  
Tom Rochelle  
Billy Parks  
Larche Waters  
Cathy Morgan  
Susan Sanders  
Janet Trico

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

Sam Merritt, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

- (A) Carlotta Askew-Brown, Assistant Director, called roll and stated a quorum was present.
- (B) Zoning Amendments – Public Hearings

A motion was made by John Bokenfohr to combine the discussion of Public Hearings BP-4-15 and BP-5-15. The motion was seconded by Grace Jenkins. A roll call vote was held the motion carried unanimously.

- 1. BP-4-15 – The application of Southern Lifestyle Development, LLC for a zoning amendment to change the zoning classification of a R-A; Residential Agriculture zoned tract to R-1; Single Family Residential. Bossier Parish, LA.

BP-5-15 – The application of Southern Lifestyle Development, LLC for a zoning Amendment to change the zoning classification of a R-A; Residential Agriculture Tract to B-2; Neighborhood Business District. Bossier Parish, LA.

Robert Daigle, Managing Partner of Southern Lifestyle Development, LLC discussed the details of the residential and commercial components of the development and the need for commercial development in the area.

Sam Merritt asked for an estimate of the number of homes to be built each year and the timetable for build out of the commercial area.

Robert Daigle responded the residential should be complete in 7-8 years and the commercial area will be longer because of the selective uses.

Allen Warren, 24 year resident of Palmetto Park, discussed the closing of the country club and golf course on December 31, 2014 and if there was a need for another subdivision. He also discussed the investment in the community the surrounding property owners have made.

Grace Jenkins asked Mr. Warren if there was a way the country club could stay open and if other had considered operating it since it has closed.

Ken Wade inquired as to what the MPC and the parish engineer has learned regarding the developments impact on the utilities.

Shonta Neal stated the Town of Benton had conducted an impact study on water and waste water and the town has the capacity to serve the new development.

Sean Kemp inquired as to the minimum size of the homes to be constructed and whether condo's or apartments are included.

Robert Daigle stated the streets would be constructed of asphalt with curb and gutter, bicycle trails are planned, sizes of homes are to be determined and will be upper end. He also stated there would be no condos or apartments.

David Rains stated Woodlake South was not included in the traffic study. He also discussed the number of entrances on Palmetto Road and the property values for homes, on the golf course, will suffer losses.

Michelle France, speaking on behalf of Woodlake South, discussed the number vacant homes and too many for sale in the area. Also questioned the need for a new neighborhood and spoke to the traffic problems on Palmetto Road. Wants Benton to hold onto small town values.

Cliff Davis, resident, spoke to the validity of the traffic study.

Hayden White, area resident, discussed the possibility of another investor putting up money to continue to operate the country club.

Jacob Wyatt, local youth golfer, discussed Palmetto Country Club being a benefit to the youth. Gives the community youth something to do and keeps them out of trouble.

Hayden White, area resident, discussed the possibility of another investor putting up money to continue to operate the country club.

Colton Ryan, discussed time he spent at the country club helping out.

Danielle Cage, resident, discussed being the mother of two school age golfers and the ability to drop them off at Palmetto to play. She also stated the other area courses aren't as accessible as Palmetto and there was no time given for the possibility of another individual to purchase the golf course. Also discussed the water level of Black Bayou decreasing.

Robert Daigle responded that the golf course utilized Black Bayou for irrigation but that the new development will not.

Cliff Davis, resident, discussed the low crime rate of the Benton area and the possibility of the new development of increasing that rate.

Richard Davis, resident, discussed that the golf course was closed by choice not because it was failing.

Grace Jenkins stated that you cannot force the owner to keep the golf course open.

Kyle Sawyer, former resident of Benton, stated he was a member in the 50's and it was never intended to be anything else. He also stated he might have purchased to the club but was not given the opportunity.

Brett Thomas discussed he spoke to the general manager of the club told him the club was making money.

Lola Jones, Bay Hills resident, discussed if there was a need for more homes and the area doesn't need more traffic. Also stated she didn't think local buyers were given equal opportunity to purchase the property.

Tom Rochelle, local builder, discussed the possibility that flooding the housing Market with an additional 288 homes would make property values go down. Also asked the developers what type of businesses would be in the commercial area as Benton could use more commercial businesses. Also stated concerns that this is not the best location for the development.

An unidentified speaker asked Mr. Daigle what type of businesses was he thinking of to be located there.

Robert Daigle responded that it could be Food and Beverage businesses, a health club, dry-cleaning pickup, ice cream shops or medical clinics. He also stated the commercial lot sizes are not large enough for grocery stores.

Sam Merritt asked the developer if the water features were being enlarged.

Robert Daigle stated they were.

Billy Parks discussed the number of elderly and churches that are represented at the meeting tonight. He stated his concerns about the development bringing more problems to the area.

Larche Waters, Bay Hill resident, discussed the contractual agreement between the applicant and the landowner and questioned the MPC regarding the six month prescription period.

Sam Merritt and Sam Marsiglia explained the six month prescription process if governing body denies the zoning amendment request.

Cathy Morgan discussed that faith drives the success of the Benton community.

Susan Sanders discussed that the people of Benton are telling the board what they want and the people have spoken.

Janet Terico, River Ridge resident, discussed the parish unemployment rate and that there are 112 new homes on the market and are staying on the market 6 to 8 months and that River Ridge is on Eagle Water system and they should be connected to Benton sewer before the new development.

Robert Daigle addressed the board to end the discussion.

A motion to approve BP-4-15 was made by Grace Jenkins. The motion failed for lack of a second.

A motion to approve BP-5-15 was made by Grace Jenkins. The motion failed for

lack of a second.

A motion to deny BP-4-15 was made by John Bokenfohr. The motion failed for lack of a second.

A motion to deny BP-5-15 was made by John Bokenfohr. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Sam Merritt stated the recommendation to the Police Jury was "No" recommendation.

## REGULAR MEETING

### 1. Approval of Minutes

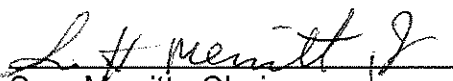
A motion was made by Grace Jenkins to approve the January minutes as written. The motion was seconded by John Bokenfohr. The motion carried unanimously.

### 2. Old Business – None

### 3. New Business-None

### 4. Violations-No discussion

### 5. Adjourn



Sam Merritt, Chairman  
SM/CAB