

BENTON PARISH METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

Monday, June 1, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.
Police Jury Chambers
204 Burt Blvd, Benton, Louisiana

MEMBERS PRESENT

Grace Jenkins
Shonta Neal
Martha Reyenga
Steve Vercher

OTHERS PRESENT

Sam Marsiglia
Carlotta Askew-Brown
Neil Erwin
Christopher Myers
Sean Diel
Shelly Horton
Mayor Wayne Cathcart
Gary Clark
Dwayne Gates
Ron Jones, Benton Alderman
Butch Ford Parish Engineer
Doctor Miciotta
Keith Norwood
Donnie Leftlett

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Bokenfohr

Martha Reyenga, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

(A) Carlotta Askew-Brown, Assistant Director, called roll and stated a quorum was present.

(B) Public Hearings

1. T-2-15 – The application of Christopher E. Myers for a zoning amendment to change the zoning classification of a 8.729 acre tract of land located in Sections 31 and 32, Township 20 North, Range 13 West, Town of Benton, LA from R-1; One Family Residence District to B-3; Community and Central District for a proposed commercial development.

Christopher Myers, applicant was present to represent the application and discussed and described the zoning application with the board.

Shelly Horton, 35 year resident, discussed the potential adverse effect the proposed development would have on the property values of the nearby residences and the actual need for more commercial development.

Martha Reyenga, MPC Chairman, asked the Benton Mayor if a new fire station was planned for this site or if the existing station was moving.

Wayne Cathcart, Benton Mayor, responded no plans for a fire station on this site that he is aware of.

Steve Vercher, MPC Member, called for a show of hands of audience members that were in opposition.

Steve Vercher asked Christopher Myers if the Courthouse Blvd. was a city or parish street.

Mayor Cathcart stated that Palmetto was a town street and that Courthouse Drive was also a town street.

Butch Ford, Parish Engineer, confirmed that Courthouse Drive and the portion of Palmetto Road involved with this project was in the town limits and is controlled by the Town of Benton.

Steve Vercher discussed concerns of traffic on Palmetto Road turning into this development and that the plan is conceptual and is a dense commercial development.

Gary Clark, representing the applicant, stated there were no plans for installation of a turn lane at this time.

Mayor Cathcart discussed that this is an 8 acre development not a Walmart so the traffic would not be as heavy and that it's an issue of scale.

Steve Vercher discussed that this proposed development is in the town and the town might want to consider, if approved, the need for a turn lane in future based on the uses.

Gary Clark stated the uses on the conceptual site plan are not set in stone and the owner would know more about the uses.

Sean Diel, Co-owner Louisiana Lagniappe Development, discussed purchasing this property for residential development but the property was actually smaller than originally thought at time of purchase and the owners had to regroup as lots would have been too expensive. Lagniappe feels there is a great market for commercial development in the area that would service the local residents such as medical uses and a family restaurant.

Steve Vercher asked if the owner would be willing to reduce the zoning to B-2.

Sean Diel answered that he would agree to a B-2 zoning and consider a B-3 when uses were identified and would consider a turn lane if needed by traffic counts.

Mayor Cathcart asked what the difference was between B-2 and B-3 uses.

Sam Marsiglia, Director, explained the primary difference in uses allowed within the two zoning classifications.

Mayor Cathcart asked the owner if the fire department is a potential tenant of the development.

Sean Diel responded if there was a need it would be possible in the future.

Mayor Cathcart stated that the developers have dealt in good faith and the market will determine how it is developed when the zoning is in place. He asked for an explanation of what a B-2 zoning district is.

Sam Marsiglia explained that a fire station is not treated the same as a commercial business where zoning is concerned and read into the record the definition of the B-2: Neighborhood Zoning classification.

Neil Erwin, MPC attorney, was asked by Sam Marsiglia to clarify that the applicant could voluntarily accept a B-2 instead of B-3 zoning without the need of another hearing. Neil Erwin responded they could.

Grace Jenkins, MPC Boardmember, asked how the businesses would affect the tax base for Benton.

Mayor Cathcart explained it depended on the type of businesses and that future commercial development is important to the town.

An unidentified citizen spoke to the problem of businesses and doctor's offices that have opened and closed in the area.

Martha Reyenga stated that eventually Bossier business would intersect with businesses to the north and called for a motion.

Shonta Neal asked the developer if he would accept a B-2 zoning classification.

Sean Diel responded he would like the board to consider B-3 but would come back when the B-3 zoning was needed.

Shonta Neal made a motion to approve the application from R-1 to B-2. The motion was seconded by Grace Jenkins.

The motion carried unanimously.

2. T-3-15 – The application of American Freedom and Storage for an Amended Planned Building Group located at 6496 Highway 3, Benton, Louisiana.

Dwayne Gates, owner, represented and explained the reason for asking for an amended Planned Building Group for the purpose of a six(6') security fence that was installed on the front property line instead of twenty (20') behind the front property line as previously approved.

Ron Jones, Benton Alderman, spoke to his concerns that the fence was too far forward and could become a traffic problem without being on the 25' setback and would that cause liability issues with the Town of Benton and the MPC.

Sam Marsiglia explained it was not a setback issue for the fence, it is the height as four (4') fences can be placed within the setback.

Martha Reyenga asked the owner if a vehicle with trailer can turn into the driveway and clear the road.

Dwayne Gates responded it could as the fence is far back from the property line.

Carlotta Askew stated the original site plan approved illustrated the fence to be Twenty (20') from the front property line.

Martha Reyenga called for a motion.

Steve Vercher made a motion to approve the six (6') fence as positioned on the Amended Planned Building Group site plan. The motion was seconded by Grace Jenkins.

The motion carried unanimously.

(C) Subdivisions – Minor Plats

1. BP-8-15 – The application of the Bossier Parish School Board for a Minor Plat approval, Fairburn Subdivision, being comprised of an approximately 38 acre tract located in Section 17, Township 19 North, Range 13 West, Bossier Parish, Louisiana.

Keith Norwood, Bossier Parish Schools, was present to represent the application and explained the reason for the plat was for the public street dedication to the parish and the public.

Martha Reyenga asked if the plat was for two lots or to combine two lots into one.

Carlotta Askew-Brown explained it was for two lots and a street dedication.

Donnie Leflett asked if the school board was putting a road through the property.

Butch Ford, Parish Engineer, stated it was for the dedication of the street and two lots and explained the reason for two lots and the location and length of the street and the parish's dedication process.

Martha Reyenga asked what were the plans for the lot the school is not constructed on.

Keith Norwood responded there were no plans at this time for the 11 acre lot.

Doctor Miciotta asked if the road would be completed before the next school term.

Keith Norwood responded there has been a lot of rain but they are trying.

Martha Reyenga called for a motion. A motion was made by Steve Vercher to approve the plat. The motion was seconded by Grace Jenkins.

The motion carried unanimously.

2. T-4-15 -The application of Christopher E. Meyers for a Minor Plat approval, Lagniappe de Benton, being comprised of 8.729 acres and located in Sections 31 & 32, Township 20 North, Range 13 West, Benton, Louisiana.

Gary Clark, engineer for Lagniappe de Benton, was present to represent the plat and explained the reason for the plat and described the two lots. He also stated If the lots were further divided it would come back before the MPC as an amended plat.

Sam Marsiglia asked Gary Clark if the changes requested by the MPC staff were on the plat.

Steve Vercher asked for the reason for the location of the detention pond.

Gary Clark explained the location of the detention pond and how it would be created in the future

Martha Reyenga called for a motion.

Shonta Neal made a motion to approve the plat. The motion was seconded by Grace Jenkins.

The motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR MEETING

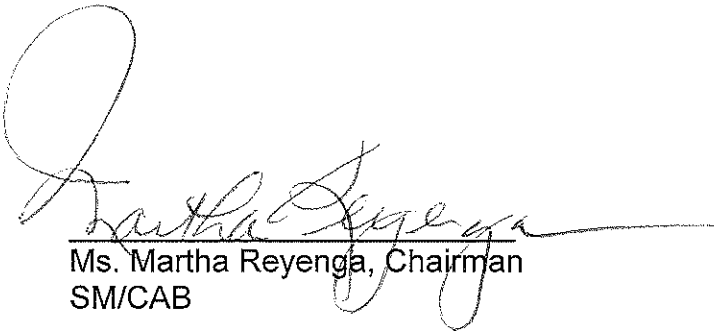
1. Approval of Minutes

Discussion was held by Sam Marsiglia to consider approval of the Minutes of the May 4, 2015 meeting. Grace Jenkins made a motion to accept the minutes as written and Shonta Neal seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Old Business-Carlotta Askew discussed the price and size of a climate controlled storage unit. Shonta Neal made a motion to except the yearly expense. The motion was seconded by Steve Vercher. The motion carried unanimously.

3. New Business- Sam Marsiglia discussed the amount of fees received by the Benton MPC so far in 2015.

4. Adjourn – A motion to adjourn was made by Gracie Jenkins and seconded by Shonta Neal. The motion carried unanimously.



Ms. Martha Reyenga, Chairman
SM/CAB