

BENTON PARISH METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

Monday, June 5, 2023 – 6:00 P.M.

Benton Town Hall
105 Sibley Street
Benton, LA 71006

MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Martha Reyenga
Steve Vercher
Bryan Kauffer
Jerry Nuckolls

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jayne Gilmour
Carlotta Askew Brown
Charlie Coyle
Katherine Stevens
Leighton Allen
Charles Williamson
Rusty Cooper
Secret Duncan
Jerry Duncan

Joseph Willimason
Dwayne Gates
America Martin
Robert Thommason
Mayor Shelly Horton

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Michael Jorgenson

- (A) Martha Reyenga called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- (B) The invocation was led by Bryan Kauffer.
- (C) Pledge of Allegiance was led by Steve Vercher.
- (D) Jayme Gilmour called roll and stated a quorum was present.
- (E) A motion was made by Steve Vercher and seconded by Jerry Nuckolls to approve the agenda.

The motion carried unanimously.

(F) PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. **BP-08-23** – The application of Coyle Engineering requesting Final Plat approval for Turtle Creek Subdivision, Unit No. 4, being 2.81 acres, more or less, located in Section 11, Township19 North, Range 13 West, Bossier Parish, Louisiana. (Located north of Parks Road on the west side of W Lakeshore Drive) (Police Jury District 3)

Charlie Coyle was present.

Coyle: This unit and the next unit on the agenda were previously approved by this body. The developer pulled back on it and is now back to get it reapproved.

Askew-Brown: It was previously approved in 2017.

As there were no further comments from the Board or the public, the Chairman called for a motion.

A motion to approve BP-08-23 was made by Kauffer and seconded by Nuckolls.

A roll call vote was held and the motion carried unanimously.

2. **BP-09-23** – The application of Coyle Engineering requesting Final Plat approval for Turtle Creek Subdivision, Unit No. 5, being 2.2 acres, more or less, located in Sections 2 and 11, Township19 North, Range 13 West, Bossier Parish, Louisiana. (Located north of Turtle Creek Subdivision Unit No. 3, south of W Lakeshore Drive) ((Police Jury District 3)

Charlie Coyle was present.

Coyle: This is the same thing. It is just 6 lots on the other end of this development.

Katherine Stevens was present.

Stevens: Where are those lots located in relation to West Lakeshore Drive? Will these lots have driveways off of West Lakeshore Drive?

Coyle: Yes.

Stevens: This will just add more traffic to my road.

As there were no further comments from the Board or the public, the Chairman called for a motion.

A motion to approve BP-09-23 was made by Kauffer and seconded by Nuckolls.

A roll call vote was held and the motion carried unanimously.

3. **BP-14-23** – The application of Leighton Allen, requesting Amended Plat approval for Willow Creek at Benton Unit No. 2B, Lots 19B & 18A, being 5.3 acres, more or less, located in Section 24, Township 20 North, Range 14 West, Bossier Parish, Louisiana. (Located at 1109 & 1125 East Hartline Road, Bossier Parish, Louisiana. (Police Jury District 3)

Leighton Allen was present.

Allen: I built my property on Lot 19. It is a different name now. I own Lot 18 and Lot 19. Part of my driveway and my fence is actually on the original Lot 18. I am selling Lot 18 so I need to re-draw the lines to have my setback where it needs to be. I think the main thing was that we keep both lots above average in the neighborhood.

Vercher: On the mark up, it shows a 2-inch pipeline on Lot 18. Doesn't that need to be shown on the plat?

Allen: The person I hired to draw that did not include it because there was nothing on court filings that had that 2-inch pipe. The 2-inch pipe originally shown was added by Joey French, the engineer for the development. He said he got that information from a piece of paper that the original owner had.

Reyenga: It is a gas line. It comes and ties in from the road on Old Plain Dealing. I know that because I live across from it. You will have to let your buyer know about it so they can stay off the gas line.

As there were no further comments from the Board or the public, the Chairman called for a motion.

A motion to approve BP-14-23 was made by Vercher contingent upon the confirmation of the existing gas main from the Parish Engineer. The motion was seconded by Jerry Nuckolls.

A roll call vote was held and the motion carried unanimously.

4. **BP-04-23** - The application of Coyle Engineering, requesting a Zoning Amendment to change the zoning classification of a tract of land being 8.94 acres, more or less, from R-A (Residence Agriculture District) to B-3 (Community and Central Business District) located in the northeast quarter of Section 23, Township 20 North, Range 13 West, Bossier Parish, Louisiana for a proposed storage facility. (Police Jury District 3)

Charlie Coyle was present.

Coyle: Since the last meeting, we have gone back and looked at the drainage and put together a study. We revised the plan to have a larger detention pond. This larger pond is designed to pick up everything coming to our site and detain it. It will also detain the great majority of the water on our site. There is a little water in the back. Everything else will go to the detention pond. It will be released to the detention pond at a lower rate than it is being released pre-development. I talked to Eric Hudson today and he said he would look at it. He was not requiring this study for the zoning but he said he would look at it.

Vercher: We requested that. I did not want the zoned property to be built on that was flooding. I went by there about three weeks ago and recorded the flooding that I saw. That water was moving. It was probably 3 or 4 feet deep. I think we did the right thing to look at this. It is crossing the road and heading east and not west. I thought it was going west towards this development.

Coyle: The study would have been necessary either way.

Vercher: I was very concerned because I thought the water was going west. You proved it was going the other way. It still causes an adverse impact because all of the water has no place to go. I do want to encourage the property owners to see what is being proposed. You have taken care of my concern with the flooding. The study is preliminary. I would like it to be finalized and signed before the development is built. You have an engineer that states he looked at hydraulics and that it is not going to flood. If you can capture the water that comes from the west... It might actually improve drainage on the property to the west. It will go there instead of backing up on his property. It has to take what is coming from the adjacent properties. We do not want to impact anyone upstream or downstream. With that said, I would like the adjacent property owners to have input before we address the other issues.

Charles Williamson was present.

Williamson: This will be on the west side of this property? We can try to do something to hold the water but concrete is not going to soak up water.

Coyle: For everything that is concreted on this site, all of that drainage will work its way into the pond.

Vercher: How will you control the flow rate?

Rusty Cooper was present.

Cooper: This is designed where the weir calculation will control the flow rate going in and the outfall pipe will be sized big enough to let that flow rate out. We are slightly reducing the water pushed to the east.

Vercher: After construction, the water will go to the pond and then be released at the same or a less rate?

Cooper: Yes. If we are talking about the 25-year storm event it looks like pre-development conditions, 259 ½ CFS will flow off site at this point. His release rate on this 255.

Vercher: How deep is the pond?

Cooper: It is five feet deep. His ponding depth is five feet. It looks like at the west property line, there is a 206 contour so you will have a 1 foot of elevation difference from what is coming in.

Vercher: From the elevations that are there now, how much deeper is the creek?

Cooper: Off of memory, I am going to say a foot or a couple of feet. It may be more if that is right at where the existing flow is, the creek, comes in to the site on

the west property line but on the north end of the pond you are going to be deeper than that because all of the contours are coming up as you get to 162.

Vercher: Three weeks ago, this thing had water all over it because it was backing up.

Secret Duncan was present.

Duncan: I should have taken a picture. If you come down Ryan Road and then Cypress Shores, we have an above ground pool there. The water comes to that pool. We also have tortoises that are fenced in. We are going to have to move everybody. That creek floods. We are worried about it coming even higher.

Vercher: If we do not get a handle on the water, it is going to flood quicker.

Cooper: If we release more water, it will increase tail water. If our discharge from our site increased, then the tail water in the receiving stream would go up.

Vercher: In my mind, from the road to the creek, I can see developing that with storage. Once you cross the creek, you start impacting what is going on with a lot of water. Have you worked with the adjacent property owners? That is what we have to do.

Williamson: The area that they are proposing the holding pond in, that all holds water in there too. They are going to have to build that up to be able to do anything. Where will that water be pushed to?

Vercher: It will be pushed somewhere else.

Jerry Duncan was present.

Jerry Duncan: This is my driveway. Right here, holds water. There is a ridge across here. Along this fence line, there is already a ditch being washed out. All of that water is going to flow this way and it will fill up parts of my property which is a different lot.

Cooper: Based on what he is proposing, it will not. The drainage area is what sheds off the area you are talking about. What Chris is proposing, post development, should reduce that area. We go from about 2 acres to .85 acres of sheet flow. He is redirecting that to go to this pond.

Jerry Duncan: I just know that Cypress Shores driveway sometimes floods on heavier rains.

Cooper: Most of the flooding problems that you are referring to are in a separate drainage area. Our drainage area that crosses this does hit a confluence with that creek. They are related. From the pictures that I have seen, I would be looking upstream of 162 to see if there is anything causing issues up there.

Vercher: We are not the police jury. We are just not going to zone property that floods. You can put it on stilts if you want to but you can not pave an area that floods. Have you worked with the parish engineer? I know you called him but have you met with him to go over this?

Coyle: We have not submitted this to Eric but we are going to.

Vercher: This is just the way I see it. I hate to push this in front of the police jury if it has not been thought out. You have done your work. I am an engineer, as you know. I am not the approving engineer. I think you need to go the approving engineer and work this out. I would like to see a final drainage study that is stamped.

Coyle: Would you consider approving the zoning contingent upon the police jury approving the drainage study?

Vercher: We could. We just do not want to put this in front of the police jury knowing that it floods. We are planners. I know he wants to expand but we want to help the property owners next to it who have to be impacted by the drainage. I think it needs to be finalized and blessed by the parish engineer. I think they need to know what to expect. I see you have a temporary thing you are going to do. The detention pond will not be built before this temporary scenario. If you put a culvert there you do not have any stacking area. You will either need to build it all or build nothing. You will have to build your detention. You do not have detention for your current facility. This will need detention in place before you start building.

Coyle: I think that if you would be willing to approve it contingent upon the police jury approving the drainage study, we would be happy with that.

Vercher: Well, let us move on to the next subject. Let us talk about buffer. What are you planning to do for screening?

Coyle: We proposed fencing.

Vercher: 8-foot fencing? I see that in the application. That is why I am asking. Let us explain to the adjoining property owners what they are going to see.

Dwayne Gates was present.

Gates: I was going to do an 8-foot wood fence for the buffer between the property and the Williamson's property.

Joseph Williamson was present.

Joseph Williamson: A wood fence will not take care of it.

Gates: We could do cyclone... I was trying to do a good job in keeping the property nice by upgrading existing areas. We normally have a wood fence. It is expensive but it makes it look nice. I was planning on doing a wood fence just beyond the Williamson property. Just beyond the Williamson's, it would be a chain link with the blinds so you will not just see buildings. Anywhere there is a house, we will do an 8-foot wood fence.

Vercher: How close are the buildings going to be to the fence.

Coyle: The buildings are set back 25 feet from the pavement which is inside the property line so essentially it will be more than 25 feet.

Joseph Williamson: My property joins this. There is a creek down behind my house that you used to be able to step over. Now that creek is washed out from all of the water. That fence will not help any. It would have to be a concrete retaining wall. I've had 3 culverts put in. They were filled to the top. If the water goes over that, it will wash them out. I just do not see how they can do this. It is just a marsh in there. That is my concern.

Secret Duncan: I took a video of our house so you could get a visual of what we are thinking we are going to see. I am going to be blunt. I do not want this. We moved out there because it is quiet. It is beautiful. We do not even have blinds on our windows. We just wanted our privacy. The existing storage buildings are fine because the tree line helps cover that up. We feel secluded. I am thinking that 34 yards from my front porch when people are coming and going we will not have any privacy.

Vercher: I have been concerned about it. As you can see, your property goes way back into a residential area.

Jerry Duncan: Even with a 10-foot fence, we can still see both buildings. I put a pole up and we can still see the sheds back there. There will still be bright lights that light up my property.

Charles Williamson: I have another question for Mr. Gates. Will that fence you are proposing to put up, will it be right up against his fence?

Gates: It will be just inside. I can bring it out some if I need to. I was going to just go right down the property line on my side of his fence.

Charles Williamson: It needs to be far enough away where the space in between can be maintained.

Vercher: Whatever happens will come back to us for site plan approval. I just did not want to get everyone excited to approve zoning if it is going to flood. How does the board feel about it?

Reyenga: Well I do not have a vote but it is wet property on the backside as it comes in to Daugherty's property. I have seen the Williamson property when it is extremely wet. You could not walk outside without rubber boots.

Vercher: That is downstream from this development. You started off wanting to do a campground here. We had a preliminary hearing and we told you to be prepared for a lot of opposition at the public meeting. Before we had the public hearing, you changed your mind and wanted to do storage. I agreed with the storage in the front. I just have not sold myself on the storage in the back because of the flooding. I also realize how you impact the whole residential area back there. You are getting so far off the road it is almost like you are building an industrial area straight all the way back.

Kauffer: As far as I am concerned, I would be willing to approve it tonight contingent upon the parish engineer approving the final drainage study. As far as screening, it seems like that might be more of a matter for the site plan approval. It sounds like there is some willingness to make some changes if there are some big issues. Drainage was the biggest thing for me.

Vercher: How deep is this lot? 1,230 feet? Your existing storage facility is 384 feet. This is 3 times deeper all the way back there. You have one heck of a pond. You gave it its own lot number.

Nuckolls: I am in favor pending the drainage getting approved by the parish engineer.

Vercher: We are not here to take your land out of commerce. We just do not want impact their properties as such that it loses value. I am really trying to figure out if you are going to impact tail water. Are you going to push water higher up on them as it tries to go to the detention pond? You are storing their water too.

Kauffer: I have to rely on our parish engineer to approve that final drainage plan. I would hope that he would look at that. That is not really an overall function of ours.

Coyle: I will state again that we would be willing to accept your approval contingent on the parish engineer approving the final drainage study.

Reyenga: I wonder how it would be if Mr. Gates did not go all the way back in that hole 900 feet and just consider part of it. How would that change the drainage, Steve?

Vercher: Well I did not do the drainage study. Once you cross the creek, then they deal with the creek. There was a question the last time... Can the parish do anything? Yes, there is probably a need for a ditch here. I respect the work of Coyle Engineering. I would like for Chris to sit down with the parish engineer and have the property owners

there too. I think there is a drainage problem, an existing drainage problem. I am not comfortable with this until we can all agree.

Kauffer: Maybe this could facilitate a bigger picture issue that is happening out there. Maybe this will open some eyes.

Vercher: A lot of water is rushing under the road. I know it holds water for weeks.

Charles Williamson: It crosses properties on its way to the lake.

Vercher: If we were to have another 7-inch rain, it is just going to continue to rise. Now that I have thought it through, if the water level has not dropped and it is still holding water and the next day it rains again, it is already at flood stage and it will just back up even higher. I have no problem from the creek to the road. Once you cross the creek you get into the areas that are flooding, the adjacent upstream and downstream properties.

Cooper: I think you are already on the right course having the parish engineer and the hydraulics engineer take a look at this. It is what is going to have to happen. If you look at the FEMA map, it is in Zone X.

Vercher: Then you have made my mind up. You get with the parish engineer and you get with Owen and White and have them do some modeling. They do have modeling scenarios on every piece of property owned by the parish. Let us let Owen and White look at this with them. If Owen and White give their blessing, then I have no problem with this. I know that this parish relies on Owen and White for every bit of hydraulic modeling.

Coyle: Are you willing to approve this contingent on the parish engineer and Owen and White approving the drainage study?

Vercher: I think you need to bring this back to us with an approved study from Owen and White and then we can move forward with zoning knowing that this will not flood. I am just one vote. Bryan, what do you think?

Kauffer: I am willing to approve it contingent upon the parish engineer and Owen and White approving the drainage.

Reyenga: I think there has been a drainage problem prior to this and nothing has ever been done about it by the parish. Now you have Mr. Gates wanting to develop out there and this will just add to the existing problem. We need to be firm that there is to be no more water added to an existing drainage problem.

Joseph Williamson: I have talked to the police jury trying to get something done. They could not do anything. I talked to the levy board and they could not do anything.

Vercher: I am ok with moving this forward contingent on approval by the police jury and Owen and White. Before we approve a site plan, I would like to see a letter from Owen and White and the parish engineer has signed a hydraulic study.

Joseph Williamson: If this is approved, who is going to be responsible if it causes damage on my property?

Vercher: I am not an attorney, sir. That will be a question for the police jury. We do not have the authority that the police jury does. We just make recommendations. You do have a right to be at the meeting when they hear this. They have the responsibility for the liability of that question.

Secret Duncan: How do we get involved in being part of these studies and we see the process and know what is going on?

Askew-Brown: I can give you the police jury contact information. I can give you the number of the clerk, the parish engineer and your police juror, Phillip Rogers.

As there were no further comments from the Board or the public, the Chairman called for a motion.

Steve Vercher made a motion to approve BP-04-23 contingent on the parish engineer approving the drainage study provided by Coyle Engineering in final, stamped form and also contingent on Owen and White confirming that the drainage study is adequate to provide no adverse impact on the adjacent upstream and downstream properties. Motion was seconded by Kauffer.

A roll call vote was held and the motion carried unanimously.

Katherine Stevens was present.

Stevens: I had a question about the Turtle Creek file while these gentlemen are still here. If they are considering the houses that are going to be built on West Lakeshore Drive part of Turtle Creek, would that... with those nice houses being right across the road... affect, in the future, any zoning on the lake side of West Lakeshore Drive? If that were the case, how could I be involved in that?

Reyenga: You would get a letter if you are within 300 feet of the property. You will be able to attend a meeting to voice your concern.

Stevens: That would be my main concern now is those big houses right across the street. It will already impact traffic a bit. The zoning problems, with new construction or something on the lake side of West Lakeshore Drive, might cause problems.

Vercher: Well, we are not there yet. You would be given notification if you were within 300 feet.

Stevens: Now that they have approval, is that not an issue right now?

Askew-Brown: They still have to go to the Police Jury. This is just a recommending body. They still have about 60 days of process. The parish does not send out notices. You would need to stay in contact with the parish clerk.

(G)PRELIMINARY HEARINGS

5. **T-05-23** – The application of America Martin, requesting a Zoning Amendment to change the zoning classification of a certain tract of land being .0275 acres more or less, from B-2 (Neighborhood Business District) to B-3 (Community and Central Business District) located in the southwest quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 31, Township 20 North, Range 13 West, municipally know as 6382 Highway 3, Benton, Louisiana for a proposed used car lot. (Town Council District 5) (Police Jury District 3)

America Martin was present.

Martin: We are trying to open a used car lot to sell used cars. This is at 6382 Highway 3. It is the orange and black building next to Trejos.

Reyenga: How many vehicles will be on that small space in front of the existing building?

Martin: Six to eight in front. In the future, we will clean the side and the back. We might have some cars inside the building.

Vercher: Being on a state highway, you can not park in the state right-of-way. We see it happen all the time but you are not supposed to. You can not park in the right-of-way. It causes a blind spot when you are trying to get out on either side. You cannot park on the property on the side of you even though there is nothing there. Are you going to leave it orange?

Martin: I do not know.

Askew-Brown: Will the UHaul business remain?

Martin: No.

Reyenga: Actually, on the south side of it, you cannot park anything there at all because there is not enough space between the south side of the building and the property line. Most of the vehicles in this picture are hanging over onto Trejo's property. I do not know what is over there on the wooded edge. I thought it was a shed.

Robert Thomason was present.

Thomason: That is the owner's shop.

Reyenga: Only six to eight cars in the front? And just a few in the back?

Thomason: We just have the two bays. He is going to sub-lease us the other two bays when UHaul leaves.

Askew-Brown: So, you will be in 6380 and 6382?

Martin: Yes.

Mayor Horton was present.

Mayor: The only concern that I have is that I think the documents need to be cleaned up. It appears that the north side where the Uhauls are, those are on Cecil Campbells property. Because the survey doesn't depict where the buildings sit, we cannot tell right now. I do not think that this will delay the process as long as they clean the documents up and show an accurate depiction on where that building sits. I am relatively certain that the uhauls are on someone else's property.

Reyenga: Even these trucks in the picture are on Cecil's property. I think that they have squeezed over. Cecil's property line comes further south than what is noted. No fencing there makes it seem like it can just be utilized.

Mayor Horton: According to the tax assessor, the edge of that curb cut on the north side is where Cecil's property starts. If you could, just get the documents cleaned up before you come back for a public hearing.

Askew-Brown: You may want to get a draftsman or an architect to accurately depict where the cars will be parked and where the building is located on the survey.

Reyenga: The point is that there is not a lot of space for parking cars in the front. You are squeezed tighter than you think. They have used state property, Cecil's property, and now they have used Trejo's property. No one complained. If they do, it might be a problem.

Vercher: Maybe you could put a concrete log or barrier so that the line is there to remind someone everyday not to pull across that property.

As there were no further comments from the Board or the public, the Chairman called for a motion.

A motion to approve T-5 23 for public hearing was made by Kauffer. The motion was seconded by Vercher.

A roll call vote was held and the motion carried unanimously.

(H) REGULAR MEETING

1. Approval of Minutes
 - a. A motion to approve the May 1, 2023 minutes was made by Vercher and seconded by Kauffer.

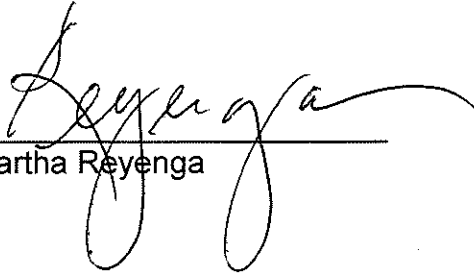
The motion passed unanimously.

2. Old Business
3. New Business

Carlotta Askew-Brown reminded the board members that the next meeting will be held at the Bossier Parish Courthouse.

4. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.



Martha Reyenga