
MINUTES
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Meeting of May 1, 2012

The Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Cedar Hill, Texas met on TUESDAY, May 1, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. in the T.W. "Turk" Cannady/Cedar Hill Room, 285 Uptown Boulevard Building 100, Cedar Hill, Texas.

Planning & Zoning Commissioners present: Chairman Theresa Brooks, Vice-Chairman Bill Strother and Commissioners: Stephanie Freeman, Gehrig Saldana and Tim Hamilton.

Commissioner Lisa Thierry arrived at 6:09 p.m.

City Staff members present: Rod Tyler, Director of Planning, Don Gore, Planner and Belinda L. Huff, Development Services Coordinator/Planning & Zoning Commission Secretary.

Six audience members present.

I. Call the meeting to order

Chairman Brooks called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. declaring it an open meeting in which a quorum was present and the meeting notice was duly posted.

II. Approve the minutes of the April 17, 2012 regular meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Hamilton to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2012, with one correction. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Freeman. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: 5– Chairman Brooks, Vice-Chairman Strother and Commissioners Freeman, Saldana and Hamilton.

Nays: 0

Chairman Brooks declared the motion carried.

III. Citizens Forum

No one spoke

IV. Case No. 12-09 – CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING and consider a request for a Conditional Use Permit to serve alcoholic beverages in conjunction with a restaurant within a Local Retail zoning district, located at 1435 North Highway 67, Suite 200, Cedar Hill, TX 75104, requested by April Lazo.

The applicant, April Lazo, 2635 Villa Di Lago, Unit 5, Grand Prairie, TX 75054 stepped forth to present this request and answer any questions from the Commission.

Ms. Lazo stated that she, along with her co-owners; wish to open a family friendly restaurant, serving primarily American food, with some Indian inspired grilled items.

Chairman Brooks opened the public hearing for anyone wishing to speak in support of this request.

No one spoke.

Chairman Brooks closed that portion of the public hearing and opened the floor for any one wishing to speak in opposition.

No one spoke.

Chairman Brooks closed the public hearing and opened the floor for discussion.

Chairman Brooks asked the applicant to ensure that their hours of operation and ratio of food to alcohol sales comply with city ordinances.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hamilton to approve Case No. 12-09, as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Strother. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: 6 – Chairman Brooks, Vice-Chairman Strother and Commissioners Thierry, Freeman, Saldana and Hamilton.

Nays: 0

Chairman Brooks declared the motion carried.

IV. Staff Reports & Discussion Items

1. Review of City Center Vision Plan

Don Gore, Planner, stated that the purpose of tonight's discussion was to review with the Commission the updated timeline for the next phase of the City Center Plan, scheduled to begin in late May, 2012 and to prepare, advise and educate them on the concepts that will be presented to them in the coming months. With the help of a Power Point presentation, Mr. Gore reiterated and emphasized the key elements of the City Center Plan, primarily focusing on the concept of walkability.

In an effort to facilitate more interaction and discussion from the Commission, Mr. Gore asked them to pair up and discuss what the concept of walkability meant to them.

After about 5 minutes of discussion among themselves, the Commissioners expressed their viewpoints.

Commissioner Thierry stated that to her, walkability meant varied transportation options, including more sidewalks and bike lanes.

Commissioner Saldana stated that walkability to him meant connectivity and that he would like to see more connections between trails and neighborhoods. Also mixed use developments, where people can live and work within the same area.

Commissioner Thierry also stated that public safety is paramount to a successful walkable city center. Features such as lighting and aesthetics like flowers and trees would all help create an

environment that would encourage people to walk rather than drive to their destinations. Another positive benefit would be environmental, reducing harmful emissions from automobiles. Finally, there could be a [maintenance] cost savings to the City by reducing wear and tear on roadways.

Commissioner Hamilton agreed with the comments made by the other Commissioners, but stated that he believes walkability also means having or creating destinations, places where people can dine, shop and/or visit.

Vice-Chairman Strother concurred and expanded on Commissioner Hamilton's comment by saying that people walk for purpose, whether recreational or entertainment and that creating a strong built environment would be crucial to a sustainably city center.

Commissioner Freeman and Chairman Brooks stated that walkability in their opinion meant having elements that are visually stimulating, that would not only encourage walking, but make walking versus driving a more appealing option. Things like art (sculptures), architecture (varied buildings types), water features (fountains or duck pond), or feeders that would attract wildlife (birds, ducks, turtles), landscaping; all of these components would give pedestrians a "place to pause" and admire the surroundings while on their way to a destination.

Mr. Gore praised and thanked the Commission for sharing their views on what walkability meant to them. Returning to the Power Point presentation, Mr. Gore stated that the Commission's viewpoints were right in line with the "formal" definition of walkability. Mr. Gore then reviewed in detail the other concepts contained in the City Center Plan which are: Urban Context, Continuity, Mode Balances, Safety, Comfort, Sociability, Accessibility, Efficiency and Attractiveness. Finally, he, along with the Commission, analyzed various photos of the Historic Downtown, Midtown and Uptown with respect to walkability.

2. Recent Submittals

This item was covered during the briefing session.

V. Adjourn

A motion was made, followed by a second for adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Theresa Brooks
Chairman

Belinda L. Huff
Development Services Coordinator
