

Perry Planning Commission
Minutes – October 26, 2015

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Martin Beeland called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

ROLL: Chairman Beeland; Commissioners Clarington, Mehserle, Williams, and Yasin were present. Commissioners Jefferson and Poole were absent.

STAFF: Lee Gilmour – City Manager and Christine Sewell – Recording Clerk

GUESTS: Bev Abney, Lillie Battle, Rich Thomas, Jim Langston, Pastor Jamie Powell, Terre Walker, Robert Russell, Melissa Wright, Elizabeth Doll, and Betsy Mullis.

PRESS: Jake Jacobs – Houston Home Journal

INVOCATION: was given by Commissioner Mehserle

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 28, 2015 MEETING: Commissioner Williams motioned to approve as submitted; Commissioner Clarington seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Chairman Beeland referred to the Campaign Notice, per O.C.G.A. 36-67A-3 and to please turn cell phones off.

INFORMATIONAL HEARING

1). #V-15-06 – 1104 Swift Street

Chairman Beeland read the applicants' request which was for variance to replace an existing lighted sign with an electronic reader board sign in a residential zoning district, along with staff responses.

Chairman Beeland opened the public hearing at 6:05pm and called for anyone in favor of the request. Mr. Jim Langston representing the applicant First Baptist Church Perry reiterated the request and advised they were seeking replacement as the current sign is old and deteriorating.

Chairman Beeland then called for anyone opposed. Mrs. Bev Abney addressed the board and advised as an adjacent resident to the property the request should be denied as the area surrounding is residential and in a historic district. Mrs. Abney also advised from Perry Parkway to Swift/Macon Road there are currently no electronic signs and there should be none. As well, she advised she had spoken with several of the neighbors and five of the seven she was able to reach were against the sign.

Mrs. Terre Walker voiced concern the change could affect property values and in the strategic plan the City had done in-town living was mentioned and we must be cognizant to protect this. Mrs. Walker also noted there are residential properties doing restoration to their property and if we let commercial "creep" onto the street it will lose its character and it should be important to protect historic districts.

Mr. Langston provided a rendering of the proposed sign which would have 5 ½" letters in a single amber color and solid background noting there would be no flashing messages.

Pastor Jamie Powell addressed the board and advised the church wanted to be a good neighbor and was sensitive to its' surroundings and the church was open to design recommendations as the current sign desperately needed upgrading as it was inadequate to serve the needs of posting church news and events.

There being no further comments Chairman Beeland closed the hearing at 6:18pm. Commissioner Mehserle inquired the nature of the messages and how many times they would change. Pastor Powell advised messages would be for service time or church events and depending on the type of event may change every two weeks. Commissioner Yasin understood the need for a new sign and had one not been there previously it would make the decision difficult, but reminded the board they had approved a similar LED for a church on Langston Road.

Commissioner Mehserle inquired if the church would be open to suggestions on possible alternate signs/designs; Pastor Powell advised they would be. Chairman Beeland inquired if the background of the sign could be white with the lettering in black; Pastor Powell advised it would be a one letter color.

Commissioner Yasin inquired of Mrs. Walker if the Main Street Design Committee would be able to assist the church. Mrs. Walker advised the property was not in the downtown district, but the committee would most certainly be glad to provide assistance.

Commissioner Mehserle inquired what those opposed to the proposed sign had issue with. Mrs. Walker advised the fact that it was LED, the change of copy and it was not appropriate for the historic district. Commissioner Mehserle noted technology changes have become the standard and he understands the need so there is more flexibility in messages and the property is at the end of Swift Street and the area is already surrounded by commercial that has begun to "creep" in.

Commissioner Clarington noted people don't always like change and that he appreciates the history of the area, but sometimes you have to change to make things better.

Commissioner Mehserle motioned to table the matter until the next meeting to allow for discussion among the concerned residents and the church; Commissioner Clarington seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

2). 1007 First Street – Demolition of structure

Chairman Beeland advised the board in February 2015 granted approval for the dwelling to be removed; since that time the church has made several attempts to do so, but with no success and was before the board to request permission to demolish the dwelling.

Chairman Beeland opened the public hearing at 6:46pm and called for anyone in favor of the request. Pastor Powell noted the church contacted the agency that conducted the 2002 Georgia Historic Resource Survey and was advised there were no restrictions on the property and what could be done. The survey noted the dwelling was a Colonial Revival, but there is nothing currently historic to the house and to the best of the Pastor's knowledge it has sat vacant for fifteen years. Pastor Powell advised they had five inquires on moving the house

with two of them being serious offers, however, the expense to move outweighed the benefit. The future use of the property would be for greenspace and parking.

Mr. Robert Russell advised he had inquired about moving the dwelling, but the costs were too high.

Chairman Beeland called for anyone opposed; there being none the hearing was closed at 6:52pm.

Commissioner Mehserle motioned to allow the church to remove the dwelling or demolish from the property; Commissioner Yasin seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

3). #V-15-07 – 104 Rinns Way

Commissioner Mehserle read the applicants' request which was for a variance to Section 90.1 of the PLDO for the minimum width at the building line to be reduced from a 60 foot setback to 47 feet, along with staff responses.

Chairman Beeland opened the public hearing at 7:03pm and called for anyone in favor of the request. Mr. Rich Thomas representing the applicant C.W. Williams Homes reiterated the request and advised they were the builder in Phase 2 of the Brookewater subdivision and the remaining lots would finish out the area.

Mrs. Betsy Mullis advised she was in favor of all the requests if the homes were 1800 square feet or larger per the homeowners association regulations.

Chairman Beeland called for anyone opposed; there being none the hearing was closed at 7:06pm. Chairman Beeland noted if relief is given it will be for the front setback which puts the house further from the pond on the rear.

Commissioner Yasin motioned to approve the request as submitted as variance is for the front of the property; Commissioner Williams seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

4). #V-15-08- 105 Rinns Way

Commissioner Mehserle read the applicant's request which was for a variance to Section 90.1 of the PLDO for the minimum width at the building line to reduce the 60 foot setback to 33 feet, along with staff responses.

Chairman Beeland opened the public hearing at 7:14pm and called for anyone in favor; Mr. Rich Thomas reiterated the request as the applicant. Chairman Beeland called for anyone opposed; there being none the hearing was closed at 7:15pm.

Commissioner Yasin motioned to approve the request as submitted; Commissioner Clarinton seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

5). #V-15-09 – 100 Brookewater Lane

Commissioner Yasin read the applicants' request which was for a variance to Section 91 of the PLDO for the side yard setback for a collector street in the R-1, Single Family Residential district, along with staff responses.

Chairman Beeland opened the public hearing at 7:26pm and called for anyone in favor of the request. Mrs. Betsy Mullis the adjacent property owner was in favor of the request as long as the dwelling to be built was 1800 square feet or larger. Chairman Beeland called for anyone opposed; there being none the hearing was closed at 7:28pm.

Commissioner Mehserle motioned to approve the request as submitted; Commissioner Williams seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC HEARING

1). #SE-15-02 - 1724 Milton Way

Commissioner Yasin read the applicants' request which was for a special exception to operate a day care home in an R-1, Single Family Residential District, along with staff responses.

Chairman Beeland opened the public hearing at 7:38pm and called for anyone in favor of the request. The applicant Ms. Melissa Wright addressed the board and advised she held a state license and one of the requirements was to have a business license from the city/county where the care is being provided and therefore her request. Ms. Wright advised she would be keeping four children; one her own, one her grandchild and two others. Ms. Wright noted drop-off and pick-up would be at various times during the day and there was parking along the side of the existing driveway to accommodate this.

Chairman Beeland called for anyone opposed. Ms. Elizabeth Doll voiced concern with the traffic on the street, which recently had the speed limit reduced to 25MPH.

There being no further comments; Chairman Beeland closed the hearing at 7:45pm.

Commissioner Clarington inquired the age of the children; Ms. Wright advised six weeks to 4years. Ms. Wright also advised the children would not be playing in the front yard as the rear yard is completely fenced in and they play there. Commissioners Mehserle and Williams voiced concerns with the drop-off and pick-up.

Commissioner Mehserle motioned to recommend denial of the application as submitted to Mayor and Council; Commissioner Williams seconded; Commissioners Clarington and Yasin were opposed to the motion; Chairman Beeland voted in favor of the motion with the resulting vote 3 to 2 for recommendation of denial of the application as submitted to Mayor and Council.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Gilmour provided the board with an update on the progress of the sign ordinance that had been submitted to Mayor and Council.

ADJOURN: there being no further business to come before the board the meeting was adjourned at 7:53pm.