



**CITY OF FRIENDSWOOD
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2021 - 7:00 PM**

Minutes

MINUTES OF A FRIENDSWOOD REGULAR MEETING HELD AT 910 S. FRIENDSWOOD DRIVE, FRIENDSWOOD, TEXAS FRIENDSWOOD CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS,

STATE OF TEXAS
CITY OF FRIENDSWOOD
COUNTIES OF GALVESTON/HARRIS
FEBRUARY 11, 2021

1. Call to order

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE FRIENDSWOOD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION THAT WAS HELD ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2021, AT 07:04 PM 910 S. FRIENDSWOOD DRIVE, FRIENDSWOOD, TEXAS

CHAIRMAN JOE MATRANGA
VICE-CHAIRMAN RICHARD SASSON
COMMISSIONER RICHARD CLARK
COMMISSIONER TOM HINCKLEY
COMMISSIONER TRAVIS MANN
COMMISSIONER LISA LUNDQUIST
COMMISSIONER MARCUS PERRY
COUNCIL LIAISON ROBERT GRIFFON
CITY ATTORNEY MARY KAY FISCHER
DIRECTOR OF CDD/PLANNER AUBREY HARBIN
DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR BECKY BENNETT

2. Communication from the public/committee liaisons

(To comply with provisions of the Open Meetings Act, the Commission may not deliberate on subjects discussed under this agenda item. However, the Commission

may direct such subjects be placed on a later regular Commission agenda for discussion and/or possible action)

Brady Mora spoke about Frank Brown, the man who is thought to have planted the trees at 501 S. Friendswood Drive. Mora said Margaret McDonald emailed Mora saying to not let outsiders cut down trees from our namesake. Mora said Joycina Baker also called him regarding the trees. Mora said the property owner has every right to develop his property and that Mora does not wish him ill but pleads for more time to speak with owner.

Randy Stine said he married into the Brown family, some of the original founders of Friendswood. He said his family has spent \$30,000 to protect trees on their property. He said they applied for a variance to fence their front yard in order to protect those trees, as well. He said the city symbol has an oak tree on it and that it would cost money but the property owner should at least move the trees elsewhere instead of cutting them down.

3. Consent Agenda

These items are considered routine or ministerial in nature and will be enacted with one motion. There will be no separate discussion of items unless a commissioner so requests in which case the item would be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately.

****Commissioner Marcus Perry moved to approve Consent Agenda. Seconded by Vice-Chairman Richard Sasson. The motion was approved unanimously.**

A. Minutes for the regular meeting held January 28, 2021

4. Action Items

According to the Planning and Zoning Rules of Procedure (R2019-15), all action of the Commission shall be made by an affirmative vote of four (4) or more members of the Commission present at such Commission meetings.

A. Consideration and possible action regarding the site plan for Friendship Center to be located at 501 S. Friendswood Drive

Item tabled on January 28, 2021

Motion to remove from table - Sasson

Second - Hinckley

Vote - 7/0 Unanimous

Harbin explained the applicant is proposing to save one of the large trees (T9), the tree to the left. She said the change is indicated on the revised landscape plan.

Sasson stated he is thankful discussions happened and that a compromise was achieved. He said he finds no reason to deny the plan as it meets city code. Sasson said he would ask the owner to plant oaks instead of crepemyrtles. Sasson thanked Sel Thint/engineer for helping facilitate discussions with the owner. Thint said he has no objection to planting oaks and will coordinate with staff.

Perry said the Commission does realize the rights of the property owner and that the presented plan meets ordinance. Perry said he would like further discussion with the property owner.

Lundquist stated this site plan is a heartbreaking decision. She said she is a self proclaimed tree hugger but the current ordinances fell short and did not protect the trees better. She thanked Thint and said she greatly appreciates the effort. Lundquist said she would also like a couple more weeks for negotiation. She said she is cognizant of the owner's right but feels this plan is not in keeping with the plan for Downtown.

Sel Thint/Everest Design Group explained the reasoning for keeping tree T9 and not the second large tree (T3). He said the driveway entrance must be 75-feet from the TxDOT right-of-way and the T3 canopy is 46-feet wide from the center of the tree. He explained that cutting half the canopy decreases the survivability of the tree. He said that would also require creating a large landscape island which drastically changes the design of the site. Thint said the owner turned down that plan.

Mann thanked Thint for explaining the thought process about removing T3.

Hinckley said he appreciates the tough position Thint is in, and looking at T3, he can see the difficulties. Hinckley stated he does not feel the building design fits the intent of the Downtown District but it does fit the ordinance.

Clark also said he understands Thint has a difficult balancing act between his client and the desire of the city. He said there is nothing wrong with the plan from a technical, legal stand point.

Matranga asked about the construction schedule. Thint answered construction was planned for the beginning of March and would last 6-8 months. Matranga asked what type of impact a two week delay would cause. Thint answered the owner has deadlines for financing and tenants. Lundquist asked if there are any concessions the city could make to save an additional oak. Thint said following the previous commission meeting, he had an extensive meeting with the architect and the owner. Thint said this is the most the owner would agree to. Lundquist stated asking for more time would only create ill will.

Mann said he liked the idea of using oaks instead of crepemyrtles. Harbin said staff and Thint can work on different tree types but will need to be aware of large tree roots interfering with utilities, streets, etc. Thint mentioned that Texas New Mexico Power Company will not allow big trees under the power lines, either.

Hinckley asked the chances of T9 not making it through construction. Thint said they will be working with an arborist and installing fencing at the drip line.

Matranga wanted to point out the following comments for the public. He said there have been many discussions behind scenes. Matranga said he understands this plan is not everything that everyone wanted but the commission is required to follow code. He said the seller did not put restrictions on saving the trees when they could have. He said the buyer could have clear cut the lot without asking permission and he has not. Matranga said the tree ordinance has been revised many times over the years and the commission is actively working on enhancing the tree ordinance, as we speak.

Lundquist stated this is no doubt a sensitive case and asked if there is any way to get City Council input. Harbin answered the city received a quote to move the trees at a cost of \$350,000 to \$425,000. She said the value in these trees is on this property. She also stated the city cannot spend tax dollars on private property. She said moving the trees would take a lot of time and be holding the developer up.

Motion to table - Perry

Second - Lundquist

Vote - Two in favor (Perry, Lundquist) and Five opposed.

Motion to approve and to encourage developer to use oak trees where possible - Sasson

Second - Perry

Vote - 6/1 Lundquist against.

B. Consideration and possible action regarding the Final Plat of Avalon at Friendswood Section 1

****Commissioner Tom Hinckley moved to approve Consideration and possible action regarding the Final Plat of Avalon at Friendswood Section 1. Seconded by Commissioner Travis Mann. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Harbin said normally final plats are on the Consent Agenda but staff was working with the applicant and thought there may be some outstanding comments. She said the plan as presented does meet code including a landscape plan for the Community Overlay District with a 6-foot fence along the boulevard. She said this plat is for 50 lots only and there is some forward motion with the land acquisition from League City.

Harbin said staff does review landscaping for common areas in residential areas. She said the developer is also proposing median landscaping and that will need a license agreement with the city.

Bobby Skinner/Taylor Morrison Homes stated it has been really positive working with staff.

- C. Consideration and possible action regarding the Preliminary Plat of Georgetown Section 1, a subdivision of 15.701 acres located in the I&GN RR Co Survey, Block 1, Section 23, Abstract 624, Friendswood, Galveston County, Texas

WITHDRAWN.

- D. Consideration and possible action regarding the Preliminary Plat of Georgetown Boulevard Street Dedication Phase II, a subdivision of 2.139 acres located in the I&GN RR Co Survey, Block 1, Section 23, Abstract 624 and Hooper & Wade Survey, Section 22, Abstract 491, Friendswood, Galveston County, Texas

WITHDRAWN.

5. Consideration and possible action regarding future Planning and Zoning Commission meeting dates

- A. Regular Meeting Thursday, February 25, 2021
Regular Meeting Thursday, March 11, 2021

6. Communications

- A. From Commissioners - suggestions for future agenda items, general comments and/or updates from liaison assignments

Perry said the Friendswood Downtown Economic Development Corporation meetings are now being recorded and are on YouTube. He said he provided a briefing on the TxDOT sidewalk and ramp grant. Perry said they are also working on the signage coming into the Downtown District. Perry stated the Planning Subcommittee is proposing changes to the Future Land Use map at the next meeting. He said they set a schedule to get through the update by the end of November.

Lundquist said Keep Friendswood Beautiful has the annual Spring Sparkle coming up.

Sasson said he attended the City Council meeting. Council approved the zone change for Friendswood Link Rd along with the first reading of two ordinance changes. He said the Galveston County Consolidated Drainage District approved the Avalon Final Plat. He said GCCDD is about 75% complete with the Imperial Estates project. Sasson said the Ordinance Subcommittee is actively working on changes to the tree ordinance.

Mann said the Planning Subcommittee discussed lot sizes and how they will come into long term planning. Hinckley said lot sizes are on the Ordinance Subcommittee's To Do list.

- B. From Planning Subcommittee – update on tasks
- C. From Ordinance Subcommittee – update on tasks

- D. From City Council Liaison, Robert Griffon - general comments and communication from City Council

Councilman Griffon said City Council approved the ordinance change to allow single family homes in multifamily zoning districts. He said Council appreciates incorporating things into the ordinance that will help developers and homeowners. He said the Clear Creek Watershed Steering Committee met and received new that grant dollars from 2015 and 2016 should be released soon.

Griffon said Beamer Road towards Scarsdale will be detouring traffic during drainage improvements that will impact water crossings.

Griffon said the Commission had a tough decision tonight and he knows it was hard to go through but the city has to abide by city ordinances.

- E. From Staff - January 2021 DRC Report; commercial and residential project updates, City Council action and ordinance updates

Harbin said the Planning Subcommittee is making progress and have a schedule set. She said the upcoming TxDOT work will improve ramps at the intersections, replace six traffic signals, and install sidewalks where there are currently none. She said TxDOT also agreed to include conduit installation for future light poles.

Bennett said the Ordinance Subcommittee met and has substantial progress on the Subdivision Ordinance rewrite. She said the proposed changes will be brought to the full commission for discussion. Bennett also said the Tree Ordinance is being researched against neighboring League City and Pearland.

7. Adjournment

This meeting was adjourned at 08:25 PM.