

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING HELD THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2019
BEGINNING AT 7:00 PM, AT 910 S. FRIENDSWOOD DRIVE, FRIENDSWOOD, TEXAS

MINUTES

1. Call to order

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE FRIENDSWOOD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION THAT WAS HELD ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2019, AT 07:03 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL LOCATED AT 910 S. FRIENDSWOOD DRIVE, FRIENDSWOOD, TEXAS,

COMMISSIONER RICHARD CLARK
COMMISSIONER MARCUS PERRY
COMMISSIONER BRETT BANFIELD
COMMISSIONER LISA LUNDQUIST
CHAIRMAN JOE MATRANGA
VICE-CHAIRMAN RICHARD SASSON
MARY KAY FISCHER CITY ATTORNEY
DIRECTOR OF CDD/PLANNER AUBREY HARBIN
DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR BECKY BENNETT

Absent: Guenther

2. Public Hearing

- A. A zone classification change request for 43.0673 acres of land, more or less, being a portion of a called 194.21 acre tract described as Tract "A" as conveyed to Yellowstone Hill Country Ranching, LLC, in Clerk's File Number 2010059686 of the Galveston County Deed Records, Galveston County, Friendswood, Texas, along the future Friendswood Lakes Boulevard, to change from Single Family Residential (SFR) to Multi Family Residential – Garden Home District (MFR-GHD)**

Harbin introduced the zone change for Sterling Creek, a garden home section. She explained the request was for a straight rezoning from single family residential (SFR) to garden home district (MFR-GHD). She said MFR-GHD was an existing zoning category that allows six units per acre with a minimum 60-foot lot width. Harbin read the general purpose description that the district is to allow development with geographical limitations, subject to flooding, or is located adjacent to a different zoning district and would provide as a buffer.

Adam Hill/Sterling Builders said they started developing the area in 2009 with 90-foot lots. He said they were instrumental in getting Friendswood Lakes Boulevard started and have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in Friendswood. He said Sterling Builders is now able to master plan the balance of land. Hill stated that, looking at the market, 90-foot lots are very expensive. Hill proposed to develop a custom product at \$500,000 on 60-foot lots. He said the proposed section 6 may be age restricted, as there seems to be a high demand for senior living in Friendswood.

For - none.

Against - Mike Anton said he backs up to the property and is worried about drainage. He asked what they were going to do with the creek. Anton questioned the setbacks in GHD. He said his main concern is density. Harbin said the GHD would allow six units per acre and should not affect the existing drainage. She explained the developer will have to provide detention. Anton said he moved to San Miguel for bigger lots, less noise, and fewer people. He explained his backyard already floods to a certain extent.

Hill said the development will be single family residential lots, not multi-family, despite the name of the zoning category. He also said the development was already approved for inline drainage.

Amir Ghebranious asked the distance between the existing fences and new houses. Hill said the rear setback would be 20-feet. Ghebranious said he purchased his property on San Miguel for tranquility. He said he is concerned with what the average price of the new homes would be and how far those homes would be from his, as well as, drainage. Ghebranious asked if the development would be altering the quality of his home. Hill explained the setbacks would be similar to the other sections that are already built. He said they would have a 20-foot setback with a price point around \$500,000. Hill stated he built the garden home section in Friendswood Lakes in 2004, if the neighbors would like to visit it for comparison.

3. 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)

Magi Crofcheck/San Miguel said they bought their home with the understanding it backed up to single family property, comparable to their home. She said garden homes would lower their resale value.

4. 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 or citizen so requests in which case the item would be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately.

A. Minutes from September 26, 2019, regular meeting

****Commissioner Marcus Perry moved to approve Minutes from September 26, 2019, regular meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Richard Clark. The motion was approved unanimously.**

5. Action Items

A. Consideration and possible action regarding a request for a zone classification change for 43.0673 acres of land, more or less, being a portion of a called 194.21 acre tract described as Tract "A" as conveyed to Yellowstone Hill Country Ranching, LLC, in Clerk's File Number 2010059686 of the Galveston County Deed Records, Galveston County, Friendswood, Texas, along the future Friendswood Lakes Boulevard, to change from Single Family Residential (SFR) to Multi Family Residential – Garden Home District (MFR-GHD)

****Commissioner Brett Banfield moved to approve a request for a zone classification change for 43.0673 acres of land, more or less, being a portion of a called 194.21 acre tract described as Tract "A" as conveyed to Yellowstone Hill Country Ranching, LLC, in Clerk's File Number 2010059686 of the Galveston County Deed Records, Galveston County, Friendswood, Texas, along the future Friendswood Lakes Boulevard, to change from Single Family Residential (SFR) to Multi Family Residential – Garden Home District (MFR-GHD)**

Seconded by Vice-Chairman Richard Sasson. The motion was approved 3-3 with Chairman Joe Matranga, Vice-Chairman Richard Sasson, Commissioner Marcus Perry opposed.

Harbin said, in addition to her previous comments, GHD regulates living area to 60 percent on the first floor.

Hill stated there is a 10-foot waterline easement and a 60 to 70-foot drainage easement that separates his property from the adjacent neighbors.

Banfield asked if the proposed homes, pricing around \$500,000, would continue with the same look as the previous sections. Hill said the architecture would remain the same and he hoped for a minimum 3,000 square feet. Banfield asked if the sections would be gated. Hill answered that section 6 would be. Banfield said the Commission would consider smaller lot subdivisions on case by case basis. He stated he was in favor of the proposed development because Friendswood needs garden homes. He said the market is downsizing and people need options other than 90-foot lots.

Sasson said the intent behind a garden home district is to create a buffer between high density uses and single family districts. He said the proposed subdivision was in the middle of a whole single family area. Sasson said he is sympathetic to the neighbors and intends to vote against the zone change.

Perry commented on the percentage of garden home to single family lots. Hill said the Commission has voted for other developments with far less. Perry said that, looking backwards, Sterling Creek almost looks like a planned unit development. Hill stated he wants the same respect as the other guys that had smaller lots approved. Perry asked if the Autumn Creek garden home section was approved under the same requirements. Harbin answered the GHD regulations had been the same since the early 1980s. Perry asked why the developer was not asking for a planned unit development (PUD). Hill answered the garden home district seemed to fit their needs and goal. He said the zoning district is not multi-family like the ordinance language reads. Perry asked if Sterling Creek was master planned from the beginning, would they have used a PUD. Harbin said, typically, PUDs are used for give and take and provide amenities like recreation centers and trails. Perry asked if the garden home section would have any amenities. Hill said the Sterling Creek amenities are accessible by everyone. Hill also stated the adjacent electric

transmission line is a hardship.

Lundquist asked where the transmission line is located. Hill said the line is along the west side. Lundquist said the Commission has accepted PUDs with smaller lot makeups but explained the overall density proved to be less than what a subdivision would be with all 90-foot lots. Lundquist asked what amenities were being provided. Hill answered there are green trails for residents to walk. Lundquist asked if walking trails were being installed. Hill clarified walking trails would not be installed, just green space to walk along. Lundquist asked if any parks were being provided. Hill said they would have green spaces like the Avalon at Friendswood subdivision.

Clark questioned the timing of the proposed Friendswood Lakes Boulevard. Harbin answered the road was currently under design and that the city is hoping the County will have it completed in 18 months to two years. Clark said the lack of access impacts sections 6 and 7. Hill commented they spent a lot of money and donated land because they need the road.

Banfield said Hill has been a proponent of 90 foot lots in the past and asked Hill why he changed tune. Hill answered the economy demands it. He said people want less house. Hill said he has watched other guys come before and make more money off the smaller lots. Hill said they are trying to compete with those other developments. Banfield stated Friendswood has to provide for an aging community. He said the market is demanding it and if Friendswood does not provide it, seniors will move outside the city. Hill said they provide tax dollars and they want some help from the city so they can compete with the big guys coming from out of town.

Fishcer reminded the Commission to focus on the land use.

Matranga asked why rezone to garden home district instead of continuing the single family lot pattern. Hill answered the master plan was to finish 90-foot lots up to Sandy Lake Drive. He said the TNMP transmission line is a hardship and that no one will pay enough money for the large lots next to a power line.

Matranga said the general description of a garden home district is to be used for unique terrain, flooding, or incompatible zoning districts. He said the Commission has seen other garden home districts that fit the description but that this proposed development is surrounded by single family lots and a planned unit development. Matranga said he is concerned that what the applicant is asking for does not meet the intent of a garden home district.

Hill asked if he came back with the proposal as a planned unit development, if it would be ok. Matranga answered that a planned unit development comes with amenities. He said technically this does not meet the requirements. Hill asked if he comes back with a PUD would he get a favorable decision. Matranga said he cannot answer for a hypothetical. Hill said they were advised to present as a zone change to garden home district instead of a planned unit development. Matranga stated he was not going to debate.

Lundquist asked if Sterling Creek is gated, how would residents be able to access all the green walking areas. Hill said the new section would have codes to the walk gates.

*Banfield excused from meeting at 7:51pm.

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

**A. Thursday, October 24, 2019 - regular meeting
Thursday, November 14, 2019 - regular meeting**

Harbin said the meeting on October 24th is cancelled due to a lack of items for consideration or discussion. She said the next regular meeting following that will be November 14th and that the second November meeting is scheduled for Thanksgiving. She said the Commission can discuss rescheduling or cancelling the Thanksgiving meeting on November 14th.

7. Communications

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

Clark announced the Zoning Board Of Adjustment would be meeting on Tuesday, October 22nd.

B. From Ordinance Subcommittee

Sasson said the subcommittee met and discussed a To Do list. He said they looked over the updated zoning map; discussed sidewalk requirements in established neighborhoods; and discussed language changes to the zoning ordinance following House Bill 2439. Sasson said Perry was concerned with the wording and staff sought guidance from the city attorney. Bennett said the subcommittee would bring their recommendations to the full commission at the next meeting.

C. From Planning Subcommittee

Harbin said the subcommittee is trying to get a meeting scheduled.

D. From City Council Liaison, Trish Hanks: General comments and communication from City Council

Hanks congratulated staff on receiving the Scenic City Award. She said Friendswood is the only city in the history of the program to jump from Bronze level to Platinum level.

E. From Staff: September DRC Report, commercial and residential project updates, and City Council action and ordinance updates

Harbin stated the DRC report was sent out. She updated the Commission that Chick-fil-a picked up their building permits and had started construction. She said the Chipotle Mexican Grill is also under way. Harbin said the Friendswood Trails subdivision looks to be being sold to a homebuilder.

8. Adjournment

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:57.

9. Call to Order: Work Session - 2nd Floor Conference Room immediately following the regular meeting

The Work Session was postponed.

- A. Training Session 2: Discussion and presentation on City of Friendswood Subdivision Ordinance (Appendix B of Code of Ordinances)**

10. Adjourn Work Session