



**CITY OF FRIENDSWOOD
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 2020 - 7:00 PM**

Minutes

**MINUTES OF A FRIENDSWOOD REGULAR MEETING HELD AT 910 S. FRIENDSWOOD
DRIVE, FRIENDSWOOD, TEXAS**

STATE OF TEXAS
CITY OF FRIENDSWOOD
COUNTIES OF GALVESTON/HARRIS
JUNE 25, 2020

1. Call to order

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE FRIENDSWOOD PLANNING AND ZONING
COMMISSION THAT WAS HELD ON THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 2020, AT 07:02 PM 910 S.
FRIENDSWOOD DRIVE, FRIENDSWOOD, TEXAS

CHAIRMAN JOE MATRANGA
VICE-CHAIRMAN RICHARD SASSON
COMMISSIONER BRETT BANFIELD
COMMISSIONER RICHARD CLARK
COMMISSIONER MARCUS PERRY
COMMISSIONER ERIC GUENTHER - VIA TELECONFERENCE
COMMISSIONER LISA LUNDQUIST - VIA TELECONFERENCE
COUNCIL LIAISON TRISH HANKS
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) None at 7:00pm.

Between agenda items 5 and 6, at 7:47pm, a Motion to Suspend the Rules was made by Commissioner Banfield to revisit agenda item 2 Communication from the public. The motion was seconded by Lundquist. The vote was unanimously approved.

Moe Mays of First Baptist Church asked the commission why he was not allowed to discuss the proposed height ordinance changes. Chairman Matranga explained the public is allowed to speak under agenda item 2 Communications from the public.

Mays stated the church has served the community well and that allowing an increased height for the cross would not set a precedent.

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 Commissioner**

Brett Banfield. The motion was approved unanimously.

- A. Minutes for the regular meeting held Thursday, May 14, 2020
- B. Minutes for the regular meeting held Thursday, May 28, 2020

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 proposed amendments to Appendix C, Zoning Ordinance "Section 7. I. Downtown District (DD), general purpose and description" to add a reference to Section 20. Definitions, "Section 7.Q.3. Area and Height Exceptions" to amend the height exceptions, and "Section 20. Definitions - Height" to remove a duplicate requirement

****Vice-Chairman Richard Sasson moved to discuss Consideration and possible action regarding proposed amendments to Appendix C, Zoning Ordinance "Section 7. I. Downtown District (DD), general purpose and description" to add a reference to Section 20. Definitions, "Section 7.Q.3. Area and Height Exceptions" to amend the height exceptions, and "Section 20. Definitions - Height" to remove a duplicate requirement. Seconded by Commissioner Marcus Perry.**

Vice-Chairman Richard Sasson moved to approve Consideration and possible action regarding proposed amendments to Appendix C, Zoning Ordinance "Section 7. I. Downtown District (DD), general purpose and description" to add a reference to Section 20. Definitions, "Section 7.Q.3. Area and Height Exceptions" to amend the height exceptions, and "Section 20. Definitions - Height" to remove a duplicate requirement. Seconded by Commissioner Marcus Perry. The motion was approved unanimously.

Harbin explained this agenda item was to follow up from the previous meeting and make sure the commission are all on the same page. She said the commission would workshop with City Council before an official vote, though. Harbin showed a power point presentation outlining the height ordinance discussion. Harbin explained the subcommittee originally reviewed the height ordinance

at the request of City Council. She said a lack of clarity in the existing ordinance led to proposed changes to clean up some items. Harbin stated the Ordinance Subcommittee met and discussed the recent SUP application for a 90-foot, 10-inch structure. Harbin said the Main Street Committee increased overall height to 70-feet back in 2005-2008 while creating the Downtown District. She said all other zoning districts allow a 40-foot building plus an additional 10feet for cupolas, towers, steeples, etc.

Harbin said staff did benchmark other cities and found most to limit building height around 40 to 50-feet. She said staff did not find any other downtowns allowing 70-foot buildings. She stated the way some cities regulate additional height is to increase the setback requirements. Sasson summarized the discussion topics. He stated the Friends Church pictures gives perspective of how tall 90-feet would be. Sasson asked for an informal straw vote regarding removing conflicting language and redundancy, clarifying the height regulations, and upholding the 70-foot height as recommended by the Main Street Committee.

Clark mentioned the Friends Church photos are not precise but do lend a perspective. Clark said a 90-foot structure in that area would be tall enough to actually block the view of the International Space Station for a time, each time it passes. Clark said a lighted monument could possibly cause light pollution, as well. He said once you make the rule, everyone can do it. He stated when he thinks of allowing a 90-foot building, he imagines ten buildings, not just one.

Guenther said a lot of thought has gone into the height ordinance and he supports it as presented.

Lundquist agreed with the general consensus. She said increasing building height is a slippery slope and she is not inclined to make an exception. Lundquist stated 70-feet is plenty tall especially since the church is right in the middle of homes.

Matranga asked what the predominant adjacent zoning was around the Downtown District. Harbin said the majority is Single Family Residential plus two blocks of Multi-Family Residential - Low Density. Matranga asked how the benchmark cities were picked. Bennett answer the adjacent cities were looked into plus cities that participate in the Texas Downtown Association.

5. Discussion Items

A. Discussion regarding update to 1998 Comprehensive Plan

Harbin showed a presentation that would go before City Council to start updating the Comprehensive Plan. She said in house updates would take place instead of hiring a third party consultant. Harbin said a new design, with help from other staff, would be part of the updated Comp Plan. She said the successes of the 1998 plan would be incorporated into the new plan. She said another important effort is to incorporate existing plans such as Park Master Plan, Major Thoroughfare Plan, etc. Harbin said the Comp Plan would establish a time frame, probably around 20 years, plus a periodic plan review. She said these items will be discussed at length with the Commission and City Council.

Perry asked if the "children" plans get inspiration from parent document. Harbin explained having all the "children" plans without the parent plan is backwards and double work for staff and consultants. Perry asked why the proposed 20 year plan. Harbin said the time frame is up for discussion but 20 years is about average for comp plans.

Sasson said he is impressed staff is taking on the Comp Plan in house. He said it is saving the tax payers a lot of money.

Banfield said he appreciates an annual review and the Comp Plan becoming a living document.

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

A. Regular Meeting - Thursday, July 9, 2020

Regular Meeting - Thursday, July 23, 2020

Harbin said the Commission would also be having a work session with City Council on Monday, July 6th to discuss the building height ordinance.

7. Communications

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

Chairman Matranga presented Commissioner Guenther with a plaque in appreciation of his service as a volunteer on the commission. Sasson, Banfield, Clark, and Lundquist all thanked Guenther for being part of the Commission.

B. From Planning Subcommittee – update on tasks
None.

C. From Ordinance Subcommittee – update on tasks
None.

D. From City Council Liaison, Trish Hanks - general comments and communication from City Council
None.

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

Harbin thanked Commissioner Eric Guenther for his volunteer years with the Commission. Bennett and Fischer also thanked Commissioner Guenther.

Lundquist said the Fairy Trail in Stevenson Park made national news.

8. Adjournment

This meeting was adjourned at 08:03 PM.