

CITY OF RICHARDSON
CITY PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES – DECEMBER 15, 2009

The Richardson City Plan Commission met December 15, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall in the Council Chambers, 411 W. Arapaho Road, Richardson, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Gantt, Chairman
Gerald Bright, Commissioner
Janet DePuy, Commissioner
Barry Hand, Commissioner
Jim Henderson, Commissioner
Scott Jessen, Commissioner
Marilyn Frederick, Alternate
Thomas Maxwell, Alternate

MEMBER ABSENT: Bill Hammond, Vice Chair

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Sam Chavez, Asst. Director of Dev. Svcs. - Planning
Israel Roberts, Development Review Manager
Mohamed Bireima, Planning Technician
Kathy Welp, Executive Secretary

BRIEFING SESSION

Prior to the regular business meeting, the Plan Commission met with staff to receive a briefing on agenda items and other topics.

MINUTES

1. Approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of October 6, 2009.

Motion: Commissioner Henderson moved to approve the minutes of October 6, 2009; second by Commissioner Bright. Motion passed 7-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

All items listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the City Plan Commission and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless desired, in which case any item(s) may be removed from the Consent Agenda for separate consideration.

- 2. Final Plat of Lot 1, Block 1 of the Calvary Pentecostal Church Addition:** A request for approval of a final plat for a 3.14-acre tract of land located at 725 W. Arapaho Road; south side of Arapaho Road, east of West Shore Drive. Applicant: Jeff Peters. *Staff: Israel Roberts.*

3. **Site Plan and Landscape Plan for Calvary Pentecostal Church (companion to Item 2):** A request for approval of a site plan and landscape plan for an 11,431 square foot, one-story church on a 3.14-acre lot located at 725 W. Arapaho Road; south side of Arapaho Road, east of West Shore Drive. Applicant: Jeff Peters. *Staff: Israel Roberts*
4. **Amending Plat for Collins Technology Park, Lot 1B, Block 1:** A request for approval of an amending plat for an 8.87-acre lot located at 1232 Alma Road; southeast corner of Alma Road and Quality Way. Applicant: Emily M. Johnson, Pacheco Koch Consulting Engineers, representing Collins Technology Park Partners, LLC. *Staff: Mohamed Bireima.*
5. **Revised Landscape Plan for Technology Business Campus:** A request for approval of a revised landscape plan for an existing office development on a 3.80-acre lot located at 3401-3517 Spectrum Boulevard; northwest corner of Renner Road and Spectrum Boulevard. Applicant: Marc Tedrow, representing Vantage Companies, LLC. *Staff: Mohamed Bireima.*
6. **Amending Plat for Lots 1A and 8B, Block B of the Technology Business Campus:** A request for approval of an amending plat of Lots 1 and 8A (3.07-acres) located at 3300 Essex Drive and 3301 Matrix Drive, southeast corner of Essex Drive and Spectrum Boulevard. Applicant: Hugo Morales. *Staff: Israel Roberts.*
7. **Revised Site and Landscape Plan for 3300 Essex Drive:** A request for approval of a revised site plan and landscape plan for an existing office building on a 1.52-acre lot located at 3300 Essex Drive; southeast corner of Essex Drive and Spectrum Boulevard. Applicant: Hugo Morales. *Staff: Israel Roberts.*

Motion: Commissioner Hand made a motion to remove Item 5 for separate consideration; second by Commissioner Henderson. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion: Commissioner Henderson made a motion to approve the remaining Consent Agenda items; second by Commissioner DePuy. Motion passed 7-0.

SEPARATE CONSIDERATION

Revised Landscape Plan for Technology Business Campus: A request for approval of a revised landscape plan for an existing office development on a 3.80-acre lot located at 3401-3517 Spectrum Boulevard; northwest corner of Renner Road and Spectrum Boulevard.

Mr. Bireima reported the property is on the west side of Spectrum Boulevard, north of Renner Road, is 3.8-acres, and zoned Industrial. He explained that the applicant was requesting to remove the existing trees that interfere with the location of a proposed monument sign at the southeast corner of the property.

Mr. Bireima stated that the revised landscape plan reflects the removal of a 12-inch caliper Oak tree, a 6-inch caliper Cedar Elm, and four Crepe Myrtles. The applicant is proposing to plant two canopy trees and four ornamental trees within the surrounding area.

Commissioner Bright asked if the buildings on the property were currently occupied.

Mr. Bireima replied he was not sure and suggested the applicant may be better able to answer the question.

Mr. Brett McMillan, Vantage Company, 11242 La Cantera Trail, Frisco, Texas, stated that the business condos are owned by the tenants and are about 25% occupied.

Commissioner Henderson asked if the berm was going to be removed and the reason behind the removal.

Mr. McMillan replied that they were trying to lower the elevation of the sign to make it more visible to traffic on Renner Road.

Chairman Gantt asked if the berm was part of the Vantage Company property, or did it carry over to the adjacent property. He also wanted to know if the sign would be 7' 4" from grade and would the berm obstruct the west side of the sign.

Mr. Marc Tedrow, Vantage Company, 2412 Valley Forge, Richardson, Texas, replied that the berm goes up 4 feet and they plan to remove approximately 2 feet from the top of it and leave the slope tapering off on to the adjacent property. He did not feel the sign would be obstructed on the west side.

Commissioners Maxwell and Fredericks asked for clarification as to the placement of the monument sign.

Mr. Tedrow replied that the sign would be placed on top of the berm, after 2 feet has been removed, and would be 9' 4" tall from the sidewalk.

Commissioner Henderson asked what prompted the decision to take out the Oak tree.

Mr. Tedrow replied the decision was based on visibility for traffic along Renner Road. He added that if he could encroach into the 15-foot easement that is closer to Renner Road, he would not have to remove the tree, but would only have to trim the branches.

Commissioner Jessen asked if Vantage owned the property east of the road way, and if so, could the sign be placed at that location.

Mr. McMillan replied that Vantage did not own that property. He added that one of the biggest challenges for achieving full occupancy for the property had been visibility, acknowledged that

not having a sign was an oversight in the original development, and felt the proposed sign would help achieve their goal.

Chairman Gantt asked if there was room for additional trees north of the proposed site. He understood that it was important to market the buildings, but felt there was an imbalance in the trade off of what would be taken out versus what would be planted.

Mr. Tedrow asked if there was a way to place the sign in the existing easement.

Mr. Bireima replied that the pedestrian easement would have to be abandoned, and there was also an electrical easement in the corner of the proposed site.

Commissioner DePuy asked if there was a way for Vantage to partner with the property next to them, which already has an existing monument sign, to include the businesses of both properties on one sign.

Mr. Chavez stated that the sign ordinance does not allow off-premise signage.

Commissioner Frederick asked if they were locked into the size of the sign, or would a smaller sign work so as not to interfere with the large Oak tree.

Mr. Tedrow replied the trunk of the tree would still be in the way.

Commissioner Maxwell asked how moving the sign south would be beneficial relative to the tree since the tree was 12 inches in caliper and the sign was 15 feet wide.

Mr. Tedrow replied that by moving the sign south he would be able to trim the low-hanging branches as opposed to removing the tree, and still have visibility for the sign.

Commissioner Bright asked if the sign and the Oak tree could possibly be located in the same area without sacrificing one for the other.

Mr. Tedrow replied that the sign would be east of where the tree is now located and felt the tree would block viewing the sign by those traveling east on Renner Road.

Commissioner DePuy asked if the sign would have the names of all the tenants in the complex. She added that even if the tree was not there, a sign with all that information would be difficult to read as traffic goes by the site.

Mr. McMillan replied that the size of the sign and the lettering would need to be large enough to be read by the passing traffic, and this information was based on research into signage used by other existing office condo developments. He noted that there would be requirements to have business names on the sign (e.g., size), and the business owners would have to pay a fee for placing their name on the sign.

Commissioner Maxwell asked if all the eleven buildings were on the same site, and if not, would that cause a problem with off-site signage.

Mr. McMillan replied that there are two lots and the monument sign would be utilized by the office condos on the southern most lot.

Commissioner Bright suggested that the wording "Renner Professional Plaza" would be more important than the individual signs.

Chairman Gantt and Commissioner DePuy both asked if Vantage had extensively advertised the condos, and whether the occupancy rate had fluctuated at all.

Mr. McMillan replied that they had performed significant advertising and brought in a third party brokerage firm to assist. He indicated that the occupancy rate had basically remained the same for the past few years. He added that not having a sign has been one of the biggest challenges when dealing with prospective buyers.

Commissioner Frederick stated she had an issue with cutting down the tree for placement of the monument sign.

Commissioner Hand stated that removing the ornamental trees did not seem to be the problem, but removing the larger Oak tree could possibly pose a problem and suggested the applicant re-think the proposal.

Mr. Tedrow offered to make a mock-up of the sign and photograph it for the Commission to review. The Commission thought that would be helpful.

With no further discussion on the item, Chairman Gantt called for a motion.

Motion: Commissioner Hand made a motion to table the item to the January 5, 2010, CPC meeting; second by Commissioner Fredericks. Motion passed 7-0.

DISCUSSION

- 8. Greater Dallas Planning Council Seminars:** Discussion on Metromorphosis 2009: Urban Placemaking, and Vision North Texas seminars held on October 9 and 10, 2009.

Commissioners and staff reviewed the material from the seminar. No action was taken.

STAFF REPORTS

- 9. Future Agenda Items:** Staff identification of future zoning cases, plats, development plans and work session briefing items.

Mr. Chavez noted the upcoming projects and advised the Commission that the site plan for Carl's Jr. would probably be on the January 5th agenda. No action was taken.

With no further business before the Commission, Chairman Gantt adjourned the meeting at 8:14 p.m.



David Gantt, Chairman
City Plan Commission