

North Little Rock Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
May 11, 2010

Chairman Clifton called the regular meeting of the North Little Rock Planning Commission to order at 4:45 PM in the Council Chambers, City Hall.

Members Present:

Alexander
Belasco
Chambers
Dietz
Foster
Parker
Clifton, Chairman

Members Absent:

Armstrong
White

Staff Present:

Robert Voyles, Director
Samantha Evans, Secretary

Others Present:

Paula Jones, Asst. City Attorney
Beth White, Alderwoman
Debi Ross, Alderwoman

Administrative:

Mr. Voyles reported to the Commission about the Downtown Character Area Plan. He stated that the final draft plan presentation will be held at the North Little Rock Chamber Building on May 12, 2010. Mr. Foster encouraged all of the Commissioners to attend.

Mr. Chambers quoted the consultants as stating North Little Rock has a lot of amenities in place to build upon.

Mr. Foster asked Mr. Voyles to send an email to all Commissioners with the website for the Master Plan.

Mr. Chambers stated the Argenta District is interested in adopting a smart code for the Downtown area. Mr. Voyles explained that such form based codes are a good idea. Form based codes focus primarily on regulating urban form and less on land use. Mr. Voyles stated that the only drawback to using a form based code would be addressing the legalities of such codes.

Roll Call:

Roll was called; a motion was made and seconded to excuse those absent from the meeting. The motion was approved with (7) affirmative votes and (2) absent.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion was made and seconded to approve the April meeting minutes as submitted. The minutes were approved with (7) affirmative votes and (2) absent.

Subdivision Administrative:

None

Public Hearing – Old Business:

1. **Rezone #1521.** To rezone property from R-3 to I-2 to recognize an existing tool manufacturing business. The request is located at 1317 Orange Street.

Mr. L. David Jones represented the applicant.

Chairman Clifton asked if there was anybody in the audience who wanted to speak on the application.

Mr. Chambers stated that he supports most of staff's recommendations to exclude the corner vacant lot, 317 and 315 13th Street from the rezoning request. He thinks that the area really has a chance to come back and he is anxious to limit industrial encroachment in a primarily residential area. He suggested squaring off the applicant's industrial property, rather than allowing the rezone of the additional residential lots.

Mr. Jones stated that while the current use does not currently comply with the site's designated use, their manufacturing business has been there for more than 30 years. Mr. Jones stated the current owners purchased property around them with the hope to replat the land into one lot for tax purposes. The owners plan to expand in the future and are asking to rezone their lot and the additional lots purchased.

Chairman Clifton asked Mr. Voyles to read staff recommendations. Mr. Voyles stated he understand they bought property, but it's zoned R-3. Any expansion into the neighborhood should be carefully considered with limits and the Land Use Plan projects prior to the plan of light industrial. Mr. Voyles stated staff cannot recommend rezoning the applicant's property when it conflicts with the Plan. The Plan calls for this area to remain primarily residential, not to expand light industrial. However, Mr. Voyles stated staff recognizes that the business has been in the area for a long time and suggest only amending the Land Use Plan to indicate a general plan of use for the neighborhood. In addition, allow rezoning of existing business use and east to the rail tracks. Mr. Voyles stated that staff does not support continued expansion of light industrial along Willow Street. Mr. Voyles agreed with Mr. Chambers that a reasonable compromise would include squaring off the industrial property currently in use, not to include the purchased

residential property.

Mr. Voyles went on to state that he has not heard from the neighborhood, but there may be people from the neighborhood at the City Council Meeting.

Mr. Jones directed the Commissioners to glance at the zoning map. He stated that much of the property to the south and west are already zoned industrial. Mr. Jones stated his client is willing to make a compromise to leave the corner vacant lot as R-3. In the future, if industrial encroachment continues in the area, Mr. Jones stated that his client may attempt to acquire and rezone the corner vacant lot. However, his client could not move forward with his expansion plans without rezoning 317 and 315 13th Street.

Mr. Foster asked Mr. Voyles his position on leaving the two corner lots as buffers for residential. Mr. Voyles reiterated staff's position that the rezone is in direct conflict with the Land Use Plan. He stated that while he knows that there has been a lot of industrial expansion within the area, including the City acquiring land for the Public Works yard, the Commissioners should think through rezoning the area from residential to industrial.

Chairman Clifton stated it is unlikely that the area will change back to single family residential. Mr. Chambers pointed out that many people made the same remarks about the Downtown area, and now it has become completely revitalized.

Mr. Chambers asked Mr. Voyles what type of buffer is required for the area under review. Mr. Voyles stated that it requires a minimum 6ft buffer on the Westside near the residential lots, and possibly 12 ft on the south side. Mr. Voyles pointed out that the business currently has a pavement and retaining wall as a buffer.

Mr. Voyles concluded by stating he could not really say he wants to reclassify the property from residential to industrial because it does not support the Land Use Plan.

Mr. Chambers stated that he would support the application and an amendment to the Land Use Plan, if the owner would amend his request to not include the vacant corner lot and 317 W. 13th Street.

Mr. Dietz asked to see the development plan. The applicant stated that he did not have the development plan at the moment and gave it to staff. He did not think that he would need his development plan for this meeting.

Mr. Jones stated he wanted to use the additional property as a parking lot.

Mr. Chambers asked Mr. Voyles if parking would be allowed in an R-3 zone. Mr. Voyles stated yes. Mr. Chambers then went on to ask the Commissioners and staff, if we could just allow the lots to stay as R-3 and used as a parking lot only. Ms. Belasco stated that due to finance purposes, the zoning should be uniform and would require a rezone.

Mr. Dietz stated that he does not have a problem with what they want to do.

Mr. Jones stated that the applicant would agree to amend the application to exclude the corner vacant lot and 317 W. 13th Street.

Chairman Clifton asked if there was anybody in the audience who wanted to speak on this item.

Ms. Bonnie Johnson, a resident, stated that she would like more information on the application. She wanted to know the exact location where the business wanted to expand and what lots they wanted to buy.

Mr. Voyles and the applicant explained the rezone would not affect the west side, near her property.

Chairman Clifton asked if there was anybody else in the audience who wanted to speak on this item. There were no additional comments from Commissioners or the audience.

Chairman Clifton asked for a roll call vote to approve the application less the vacant corner lot and 317 W. 13th Street.

Alexander	Yes	Foster	Yes
Armstrong	Absent	Parker	Yes
Belasco	Yes	White	Absent
Chambers	Yes	Clifton	Yes
Dietz	Yes		

Chairman Clifton asked for a roll call vote on the amended application with a change to the Land Use Plan.

Alexander	Yes	Foster	Yes
Armstrong	Absent	Parker	Yes
Belasco	Yes	White	Absent
Chambers	Yes	Clifton	Yes
Dietz	Yes		

Rezone #1521 was approved with (7) affirmative votes and (2) absent votes.

Public Hearing – New Business:

- 2. Rezone #1525.** To rezone property from I-1 to R-2 to recognize an existing residence. The request is located at 4616 Briley Road.

Mr. Voyles represented the applicant, Robert Fields. He stated that the site has an existing house on an established parcel next to a trailer park. This is a residential site and the City zoned the area to industrial when it was annexed. The rezone would allow for the mortgage on an existing residential structure. The adjoining trailer park is likely to continue and this site is not on a busy street or in transition area. Mr. Voyles stated that staff recommends to approve the spot zone.

Chairman Clifton asked if there was anybody in the audience who wanted to speak on this item. There were no additional comments from Commissioners or the audience.

Chairman Clifton asked for a roll call vote on the application.

Alexander	Yes	Foster	Yes
Armstrong	Absent	Parker	Yes
Belasco	Yes	White	Absent
Chambers	Yes	Clifton	Yes
Dietz	Yes		

Rezone #1525 was approved with (7) affirmative votes and (2) absent votes.

- 2. **Rezone # 1526.** To rezone property from R-4 to I-1 to allow warehousing. The request is located at 3021 Arkansas Ave.

The applicant, David Jones, was present.

Mr. Chambers stated to the applicant, Sid Richmond, that the site looks really good, due to his clearing way of a previous auto salvage yard.

Mr. Chambers asked if the vote included rezoning the property and a change to the Land Use Plan. Chairman Clifton stated that it did.

Chairman Clifton asked if there was anybody in the audience who wanted to speak on this item. There were no additional comments from Commissioners or the audience.

Chairman Clifton asked for a roll call vote on the application.

Alexander	Yes	Foster	Yes
Armstrong	Absent	Parker	Yes
Belasco	Yes	White	Absent
Chambers	Yes	Clifton	Abstain
Dietz	Yes		

Rezone #1525 was approved with (6) affirmative votes, (1) abstention, and (2) absent votes.

- 3. **Special Use #690.** To allow a daycare center in a C-6 zone. The request is located at 600 N. Olive Street.

Postponed until June 8, 2010 Planning Commission meeting.

Public Comments/Adjournment:

Mr. Chambers announced invited everyone to Art Week’s Junction Bridge Kick-off on May 13, 2010, at 5:30 p.m.

A motion was made to adjourn and it was seconded. The motion passed with (7) affirmative votes and the meeting was adjourned at 5:24 pm.

Passed: _____

Respectfully Submitted:

Norman Clifton, Chairman

Robert Voyles, Director