

Russellville Planning Commission Minutes

August 22, 2016 @ 5:30 p.m.

The Russellville Planning Commission held its regular meeting on Monday, August 22, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the Russellville City Hall Council Chambers.

Members Present

Chairman Dennis Boyd
Vice-Chair Doug Skelton
Peggy Stratton
Council Liaison Freddie Harris

Nathan Barber
Karen Yarbrough
Mike Wilkins

Members Absent

Secretary Wendell Miller
Shirley Hatley
John Whiteside

Also present: Mayor Randy Horton, City Planner James Walden, City Engineer Kurt Jones, City Attorney Trey Smith, Planning Assistant Lequitta Jones, Jim Lynch/City Corp, Fire Marshal Richard Setian, Gregg Longs/Crafton Tull, Frank Barksdale/AMR Architects, Nick Landers/Landers Development, John Sledge/Landers Development, Bob Weibler.

Welcome

Mayor Horton, Chairman Boyd and the commissioners welcomed Karen Yarbrough to the Planning Commission. She is filling the vacancy left by Commissioner Todd Meimerstorf.

The First Order of Business was a request to review and approve the July 25, 2016 minutes. Commissioner Wilkins made the motion to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skelton and passed unanimously.

The Second Order of Business was a request to review and approve the large scale development plan for the existing Walmart Fuel Station #58 located at 2409 East Main Street. Submitted by David Van Leer P.E. of Cochran Engineering on behalf of Walmart. (DV.16.08.144)

City Planner Walden said this property is located at the 2409 East Main Street Walmart location. Their proposal is to expand the fueling station that is in the Walmart parking lot. The adjacent uses are Walmart to the north, Chili's, Arvest Bank to the east, and surrounded by other commercial property. This new proposed driveway for this property is somewhere in the vicinity of 200 to 300 feet from the intersection with Weir Road. In reviewing the *Comments/Questions*, we had one question that was not answered -- would the parking be sufficient to meet the requirements for both Walmart and the Fueling Station? We have not received updated parking calculations. So if this were approved we would need verification of that prior to a building permit being issued. Another question with the development was would a dumpster be provided on site. The applicant stated that they have an agreement with Walmart where they actually take

their trash to the Walmart dumpsters. So that trash service will be adequately handled. In terms of the elevation drawings required to meet the commercial building standards for the City, we did get those elevations today and the elevations will consist of EIFS and brick as well as a wood fence on the back. So there is no concern in regard to the façade complying with the code requirements. The major concern is the proposed driveway that turns onto Main Street. Initially, it was proposed as one form of a ‘one way in and one way out’ design.

City Engineer Jones said when the Walmart Super Center was originally constructed there was a right-in right-out driveway on East Main that was later removed. The previous driveway is shown on the latest plan. It was located a little bit further to the east. The concern initially was that we’re going to have a repeat of what happened approximately 10 years ago. Essentially, there were numerous east-bound vehicles attempting to make illegal left turns into the Super Center. That was our main concern. After the Technical Review Meeting we expressed our concerns to the developer’s representatives and told them that due to this previous traffic problem, the recommendation was going to be denial. Since that meeting we have come up with a plan that we believe will adequately control the attempted left turn movements into the facility. I sent the revised plan to Scott Mullis, District Engineer for the Arkansas Highway Transportation Department (AHTD), for their review. We discussed it and he felt like this was something that they could permit with a couple of minor modifications. Instead of the channelizers that the developer’s engineer had proposed, they requested a four-foot wide concrete median. If this is approved, I will work with the developer’s engineer and tweak the exit lane slightly. We also want to adequately discourage any attempted left turn out of the facility as well. I think we are at a point from an engineering standpoint with the State that we can live with.

Commissioner Wilkins asked what was going to keep people that are going east on East Main from trying to turn left across the traffic. City Engineer Jones pointed to the drawing where the proposal shows the channelizers that would keep vehicles from turning across into the next lane. It’s similar to West Main where Marina Road merges into West Main. Mr. Wilkins asked if there would be a sidewalk. Engineer Jones said yes, the sidewalk will be located in the narrow island part of the road.

Planner Walden said the *recommendation for this application is approval with contingencies*:

- (1) Updated parking quantities to verify the parking requirement post development before any building permits are pulled.
- (2) The applicant coordinate with the city engineer on submitting updated driveway plans that include a concrete island instead of channelizers at the right turn in.
- (3) Permitting approval from the AHTD for the driveways.

David Van Leer with Cochran Engineering said he thought they could address all the items that the staff and commission have requested and all the items they listed contingent upon approval. We would be willing to address and modify our plans accordingly.

Commissioner Barber asked if this new driveway is to increase the accessibility to the pumping station area. David Van Lee said “yes.” We would be adding two additional fuel dispensers --

technically four pumps -- the kiosk building will be removed and the large convenience store constructed. Mr. Barber asked if the addition of the new driveway would take some load off of the east entrance to the Super Center. Mr. Van Leer said "yes."

Commissioner Wilkins asked if the purpose of eliminating some of the parking places was to give a wider lane into the main parking lot. Mr. Van Leer said this will also allow for even flow through the parking lot. City Engineer Jones said they are actually proposing blocking that main isle with an island, which I like. What it is going to do is require traffic to come up there to that main south perimeter road that they have in the parking lot now. Then they will have to either turn left or right at that point. It is a one-way isle coming away from the store at that point. I think they have adjusted things internally that will improve traffic flow and help prevent some problems resulting from the large flow of traffic coming into the Super Center's parking lot. Mr. Wilkins asked Engineer Jones if they will have sidewalks. We need to make sure they have a continued access. Mr. Jones said there will be sidewalks.

Mr. Jim Lynch from City Corporation said he wanted to make sure that the developer addresses the water and sewer that are both located on that side of the street to ensure that there is adequate cover because when they cut that down there may have to be some utility relocation take place. We just want everybody to be aware of that. Mr. Van Leer said that would not be a problem. He said they would address that also.

Commissioner Wilkins made the motion to approve subject to satisfying parking calculations, updated driveway plans, permitting approval from the AHTD and satisfying the concerns of affected public utility companies. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skelton and passed unanimously.

The Third Order of Business was for discussion only: The Arbors at Russellville Assisted Living Facility on Marina Way submitted by John Sledge of Landers Development, LLC, and Frank Barksdale/AMR, on behalf of Nick Landers.

John Sledge, Frank Barksdale with AMR Architects, Inc., Gregg Long with Crafton Tull, and Nick Landers gave a presentation regarding a proposed assisted living facility, "The Arbors at Russellville Assisted Living." Mr. Sledge said we are proposing to put approximately 69,000 square feet of assisted living on Marina Way. The location is about 1500 feet west of the River Oaks Subdivision. There is a 40-acre tract of land that has been for sale for awhile and we are looking at putting it on 20 acres of that. We would like to zone it to a Planned Unit Development (PUD), which protects the City. The facility that we are going to construct is a 75-bed unit which will have a chapel, movie theater room, beauty shop, laundry service, and restaurant. The reason we chose Marina Way is the convenience of getting people to and from various doctor's offices. It is close to everything. We have letters from some of the surrounding neighborhoods where we've built similar facilities. This type of facility does not devalue property values. The cost to construct will be \$150 to \$170 per sq ft to build. We are proposing a 15 million dollar project. We are looking at constructing about 18 garden homes as part of the development that are independent living that residents would lease. If a couple wanted to live in one of these garden homes, we found that a lot of people like to keep their independence as long as they can. This would give them a place that has nurse calls, food is prepared, housekeeping and lawn care is provided; they just live there. It is a stepping stone for them to move into an

Assisted One, Assisted Two, and Memory Care if needed. One wing we have setup now, which is 16 beds, would be for residents who require memory care. We have it designed so if there was a need for more we could split it off with two wings being there. We are looking at a lodge feel similar to a Big Cedar Lodge near Branson. We want something that is glamorous to look at. We have tree lined roads so you won't even know that it's there. It will be gated. The gates coming in we have already gotten with the fire chief and talked to him. We have two ways in and out. With the 18 garden homes, we will have a club house for them. We can feed them there. The food will be cooked in the main building and walked down to their club house. The room size in the main facility is 450 to 500 sq ft per room. They have a separate bedroom and living area with a small kitchenette. There is a beautiful view of Lake Dardanelle from the main lodge which will include an all glassed in 2700-sq ft big room, two fireplaces, and a baby grand piano. They have a beautiful view here. The garden homes are 1100-sq ft which will sit lower than the lodge so the lake will be visible from the lodge. The garden homes will also have a view of the lake. Anything inside the PUD we will be responsible for.

Mr. Sledge said we also have an area north of the gas line and this will be a separate phase. We could include it on our plans at the beginning or come back to the City at a later date when we decide to develop that part of the property. We plan on having the formal proposal to the Planning Commission in October and breaking ground early next year.

----- *End of Discussion on Printed Agenda Items* -----

Chairman Boyd thanked the gentlemen for their presentation and then asked if there was any other business that needed to be brought before the Planning Commission. He then noted that the preliminary packets mailed to the commissioners contained a replat of property at the corner of Arkansas Avenue and Main Street for a CVS Pharmacy. He reminded City Engineer Jones about a conversation the two of them had regarding appealing to the developer with a request to see if they would be willing to reconfigure their site layout and put the parking behind their store instead of in the front.

Engineer Jones said he did appeal to them and actually spoke with the developer and pointed out that they had done it that way in Conway. Of course, Conway does have ordinances and development codes that actually require it. I was told by the developer that Conway's market barely justified doing it. Apparently there is a significant cost incurred in developing the building that way. He explained to me that it changes the way the building operates. He said they almost walked away from Conway as the result of the additional cost involved and there was no way that the Russellville market was going to justify it. I made the plea. I was turned down. And as far as I know, they plan to proceed with the project as originally laid out in the concept plan.

The chairman thanked him for the update and his effort to persuade the developer to reconfigure the site layout. The chairman expressed disappointment that CVS was unwilling to modify their plans given the prominent location of the development. He pointed out the contrast between CVS's reluctance to cooperate with the City with the recent positive experience the City had with the developers of Casey's General Store, who bent over backwards to cooperate and partner with the City because they, too, are building in a prominent location.

Commissioner Wilkins asked why the parking variance for the CVS Pharmacy was pulled from the Board of Adjustment agenda. Mr. Jones said the parking waiver was not necessary. They never consulted us before they made the request. Mr. Wilkins said he spoke to the site developer about the signage and asked if he would have some respect for the downtown area given that location.

Commissioner Skelton asked City Attorney Smith if the Planning Commission could pass a motion that would make Main Street east and west, as well as Arkansas Avenue and maybe even Parkway, into a special zoning district where all new construction has to come before the Planning Commission. Attorney Smith said you would have to make a recommendation that would have to go to the City Council. Mr. Skelton said he certainly would like for the new construction to at least come before the Planning Commission and City Council for approval of what the exterior of these structures are going to look like. The city attorney said you need to make that recommendation. The chairman suggested that Planner Walden investigate Commissioner Skelton's question and provide the commission with draft wording for a recommendation to the City Council.

Meeting Adjourned

Chairman Dennis Boyd