

MINUTES
MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD
City Commission Room, City Hall
1101 Poyntz Avenue
September 9, 2010
7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Meredith, Vice-Chair; Mike Hill; Linda Morse; and Stephanie Rolley.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Nikki Miller, Chairperson; Mike Kratochvil; and Jerry Reynard.

STAFF PRESENT: Eric Cattell, Assistant Director for Planning; Steve Zilkie, Senior Planner; Lance Evans, Senior Planner; Cam Moeller, Planner II; and, Chad Bunger, Planner II; and, Ty Warner, Executive Director Flint Hills Regional Council.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one spoke.

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 16, 2010, MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD MEETINGS.

APPROVE THE FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF LOT 6, GRAND MERE VILLAGE COMMERCIAL PUD FOR THE PROPOSED FIRE STATION HOUSE NO. 5, GENERALLY LOCATED NORTH OF KIMBALL AVENUE AND VANESTA DRIVE INTERSECTION. (APPLICANT/OWNER: CITY OF MANHATTAN)

Rolley moved that the Board approve the Consent Agenda. Hill seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 4-0.

GENERAL AGENDA

A PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER AN AMENDMENT OF THE FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND ORDINANCE NO. 6768 OF THE 17TH STREET PROPERTIES COMMERCIAL PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD) GENERALLY LOCATED SOUTHEAST OF THE INTERSECTION OF S. 17TH STREET AND YUMA STREET INTERSECTION. THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT IS TO ALLOW AN EXISTING POLE SIGN, NOT APPROVED AS A PART OF THE PUD SIGN PLAN, TO REMAIN IN THE PUD, TO ALLOW BANNER SIGNS ON THE POLE SIGN, AND TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF OFF-STREET PARKING SPACES SHOWN ON THE APPROVED FINAL

DEVELOPMENT PLAN BY TWO (2) PARKING SPACES, DUE TO THE POLE SIGN. (APPLICANT/OWNER: 17TH STREET PROPERTIES-LEE BORCK)

Zilkie presented the staff report and recommended denial of the amendment request for the existing sign and approval of the reduction of off-street parking and approval of banner signs, with conditions.

Meredith opened the Public Hearing.

Leon Osborne, Kaw Valley Engineering, stated he had a different interpretation of City regulations with the main concern is if the property is a corner lot. His difference is regarding corner lots and fronting on more than one street. He looked at the property as a corner lot, thus allowing two signs where the total street frontage is in excess of 600 feet or the zoning lot fronts on more than one street. The site fronts on two lots. Setbacks have been changed through the PUD process, thus he assumed it would be allowed for the sign.

Doug Marriott, managing member of the project, stated two different engineers missed the current sign and he presumed the small billboard was grandfathered into the development. The sign would look better than it does today, especially with the money he would spend on it. He asked the Board to go to the development and look around the neighborhood. There are small billboard signs each direction along Fort Riley Boulevard. He said there is not any retail next to his location except for Dara's gas station, thus his sign won't hurt any retailers. He spoke to Mr. Dara, who has no objection to the sign. Marriott said this is a different situation because the sign is already there and they are not requesting to build a new sign.

Meredith closed the Public Hearing and opened Board discussion.

Rolley asked Zilkie to explain the square footage issues again.

Zilke said the existing sign is 192 square feet in area and combined with the existing pole sign the applicant wishes to retain the total would be about 446 square feet of sign square footage along Fort Riley Boulevard.

Rolley said that on the Final Development Plan, the street is labeled "concrete drive" and asked if that is correct? Zilkie replied that it is an unnamed right-of-way, wider than an alley, but narrower than a street. He said it most likely came about when Ag Press was developed and it is a publicly owned right-of-way.

Rolley asked if it is on the city street plan. Zilkie said it shows up as right-of-way.

Morse asked if there is a difference between maintaining a right-of-way and maintaining a street. Zilkie said no. He said an alley is a right-way-way other than a street. Zilkie also said the drive could be either a street or an alley.

Morse asked about the precedent for allowing the additional sign and square footage. Have there been any exceptions for additional signs and additional square footage of signs on Fort Riley Boulevard. Zilkie said the Board of Zoning Appeals might have considered something like this, but the PUD situation is a unique circumstance. He said it's most likely not a precedent, because this will most likely not happen again.

Morse said there are other street stubs along Fort Riley Boulevard. If this project was at a different street along Fort Riley Boulevard, for example 14th Street, would it warrant a sign? Would the regulations allow this additional sign with the same circumstances? Zilkie said an owner could request a sign, and, if it was a similar circumstance in the C-2 District, then the applicant would need to go to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Rolley moved that the Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board recommend approval of Amendments of Final Development Plan and Ordinance No. 6768 to allow grand opening banner signs and a reduction of the required number of off-street parking spaces, with the three conditions of approval; and, denial of the Amendment to allow the existing pole sign.

Morse seconded the motion.

Hill said this is very unique situation and it is too bad it wasn't caught during the PUD process. But for him, it is an existing pole sign, not a new one. There are lots of pole signs along Fort Riley Boulevard and he can't see what denial would accomplish. He understands the City's recommendation, but can't support denying the ability to keep an existing pole sign.

Rolley said she appreciates Hill's perspective and really appreciates the particular development and that it is a model for the use of the planned unit development in Manhattan. The quality of the development is clear and has made many changes compared to what might have occurred within the zoning ordinance, to a good advantage. She agrees it is an existing pole sign, but the surface is more than twice the size of the existing sign, which concerns her. The concrete drive that is a public right-of-way does not meet the dimensions of the subdivision regulations to qualify as a street. Taking the sign area from 192 square feet to 446 square feet may be exploiting the situation and that concerns her. The development is a catalyst for more development along Fort Riley Boulevard that can be of similar quality.

Hill said the Board didn't ask the applicant why they had the need to double the signage. Osborne said we are not increasing the size of it, just utilizing the existing face that is there.

Rolley clarified the numbers for the size of the sign with Zilkie who said the square footage allowed is based on the street frontage. The C-2 District does not add up two street frontages together (unnamed right-of-way and Fort Riley Boulevard), and therefore 315 foot unnamed right-of-way does not count towards the square footage of signage along Ft. Riley Boulevard.

Marriot said he appreciates Hill's perspective. He didn't look at the sign as doubling the size at all. He reminded the Board about the possible issue of too much traffic off 17th Street. The resolution was to use the public right-of-way to get to the retail center. He views the new pylon sign with room for tenants that was granted in the PUD, as belonging to the retail center. He views the billboard sign more akin to a highway billboard sign, advertising the hotel.

Meredith agreed with Rolley. The existing pole is fine, but increasing the size of the signage is problematic for him.

Hill said he is still confused and asked if the sign staying the same size or increasing in size. Osborne said the sign is staying the same size.

Rolley said it is the total amount of sign area on the whole project that is increasing.

Hill clarified the pole sign stays the same size and that the ground sign was approved with the PUD.

Morse said she is inclined to support the regulations and views the amendment as a big deviation from the standards. She would not want to see other requests from other businesses for comparable square footage.

On a vote, the motion was approved 3-1, with Hill opposed.

A PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE REZONING OF TRACT A, SCENIC MEADOWS ADDITION, UNIT 3, AN APPROXIMATE 15-ACRE TRACT OF LAND FROM R-1, SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT, WITH AO, AIRPORT OVERLAY DISTRICT, TO R, SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT, WITH AO, AIRPORT OVERLAY DISTRICT, GENERALLY LOCATED EAST OF SCENIC DRIVE AND 400 FEET SOUTH OF THE INTERSECTION OF FOSSILRIDGE DRIVE AND SCENIC DRIVE. (APPLICANT: JEFF HANCOCK – SMH CONSULTANTS/OWNER: ANGELA BRITT)

Bunger presented the staff report and recommended approval of the request. Bunger noted that Agriculture is a permitted use in the proposed R District.

Meredith opened the Public Hearing.

Richard Britt, applicant and owner, said they want to keep using the site as agricultural land and will answer any questions.

Meredith closed the Public Hearing and opened Board discussion.

Morse asked who initiated the process in 2006 to get the site platted/rezoned/annexed.

Bunger said the previous owner, Frank Tillman.

Morse asked if the applicants fell into the issue inadvertently. Bunger said the zoning regulations state all legally non-conforming uses of land without buildings shall be made to conform within two years.

Hill moved that the Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board recommend approval to rezone Tract A, Scenic Meadows Addition, Unit Three, from R-1/AO Single-Family Residential District and Airport Overlay District, to R/AO, Single-Family Residential District and Airport Overlay District.

Rolley seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 4-0.

WORK SESSION AGENDA

INTRODUCTION TO THE FLINT HILLS REGIONAL COUNCIL AND DISCUSSION OF REGIONAL HOUSING ISSUES. (TY WARNER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FLINT HILLS REGIONAL COUNCIL)

Warner spoke about his career journey and then explained the Flint Hills Regional Council.

The Flint Hills Regional Council members are trying to work cooperatively together. There are 10 municipalities in five counties that are voluntary members of the Council. The possibility of the First Infantry leaving Fort Riley was the large issue that started the Council, but in reality Fort Riley actually gained soldiers, causing the region to look at the impact of the growth. The Flint Hills Regional Growth Plan was the result of the cooperation addressing the issue. The Growth Plan suggested having a regional intergovernmental body to coordinate among governments. The Council was officially formed in January 2010. It is not another layer of government, but a voluntary collaborative and cooperative body. It has no taxing ability and is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. It is the first regional body formed in twenty years, and the first one of the twenty-first century. There are 39,000 units of local government across the country, and 35,000 of them are involved in some sort of regional council. This area is entirely unique and special. The Council is not going to usurp any local government's authority and it has specific goals. One goal is to bring the area into an economic development district to get funding that isn't currently available to the region. Eventually, the Council would like to become a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to get federal transportation money. The MPO would then decide how to use the money locally, rather than have the State decide. The issues the Council addresses are up to the members. Right now topics include possible cooperative code enforcement for the area, the TWORKS program, and housing (extra 450 homes on Post).

Generally there are 1,800 troops stationed at Fort Riley, by 2012 all those troops will be coming back to Fort Riley. There will be a lot of families who will relocate to the region once the troops are there. There is a housing database that was started for Manhattan.

The Council is trying to update it. It is very good with owner occupied, but not with rental.

Rolley asked where the Council's offices are located and what are staffing prospects? Warner replied there are offices on Fort Riley. The next person they will be hiring is an office manager and then future staff depends on the focus of the Council, most likely a transportation planner or economic development person.

Morse said she saw a need to work across governmental boundaries. She asked if the Council knew what type of development and the numbers that will be a result of Fort Riley's needs. Warner they are pulling together more numbers on that. Fort Riley is having a community partnership meeting focused on housing on September 22nd. During October 2011, most troops should be back, but this can change at any point making it hard to plan for.

Warner concluded his remarks and said that problem solving has changed from the local, state, federal level to transcending boundaries. The Flint Hills Regional Council is set up to be able to respond to problems that fall into the layers of neighborhood, regional, and global.

DISCUSSION OF REMAINING LAND IN GROWTH AREAS IDENTIFIED IN THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Moeller gave a status update of residential growth within the Manhattan Urban Area comparing the number of acres designated in the Comprehensive Plan for urban residential development, with the number of acres that still remain undeveloped which would accommodate approximately 19 years of growth based on past absorption rates. He addressed the number of dwelling units built per year since 1980. He also spoke about the Highway 24 corridor and the Gateway corridor leading into Manhattan.

Cattell mentioned the City is currently working with Riley County to update the Gateway to Manhattan Plan. There are two public open houses in September: September 16th and September 30th from 4-8 pm at the Manhattan Christian Fellowship Church at 270 Pillsbury Drive. The purpose for updating the Corridor Plan is because Riley County approached the City to extend municipal services out to the area to meet public health needs. This leads to the potential for urban density development. The US 24 Corridor has City sewer and water that serve Heritage Square, which leads to possible development.

Cattell said that historically Manhattan has absorbed 20-25% of Fort Riley related population both civilian and enlisted. He said the people who actually came to Fort Riley after the BRAC process were younger people who didn't have families and tended to live on base.

Morse asked Cattell if he knew if Fort Riley's mission will become more stable and not as transitional in the coming years. Cattell said the Flint Hills Regional Council would be

able to get that type of information. However, the military has indicated a desire to station personnel for longer periods at a location, so they can buy a house and put down roots.

Rolley asked Moeller if he had a sense of the average density of the residential development that has taken place. Moeller said he didn't figure the density, but could be done.

Rolley said the City appears to be building one neighborhood every year and a half and the Board needs more discussion about neighborhood planning to put faces to the demographics and think about schools, parks and community facilities.

Cattell said that was the purpose of the green infrastructure planning the City has been doing to develop a framework for neighborhood planning and it is something the City and Board will continue to work on.

Rolley asked if the school district would be included in discussions. Cattell said the City has spoken with the school district such as with the Amherst Avenue site in Miller Ranch, and the City will continue to speak with the district.

REPORTS AND COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Morse suggested it would be helpful for the Board to hear about census information when it comes out as well as an update on anticipated transportation needs for roads and streets.

Meredith adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley Myers, Planning Intern