

MINUTES
MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD
City Commission Room, City Hall
1101 Poyntz Avenue
December 19, 2016
7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Neil Parikh, Chairperson; Debbie Nuss, Vice-Chairperson; Gary Stith; Jerry Reynard; Phil Anderson; Ken Ebert; and John Ball.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Eric Cattell, Director of Community Development; Chad Bunger, Senior Planner; John Adam, Senior Planner; Ben Chmiel, Long Range Planner; Doug May, Current Planner.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one spoke.

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 5, 2016, MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD MEETING.

APPROVE THE FINAL PLAT OF THE MUIRFIELD ADDITION, UNIT 2, GENERALLY LOCATED 1300 FEET NORTHEAST OF THE INTERSECTION OF GRAND MERE PARKWAY AND COLBERT HILLS DRIVE (APPLICANT/OWNER: BACK 9 LAND DEVELOPMENT, LLC – T.J. VILKANSKAS)

Stith moved that the Board approve the Consent Agenda.

Reynard seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 7–0.

GENERAL AGENDA

A PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE CONCURRENT PLAT (PRELIMINARY PLAT AND FINAL PLAT) OF THE MATC ADDITION GENERALLY LOCATED AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SETH CHILD ROAD AND DICKENS AVENUE, WHICH WILL CONSIST OF TWO (2) LOTS FOR THE MANHATTAN AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE AND A WESTAR ELECTRICAL SUBSTATION. (APPLICANT: KATIE WALBRIDGE – WESTAR ENERGY, INC.; OWNER: MANHATTAN AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

May presented the staff report and recommended approval.

Stith asked why the final plat shows no access along Seth Child Road, but not along Dickens and why a travel easement is not shown.

May responded that access to Seth Child Road is prohibited by KDOT and that Lot 2 will only connect to the MATC campus.

Stith responded that nothing on the final plat guarantees no access onto Dickens Avenue.

Bunger explained that the amount of frontage along Dickens would allow access to Dickens. Westar and MATC created a private easement between Lot 1 and Lot 2. Lot 2 is legally able to access Dickens Avenue, however the applicants chose not to.

Stith asked if the private easement can be shown on the plat

Bunger responded that private easements are not shown on final plats.

Anderson asked what the final vote was for the Conditional Use at the BZA meeting.

May responded it passed with a 3–2 vote.

Nuss asked if there were any noise complaints from residential neighborhoods near electrical substations.

May responded that he wasn't aware of any complaints.

Parikh opened the public hearing.

Katie Walbridge, applicant and civil engineer for Westar Energy, presented additional information about the reasons for Westar proposing to build a new substation. She said there is aging electrical infrastructure in the City and this proposed substation would partially or completely remove four (4) existing substations. She said this project would be a \$10 million investment, and would increase reliability in electrical service. The substation would have two (2) transformers, with room for two (2) more. She said several 34.5 kV line would be removed through town. She said the location at the MATC campus was chosen as it affects the least amount of people, and addresses the future growth needs of the city. She explained that the project would include a twenty (20) foot wide access drive into the site as well as a drainage easement on the north and east sides.

Nuss asked what other sites were considered for the substation.

Brad Kessel, Director of Manhattan Operations for Westar, responded that KSU land on Claflin Road was considered but that would have required large transmission lines down Claflin. He said a parking lot at KSU was considered, and they also considered purchasing homes to assemble a site. He said MATC and USD 383 were receptive to the current proposed site. He said the current proposed site is less impactful and is central to the ser-

vice area.

Nuss asked how much more land would be needed to move the proposed substation further to the north.

Walbridge responded that access from Lundin Drive was difficult in terms of delivering the transformers to the site and in case of emergency all cars would need to be cleared from the street. She added that this site would impact three (3) property owners. Additionally, she said access to the site would require a large box culvert. She said the cost difference between the two sites was not substantial, but the safety and access were bigger issues.

Nuss asked if there are any issues with access to the proposed site.

Walbridge responded that there are no issues.

Nuss asked if USD 383 and MATC intend to make the substation a benefit to the whole community, similar to the Konza Education and Science Park in Topeka.

Walbridge responded that she hopes it will benefit everyone, but that it was not brought up at the Board meeting.

Anderson stated that aesthetics are important to the neighborhood. He stated that the existing trees along Dickens and the proposed screen wall help with this. He asked how much the houses along Dickens will see of the substation.

Walbridge responded that the substation will be 15 to 18 feet above Seth Child Road. She stated that she met with Kansas Forester and City Forester to determine the best landscape plan for the site. She stated that they moved the sidewalk to the north side of the trees along Dickens, which saves most of the trees.

Anderson asked if the trees north of the site are existing.

Walbridge responded that they are and they will be retained or replaced as much as possible.

Stith asked if the landscape plan shown was required.

May responded that it was a condition of approval by the BZA and that the landscape plan shown is a minimum, but the applicants are welcome to add more.

Parikh closed the public hearing.

Ebert moved that the Planning Board approve the Preliminary Plat and Final Plat of the MATC Addition, based on conformance with the Manhattan Urban Area Subdivision Regulations.

Reynard seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 7–0.

WORK SESSION AGENDA

UPDATE AND DISCUSSION OF THE AGGIEVILLE COMMUNITY VISION PLAN.

Adam introduced the topic. He said staff revisited the eleven-year-old Aggieville Plan to bring it up to date, prompted by the recent Comprehensive Plan update, the evolution of the Urban Core Residential District out of the “campus edge” concept in the original plan, and evidence of interest in greater intensity of development in the Aggieville area.

Chmiel presented a slideshow of the major changes to the Aggieville Plan and examples of 3-D modeling work to illustrate proposed building massing concepts staff is recommending in the three sub-areas of Aggieville: the Anderson–Bluemont Corridor, the Historic Core (Moro), and the Laramie Corridor. Staff is seeking feedback in advance of adoption of the updated Aggieville Plan, which is targeted for April 2017.

Anderson said Aggieville needs to be attractive for shopping with pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and suggested addressing the need for promoting surrounding neighborhood housing improvements in the Plan.

Nuss said it is good to encourage diversity of housing and affordability; however the Plan only mentions it without going into further detail on achieving it. She also recommended greater specificity on preservation policy, citing “seeks to preserve the historic core” as an example of an objective without tools to carry it out.

Stith said the objective should be to create a unique sense of place, and suggested looking further at historic preservation to do that. He said the Strategic Action Plan is the most important piece in the updated Plan, and that its lack in the prior version was partially why nothing happened for more than 10 years.

Ball said that pedestrian malls may be a possibility, but recommended being cautious before implementing such things. He said the parking garages will be an important component to the success of Aggieville. The parking needs to be accessible from the exterior of the district if it is to be effective. He added that if the Plan raises the value of development in Aggieville, the housing around it in surrounding neighborhoods will become more valuable as well, leading to reinvestment in those areas. He said the kind of development envisioned in Aggieville is just what Millennials are looking for, a demographic that the City should try to attract.

Ebert was concerned that five stories might be too intense for the Laramie Corridor. He asked if staff had calculated the square footage potential of such a build-out and how much parking demand it would create. Ebert added that he liked the 3-D modeling.

Chmiel replied that those calculations had not been done.

Cattell responded to Ebert's concern about the intensity along Laramie, pointing out that in order to leverage private development to help pay for parking garages, you need to allow the kinds of density that will make redevelopment lucrative.

Stith concurred, saying that allowing greater density incentivizes development, which then creates value. However, he added that few developers will be willing to build to the maximum five-story potential because the people and parking are not there to support it, so he would not worry about the full build-out happening anytime soon.

Parikh liked the Plan overall. He thought it was interesting to tie it to City Park, because there is no feeling of a connection now. He said Aggieville is the most important area to concentrate planning and redevelopment efforts in the City. He added that the City cannot rely just on the student population to make Aggieville successful; there is a richly diverse community in Manhattan that wants the amenities envisioned in the Plan.

Anderson asked for some clarification on utility capacities.

Chmiel noted that water pressure for fire safety needs to be improved before too much redevelopment and intensification takes place.

Parikh opened the meeting to comments from the public.

Kathy Dzewaltowski, 100 South Delaware Avenue, recommended not allowing five-story structures in the Laramie Corridor lest it lead to the redevelopment of the John Hessin House at 519 North 11th Street.

Linda Mays, Director of the Aggieville Business Association, expressed support for the Plan, praising Mr. Chmiel's work, and noted that the district's businesses are all eager to see this move forward.

REPORTS AND COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Stith noted that the Flint Hills Regional Council had contracted with a consultant to develop an economic impact report on the potential down-sizing of Fort Riley. He said the final report, the "Fort Riley Force Reduction Economic Analysis" is now available on the project website www.flinthillsregion.org. This report indicates the significant impact Fort Riley has on the regional economy. Each jurisdiction is impacted differently, so the data is provided by jurisdiction. The Report makes 11 recommendations to offset the economic impact of the reductions at Fort Riley and any potential future reductions.

Parikh asked about progress with coordinated planning with Pottawatomie County. Cattell indicated that Pottawatomie County was waiting for its new Commission to be seated before continuing discussions.

Anderson commented that the City Commission had held a work session on the rental inspection program. And noted that the Comprehensive Plan in several places specifically talks about the for proactive code enforcement. He said the City does have the right to do inspections, as peer the Comprehensive Plan.

Ball indicated that state statute prevents the City from doing interior inspections on private homes and that he City Commission is trying to find a middle ground on the issue that is less intrusive and complies with applicable statutes.

Anderson said he supports a less intrusive approach but that the City Commission can do more.

Ball said the Commission is trying to strike a balance. He said redeveloping Aggieville will help to revitalize the surrounding neighborhoods because many millenials in other cities are buying, investing and rehabilitating residential structures in similar areas and want to live in this type of urban environment with the types of amenities that the Aggieville Plan is promoting.

Anderson mentioned that David Miller has been doing renovations of six properties in the older neighborhoods and is a good example of how it should be done. He said tax credits could help promote such renovations.

There being no further business, Parikh closed the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug May, Planner

John Adam, Senior Long Range Planner