

MINUTES
MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD
City Commission Room, City Hall
1101 Poyntz Avenue
March 20, 2017
7:00 p.m.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one spoke.

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 6, 2017, MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD MEETING.

SET ASIDE THE APPROVED FINAL PLAT OF HERITAGE SQUARE NORTH AND APPROVE THE REVISED FINAL PLAT OF HERITAGE SQUARE NORTH, UNIT TWO GENERALLY LOCATED TO THE NORTH OF THE INTERSECTION OF U.S. HIGHWAY 24 AND SOUTH PORT DRIVE (APPLICANT/OWNER: HERITAGE CAPITAL INVESTORS, LLC – JAIME R. MCATEE, MANAGING MEMBER; FILE NO. SUB-17-021).

Stith moved that the Board approve the Consent Agenda.

Anderson seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 5–0–2 with Parikh and Stith abstaining.

Anderson stated he received an inquiry from a constituent asking why trails were not included on the final plat of Heritage Square North. Bunger clarified final plats do not show public amenities such as trails, sidewalks, roadways, and/or utility lines. Final plats are only reserved for public easements and lot lines. The preliminary plat did show a 10-foot-wide trail with a note stating the first 5 feet would be built by the developer and the other 5 feet would be built in the future by someone else, possibly the City of Manhattan.

GENERAL AGENDA

TABLE THE PUBLIC HEARING TO AMEND ARTICLE IV, SECTION 4-203, “C-3, AGGIEVILLE BUSINESS DISTRICT”, OF THE MANHATTAN ZONING REGULATIONS, PERTAINING TO PARKING LOT LOCATIONS, ACCESS POINTS ON MORO STREET, AND AUTO-ORIENTED USES (APPLICANT: CITY OF MANHATTAN; FILE NO. DCA-17-002).

Adam stated the purpose of tabling this item was to wait until the Aggieville Community Vision Plan was adopted in the second reading.

Stith said he was hopeful these amendments would parallel the adoption of the Aggieville Community Vision Plan, but he would defer to the staff recommendation.

Bunger clarified the amendments to the zoning regulations have been advertised. Therefore, any proposal for a new development in the C-3, Aggieville Business District must comply with the old and new regulations.

Nuss also said that Stith’s concern was her concern as well and wondered why this item was being tabled.

Stith moved that the Board table the public hearing to amend Article IV, Section 4-203, “C-3, Aggieville Business District”, of the Manhattan Zoning Regulations to the May 1, 2017, Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board meeting.

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

A PUBLIC HEARING TO AMEND THE MANHATTAN URBAN AREA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BY ADOPTING AND INCORPORATING BY REFERENCE THE AGGIEVILLE COMMUNITY VISION PLAN (APPLICANT: CITY OF MANHATTAN; FILE NO. CPA-17-001).

Adam presented the staff report and provided the City Administration’s recommendation to approve Resolution No. 032017-A, amending the Manhattan Urban Area Comprehensive Plan by adopting and incorporating by reference the Aggieville Community Vision Plan, dated March 2017, and incorporating the necessary citations in Chapter 3 and Appendix B, as proposed. City Administration also recommended forwarding a recommendation to the City Commission that the City proceed with implementing the first item identified in the Strategic Action Plan, to hire a consultant team to conduct a comprehensive analysis of transportation, circulation, and parking infrastructure, combined with developing a streetscape design and Triangle Park concept. Adam said the second recommendation is intended to set up conditions to leverage city-owned land for private investment by building parking garages on the outside edges of Aggieville.

Anderson asked for clarification on the potential locations of the parking garages as well as the purpose of the inclusion of the property on the east side of 11th Street at the inter-

section of Moro and 11th. Adam said the proposed parking garages would go on two current surface parking lots, one of which is city owned and the other is privately owned. As for the other property at Moro and 11th Streets, Adam said it was included in the hope it would be redeveloped as part of this plan. It is currently the only intrusion of commercial development on the mostly residential block.

Ebert asked for clarification on the design review process called for in the Aggieville Community Vision Plan and how that process would work.

Adam said until the amendments to the C-3, Aggieville Business District are adopted and design standards are put into place, the encouragement by City Administration would be to use the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process to go through a design review. At one point, a design review process was discussed but not enacted by the plan because that would require an amendment to the zoning regulations.

Ebert said the Plan uses the word “impose” on a couple of occasions. He found this wording to be harsh.

Parikh opened the public hearing.

Mel Borst, 1918 Humboldt Street, stated he wished to see a Bluemont Avenue corridor plan developed before the adoption of the Aggieville Community Vision Plan.

Anderson asked if Borst wished to see a Bluemont Avenue corridor plan added to the Aggieville Community Vision Plan. He agreed with Borst on the suggestion of studying the Bluemont Avenue corridor.

Borst said it would be a good thing to consider adding a Bluemont Avenue corridor study. He expressed concerns about the “canyon-like effect” that might be created in the Aggieville area of Bluemont Avenue.

Cattell said there are not very many blocks between 11th Street and 4th Street along Bluemont Avenue; they have been looked at and considered in recent years, including last year’s M-FRO rezoning. These blocks are already within the Multi-Family Redevelopment Overlay or in R-2, Two-Family Residential District. He said it would be a mistake to hold up the adoption of the Aggieville Community Vision Plan to do a study of the Bluemont Avenue corridor. Also, the zoning of the remaining Bluemont Avenue corridor has been confirmed twice through the last two comprehensive plan updates. He added a Bluemont Avenue corridor study can be conducted in the future and could be considered as soon as during one of the next Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board meetings in which the Board will conduct its annual review of the Manhattan Urban Area 2035 Comprehensive Plan and priorities from the Comprehensive Plan’s action plan. He said one action item that should be considered is reviewing the Downtown Tomorrow Plan. Edges of that plan could be related to the Bluemont Avenue corridor.

Anderson agreed with Cattell and encouraged Borst to attend future meetings when the Board deals with these issues in a few weeks. Anderson believed it was important to consider and review the Bluemont Avenue corridor.

Borst added there has been some concern about added economic pressure to the historic stone house located on southwest corner of the Laramie Street and 11th Street intersection. He felt it would be a loss to the community if the structure was torn down. He sought clarification of any considerations for rezoning this parcel of land to fall in line with the zoning along Fremont Street to the north of City Park.

Chmiel clarified the Aggieville Community Vision Plan addresses the historic nature of the structure. It has been divided into apartments, but it still has an historic quality to it. While it is part of the Laramie Corridor, which allows buildings up to five stories tall, the Plan encourages the property's preservation. He said the Historic Resources Board put in a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) request for 2018 to conduct a historic survey of the area to identify buildings with historic significance. However, it is up to the property owner if he or she wishes to pursue any formal historic register listing.

Cattell said there was a stone house historic survey conducted and that the property owner could use that as a starting point to list the house on a historic register. He said the reason the property is zoned C-3, Aggieville Business District is because the property owner at one time wanted to keep the house and apartments in the structure as well as have retail on the ground level.

Borst requested that the planning process offer more incentives to protect the property.

Nuss asked if Borst was representing himself as well as any others since he kept using "we" in his testimony.

Borst said he was speaking as a citizen and for others who voiced their concerns to him about the stone house and Bluemont Avenue corridor.

Ebert asked what the detriment would be of adopting the Aggieville plan before doing a Bluemont study.

Borst further stated he was not sure if the increase in height of buildings along Bluemont Avenue was good or bad, but the "canyon-like effect" should be considered and reviewed.

Chmiel responded almost 95 percent of the principles from the 2005 Aggieville plan are carried over into this Plan, including the height allowances. There are also design guidelines in the back of the Aggieville Community Vision Plan to help guide such items as building height variability. He said the Bluemont Hotel was a good example of some height variability as it peaks at five stories but goes down to four stories at some points. Any monolithic effect of building heights are specifically considered in this Plan. He also said there were some provisions in the Plan to help façade variation and to break up the massing of buildings.

Stith asked what the zoning was for the area south of the alley near Fremont Street and what was proposed in the plan. Chmiel said it is currently R-M, Four-Family Residential District with a University Overlay District, and the current uses range from fraternity houses to apartments. Cattell said the plan maintains the residential edge and ensures there are not commercial uses facing City Park. The Aggieville Community Vision Plan respects the Manhattan Urban Area 2035 Comprehensive Plan for this area.

Stith recognized Borst's concerns about the stone house. He said if they leave it zoned C-3, Aggieville Business District, it is in jeopardy because the historic designation is left up to the property owner. Another way of preserving the stone house is to "wrap" the zoning currently along Fremont Street up to the property. Reynard asked if the historic register listing was up to the property owner. Stith said this was correct. The Board could rezone the area, but it cannot officially deem it historic.

Anderson asked if the streetscape design would cover the entire area in the Aggieville Community Vision Plan. Cattell said the hiring of the consultant would help determine what areas would feature new streetscape. Anderson asked for a variety of designs based on historic, residential, or commercial districts, but also there would be some unification across the districts to encompass the whole area.

Linda Mays, Director of the Aggieville Business Association, said she supported the Plan and believed its adoption would help maintain the momentum she is seeing in the area.

Parikh closed the public hearing.

Stith said there was a lot of good work put into this Plan and its process. The public survey and its great response rate gave the Plan some good ideas but also identified how strongly people feel about Aggieville. He said this Plan protects the historic character of Aggieville along Moro Street and encourages an even better destination with opportunities along Bluemont and Laramie. He felt those two streets were not contributors to Aggieville.

He noted that you can't incentive redevelopment with one-story buildings; allowing building heights up to five stories is necessary. He said, based on his travel experiences in the U.S. and abroad, he does not share the perception that there will be a canyon-like effect. He said parking is an issue that must be solved, and the proposed study recommended by City Administration is important to quickly move forward on.

Anderson said he was in favor of maintaining the historic nature along Moro Street, but it is also important to preserve other buildings such as the stone house at 11th Street and Laramie. He said the city has lost "dozens and dozens of absolutely incredibly beautiful structures." He did not want to see any more put at risk and the Board should do everything it can to encourage the property owner of the stone house to maintain its integrity.

Nuss said the plan was ambitious for the community and one she supported. She felt Aggieville has been neglected in recent years and doing something now is important. She also echoed Anderson's statement to maintain the historic nature along Moro Street. The

recent fire at the Dusty Bookshelf demonstrated some confusion in the community of what is officially historic and what is historic in people's memories. She supported doing the historic survey of the properties in the area as it would benefit both the community and property owners. She also supported Stith's idea of wrapping around the zoning along Fremont Street to include the stone house at 11th and Laramie. She also believed parking in the area was an issue and a priority to address. She went on to say the Plan would encourage redevelopment. She commended the community for participating in the planning process.

Parikh said Aggieville was personally important to him, and while the corridor entering the area was a concern, the Aggieville Community Vision Plan was going to lead the community into addressing the corridor and preserving the historic area around it. He believed with the work of the City staff, the potential hiring of the consultant to look at traffic circulation, and the Aggieville Community Vision Plan, Aggieville could find a blend of features that model other cities such as Old Market in Omaha and Westport in Kansas City while also fitting Manhattan's own character.

Stith moved to approve and adopt Resolution No. 032017-A, amending the Manhattan Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, by adopting and incorporating by reference the Aggieville Community Vision Plan, dated March 2017, and incorporating the necessary citations in Chapter 3 and Appendix B, as proposed; and recommended approval to the City Commission.

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

Stith moved to approve a recommendation to the City Commission that the City proceed with implementing the first item identified in the Strategic Action Plan, to hire a consultant team to conduct a comprehensive analysis of transportation, circulation, and parking infrastructure, combined with developing a streetscape design and Triangle Park concept.

Parikh seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 7-0.

REPORTS AND COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Stith asked if City staff had heard any report about what the future might be for the Dusty Bookshelf building at Manhattan and Moro Street. Cattell said he heard secondhand through a fire inspector that a structural engineer deemed the façade as salvageable. However, it is up to the property owner if he or she wants to put that much money into it. Stith said he hopes the façade is salvaged. While it is not designated historic, he believed it is a historic resource, and he hoped City Administration would encourage that building be preserved.

Nuss said she did know local preservationists reached out to the property owners to let them know there was interest in the community to preserve it.

Stith asked for further information about the March 27 meeting regarding the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Bunger said the intent of the meeting was for the consultants to lead a discussion about the entire UDO process. This meeting will officially

kick off the process and will be followed by stakeholder meetings on March 28 as well as a public open door meeting on March 29.

Stith asked if there would be coordination between the efforts undertaken by Riley County. Bunger confirmed this, saying both Riley and Pottawatomie Counties will be involved in the UDO process.

Stith asked if there had been changes to the Urban Core Residential (UCR) zoning definitions. Cattell said City staff is working with the legal department on an issue regarding the pedestrian easement. He said the item has not been advertised yet, and a decision would be made this week if the April 3, 2017 meeting will include adopting the UCR district into the Manhattan Zoning Regulations.

Anderson said he was pleased with the improvements to the intersection of 17th Street and Poyntz Avenue. He said the change in timing of the street light was very quick and his stop time was reduced to ten (10) seconds. Cattell said it is one of the camera-operated street lights as before it was a magnetic coil system. He said the intersection also includes improvements to pedestrian safety.

Ebert commended the City staff on its work with the Aggieville Community Vision Plan and completing it in-house. Cattell said the Community Development department tries to do most of its work in-house and only hires consultants for bigger projects.

Following no additional comments or reports, Parikh adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Kutz, Planning Intern