

CITY OF FIFE
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING

Fife City Hall

August 31, 2009
7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER –

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm with the following present:

Commissioners: Chairman Jim Call, Donald Alveshere, Jeff Brown, Richard Garchow, Fred Thomas and Shannon Thornhill

Absent: Doug Fagundes

Staff present: Planner 1 Chris Pasinetti and Senior Administrative Assistant Katie Bolam

APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

Planner Pasinetti asked to have this item deferred until the next meeting, asking to have the recording reviewed with regards to page 2 of the minutes, paragraphs 2 and 4. The commissioners indicated they thought the minutes adequately reflected what was said at the meeting; Planner Pasinetti said that, if so, he will need to clarify what he meant, as the minutes do not reflect what is accurate on this matter. It was agreed to defer the approval of the 8/3/09 minutes to the 10/5/09 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

a. CMU Zoning Code Amendment allowing car sales lots

Planner Pasinetti said that City Council has requested staff to take review of the CMU zone with regard to the potential allowance of car sales lots.

Chairman Call said that this would be a 180 degree turn from the purpose of the zone, with agreement stated by Commissioners Thornhill, Brown and Thomas. Chairman Call stated that there is plenty of space along 20th St outside of the CMU zone.

Commissioner Thomas asked if council is afraid Fife won't get enough of the development that the CMU zone calls for.

Commissioner Garchow asked if there is a particular developer looking, saying that he already talked with Hinshaw and knows they decided against further development.

Planner Pasinetti answered that the City Council has been rethinking the issue and has asked staff to review it again with the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Alveshere says there are enough other places in the city to locate car sales lots. He said that no matter how it's set up, it'll compromise the entire CMU purpose of a pedestrian feel.

Commissioner Thornhill agreed, saying it's like putting industrial right up against a housing development – it doesn't mesh.

Commissioner Brown said it doesn't match the intent of walkability – a car lot is a destination place and goes completely against what we are trying to do here.

Chairman Call said that, as it is, Hinshaw and McCann are like “two thumbs” of the car dealerships in town, adding that it would be very shortsighted to change this – sales tax is very important to our revenue stream, but it can be diversified and we need that diversification – it would be a detriment to the city, both short and long term.

Commissioner Garchow disagrees with the majority, stating that it's hard to match the revenue of a car dealership and that it's the best use of I-5 frontage land.

Commissioner Thomas disagreed with Commissioner Garchow, saying we're back to what the CMU zone was created for.

Commissioner Thornhill liked the diversity comment made earlier regarding revenue.

Chairman Call proposed a motion: It is the consensus of the Planning Commission that the intent of the CMU zone would be undermined by the inclusion of car sales lots. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion.

Some further discussion:

Commissioner Alveshere said that an overwhelming tipping would occur with any more car lots, giving the CMU zone the impression of “just another auto row,” with the possible result of keeping the kinds of businesses we want in this zone away.

Chairman Brown asked what Planner Pasinetti meant in the staff report when he stated that it could integrate easily. Planner Pasinetti answered that any use, including car lots, would still have to meet the setback and design requirements of the zone, and car sales lots are not counter to the comprehensive plan.

Commissioner Thomas asked about the need to change the sign code.

The motion passed 5/1.

STAFF REPORT

a. Density and Crime Rates

Planner Pasinetti pointed to the various reports and charts provided in the packets, stating that, while interesting, the bottom line is that there's just not enough data to draw any meaningful conclusions for Fife.

Discussion ensued regarding socio-economic forces.

Chairman Call requested a Fife police officer be invited to a future meeting to discuss some of the specifics to Fife.

OTHER

Commissioner Alveshere asked to make a couple comments.

- a.** He pointed out for the benefit of the other commissioners that there has been a change for the Planning Dept, involving supplying planning services to the City of Milton, saying he isn't certain what that may mean to the Fife commission. Assistant Bolam answered that it would not have any effect on the Fife commission, that Planner Chris Larson would be handling the Milton items, with Assistant Bolam serving in a similar capacity, preparing packets, taking minutes and general office support.
- b.** He asked if the documentation presented at council regarding the work being done at the levee could be made available to the commission at the next meeting – the information included estimates of costs and likely damages in the event of a levee-damaging flood.

Commissioner Garchow encouraged fellow commissioners to attend the "Port 101" class to be held at Fife City Hall on September 16.

Planner Pasinetti invited the commissioners to go down to Levee Road, across from the Saddle Creek entrance, to check out the levee-repair work completed recently by the county.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Thomas moved, seconded by Commissioner Alveshere, to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.