

Planning Commission
August 21, 2006

Chairperson Cramer called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

The following members were present: Bill Dorn, Gordon Liebel. James Montgomery was absent. Also in attendance was City Planner Dan Staley.

Smith moved to approve the minutes of the August 7, 2006 commission meeting. Liebel seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Planning Director Staley stated there is a council workshop on August 29, 2006. Mayor Johnson was in his office this afternoon and wanted to know if the Planning Commission would like to have a joint workshop with the Council. Staley stated this could be a good time to discuss the Integrated Stair issue. Liebel stated this could be a good time to reiterate to the Council that the Planning Commission is supposed to review all short plats and long plats. Cramer stated anyone that cannot make it; it would be a good idea to have any written comments or concerns they have.

Integrated Stair:

There was a lengthy discussion on what Integrated Stair wants to do. Staley brought the two members that were not at the last meeting up to date on this proposal. Staley stated basically Integrated Stair wants full frontage improvements until more development comes in. Maas asked if there could be a time limit on how long the waiver is for. Staley stated it could be for any time limit the Council wants to put. Dorn stated he went out to the site and talked to the owner and he was told something different than what this proposal actually is. Staley stated we are only reviewing the proposal that is before us. Smith stated if this is not a correct plan, we should put this on hold until we received the correct one. Staley stated this is the only plan the City has. Discussion ensued. Staley stated that a binding site plan is actually a commercial short plat and that is why there full frontage improvements are required. Dorn asked what everyone else on the commission how they felt about private driveways. Staley stated private driveways is one thing we will be talking about very soon within the subdivision regulations and that is the reason he brought this up to the commission. Smith stated he doesn't like it but the rest of the commission can decide. Maas asked if we are going to make a decision or wait. Staley stated it is up to the commission. Council committee brought this back to the planning commission for a recommendation. Dorn asked if a private driveway has to be paved. Staley stated yes 22' wide 2" asphalt. Maas asked if they can bond around the improvements. Liebel stated he would have to bond around anything because he wants to put in a private driveway, what we were suggesting is to put in a binding agreement that if he ever sells the property or continues to develop any other portion of it, at that point he would have to put in a public road with curbs and sidewalks. Cramer asked if we want to make a recommendation at this point. Smith stated we need a new site plan. Maas stated no we don't we just need to act on the one before us. Staley stated the request is to grant the waiver for the full frontage improvements on the access road and again we are just an advisory committee and the Council committee is looking for additional input to help them make a decision. **Liebel moved to recommend approval of the waiver per the submitted plan provided there is a binding agreement that the full frontage**

improvements will be passed through on any future development on the Integrated Stair Systems Binding Site Plan dated 4/8/2005. Smith seconded the motion. Maas asked because we specified Integrated Stair Systems, will that pass on with transfer of ownership. Staley stated any restrictions or covenants go with the property. Maas asked what would happen if he wanted to develop on lot 2. Staley stated at the permit approval time, the city would see that the road is inadequate to service the traffic; he would then be required to upgrade the road. Maas asked how many years he has to wait to divide the property again. Staley stated five years. **The motion then carried with a 4-1 vote.**

Subdivision Regulation:

Cramer stated for the record, Montgomery has given written comments to the commission on his opinions. Liebel stated he is generally not in favor of alleys. He has not lived in neighborhoods with alleys but he has had friends and relatives that have lived in neighborhoods with alleys even in fairly newer subdivisions in Texas. He doesn't think we should not allow them. There are opportunities where they work but he doesn't think we should require them either. He has a number of reasons. First of all if you the argument that you can tear up the utilities in the alleys, more than likely the alleys will be paved with the newer subdivisions. He doesn't know of a lot of newer developments that would have gravel alleys, we have already heard from the utility department about gravel alleys and the up keep and maintenance issues on them. So if the alleys are paved, they will still have to tear up the asphalt. If they had to tear it up, it disrupts all those homeowners from gaining access to their property. He is not sure you will save a whole lot by running utilities in the alleys. He would like to look at an example of a subdivision that has alleys and narrow roads with wider tree lanes. Have you now taken another 5% - 10% of the overall property that is available to build on and reduced the number of lots that the builder would be able to build on. Smith stated he agrees with Liebel on one thing we can't dis-allow them and we can't force them to put in alleys. Maas stated she doesn't know how an alley would have to do with connectivity to the streets. Liebel stated one thing he can disagree with in some of the old neighborhoods, if you have the houses built closer to the streets and you have porches, it is supposed to support more community feeling. It has been his experience everybody spends all their time in the back yards and everyone puts fences up and it leaves a narrow corridor where everyone puts their junk back their and makes it very unsightly. Staley gave a copy of a new development in Denver Colorado called Stapleton which is a new urban development. They have mixed use with retail on the bottom and two-three stories of apartments, central parks, some places have alleys, they have the wide tree lawns, they have the narrow streets, etc. Discussion ensued. Liebel stated he thinks Montgomery makes a valid point in that the current layout should be followed if there is any development as far as "A" street; however he feels there are a lot of problems with the current alleys. He would be inclined to keep the character of the city for a certain boundary, but get farther outside out that he doesn't feel is should be required. Smith stated he thinks alleys will fit in certain situations and not in others. Without knowing exactly how the city is going to grow and where the houses are going to go and what the lots sizes are going to be, maybe that is off the wall but it is hard for us to sit here and say. Staley stated you can't wait to make a decision until you have all the information, because you will never have all the information. We do know how the lot sizes are going to go by our zoning map. Smith stated we haven't even decided how much open space or parks we are going to have. Staley stated we are getting there and we need to keep reminding ourselves what

the priorities are. By going through this motion we are reminded what our priorities are. Smith stated look at right now they are always asking for variances and waivers. Staley stated the better regulations we have the more exact they are the easier it is to say no. Dorn stated he feels on the small lots, there should be alleys for access and to be able to store your toys and get them off the streets. On 6,000 square foot lots without access off the back, you couldn't even pour a patio. We are never going to be an industrial site, we are bedroom community and everyone here commutes. You have to be fair to the developers too. If you want the city to grow you can't hold them hostage. Cramer stated what she is hearing is nobody wants to require to have them or not have them. Staley stated the key is when Dorn stated it is the scale of the development, he is exactly right. No one is going to put in alleys on 5 acres but on 20 acres they may. Staley stated he thinks were we are getting stuck here is how do we get someone who has 30 acres and in the right zone getting them to put in alleys. Staley stated that would be up to the planning staff to strongly encourage this. Cramer stated so we can leave the language in here that states Alleys *may* be provided. The other thing we need to discuss is the size of the alleys. Obviously 30 feet is too big. Dorn stated you could have an alley 16 feet and then have an ordinance that you cannot put your fence within 2 feet from the alley. This actually gives you then 20 feet. Discussion ensued. Liebel stated he doesn't care for the alleys in Buckley because they are not maintained very well, they are too narrow to begin with, they are graveled and they are pretty unsightly and not very functional. If we require newer ones a little further out then maybe it would be better. Staley stated he agrees that the alleys here now are not very functional. Cramer stated it sounds like the commission is agreeing that we want to keep the language "may allow", and we still have to figure out the widths. Staley stated he will contact some of the surrounding cities to find out the widths of their alleys. Maas asked Cramer when she said that the wording should be may instead of shall, is that set in stone and asked if she was speaking for her. Cramer stated from everything that was stated that nobody was saying they didn't want them at all or that they wanted them everywhere. Maas stated in her opinion, she thinks they maybe should be required in certain size lots because there is also lot varying. Staley stated nothing is set in stone right now. We will go back through this and make sure we've put in everything we want and then it will have to go to the public for a public hearing.

The next meeting will be September 11, 2006 at 7:00 PM and we will hopefully finish up on alleys and get through the street trees section.

With nothing further the meeting was adjourned at 9:13 PM.

Lisa Cramer, Chairperson