

The Saraland Planning Commission convened in regular session on March 9, 2021 at the Saraland City Court Room. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Scooter Thronson.

Roll call was as follows:

Present: Chairman Scooter Thronson
Wayne Biggs
Austin Sealey
Barry Andrews
David Brown

Absent: Secretary Julie McGuire
Mayor Howard Rubenstein
Wayne Lyssy
Chris Williams

Others present: Mike Black, Director Building Department; Laura Tarver, Permit Technician; Jennifer Jemison, Zoning Technician; Andy Rutens, City Attorney.

Motion was made by Wayne Biggs to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2021 meeting, seconded by David Brown. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Barry Andrews to approve the agenda for the March 9, 2021 meeting, seconded by Austin Sealey. Motion carried.

Chairman Scooter Thronson called for conflicts of interest of any agenda item for members of the Planning Commission. No conflicts were brought forth.

Invocation by Wayne Biggs

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Prelim/Final Subdivision Plat-The Cottages-South and East Side of Spartan Drive

Public Hearing to consider the request for review of a Preliminary/Final Plat proposing a 193-unit multi-family residential complex. Parcel No.: R022204370001002.000, filed by Elcan and Associates, Inc.

Andy Rutens, City Attorney, recommended to amend Agenda Item #1 due to not having a quorum present for the public hearing. Chairman Scooter Thronson requested to have a special meeting on March 16, 2021 at 5:30 pm to review this item. Motion was made by Wayne Biggs,

seconded by David Brown, to approve for the Special Meeting regarding the Prelim/Final Subdivision Plat for The Cottages at South and East Side of Spartan Drive, filed by Elan and Associates, Inc. on Tuesday March 16, 2021 at 5:30 PM, with no pre-meeting. Motion carried.

2. Petition for Re-Zone-The Cottages-South and East Side of Spartan Drive

(South of Industrial Pkwy and East of Spartan Drive, 121 ± acres)

Recommendation to City Council regarding the petition to Rezone from M1, Light Industrial District to propose a multi-family development consisting of 187 “cottage” style units, filed by Elcan and Associates, Inc.

Andy Rutens, City Attorney, spoke in regards to the petition for rezoning of the cottages at the south and east side of Spartan Drive. Request is to rezone 64 acres of the 121 total acres from M-1, Light Industrial District, to a lesser zoning R-4, High Density Single and Multi-Family Residential District.

Motion was made by Wayne Biggs, seconded by David Brown to approve the Petition for Re-Zoning of the 193 cottage style units at the south and east side of Spartan Drive from M-1 to R-4 subject to the approval of the Prelim/Final subdivision application at the requested special Planning Commission hearing on March 16, 2021 at 5:30. Motion carried.

3. PUD-The Cottages-South and East Side of Spartan Drive

(South of Industrial Pkwy and East of Spartan Drive, 121± acres)

Public Hearing to consider the request for review of a Preliminary/Final Plat proposing a 193-unit multi-family residential complex. Parcel No.: R022204370001002.000, filed by Elcan and Associates, Inc.

Chairman Scooter Thronson asked for comments from Mike Black, Building Department. Mr. Black described the request and recommendations from Kirby Latham, with Neel-Schaffer, Inc.:

-Given the locations of the proposed development access points, a traffic study would be recommended to determine the traffic affects to Spartan Drive. This study should also determine any affects to the High School.

-Should the traffic study recommend improvements to Spartan Drive, has there been enough study to determine any/all improvements would fit into the existing Spartan Drive right of way?

-There is a portion of the development that is accessed only by bridge. Should something happen to the bridge, how will emergency services handle this? I would suggest input from Saraland Fire Safety and Saraland Police.

-Give the closeness to the proposed development I would encourage input from the Saraland School system.

Please note once full design/construction plans, calculations and permits are submitted we will know a better understanding of the project. Once we have the information required of the City for plan approval, we will conduct our review and will provide our comments accordingly.

Thomas Brymer, the Water & Wastewater Utilities Project Engineer, stated the plat plans did not include a detailed water/sewer design so no review could be performed.

Andy Rutens, City Attorney, spoke on this being the preliminary plan approval and not the final approval and is also contingent upon the Prelim/Final Subdivision Plat being heard at the Special Meeting on March 16, 2021.

Mr. Scooter Thronson, opened the floor for the public hearing.

A representative from Elcan and Associates, Inc. stated that if the City Engineer needs a traffic study, that they would be happy to provide one.

The Saraland School System's Superintendent, Dr. Aaron Milner, spoke in favor of the proposed Cottages project. He was thrilled at the potential investment and economic impact this will have on the City of Saraland. Dr. Milner has reviewed the site plan and did not see a problem with the everyday operations for traffic to/from school during the daily school hours and Friday night football games. Dr. Milner described a potential new track for the school may be built in the near future located between the athletic facility and the top portion of the development property. Band practice will also be held at this location. They will have a specially designed light system that will limit light pollution to the development and does not see that being a problem. Public hearing closed.

Motion was made by Wayne Biggs to approve the PUD for The Cottages, contingent upon the Rezoning approval and Subdivision Plat approval, seconded by Barry Andrews. Motion carries.

4. Petition for Re-Zone-527 Saraland Blvd S

(2 Lots, 5.85± acres, filed by DRS Investments, LLC)

Recommendation to City Council regarding the petition to Rezone from R-4, to B-2 to allow for the development of a multi-tenant commercial business facility.

Chairman Scooter Thronson asked for comments from Mike Black, Building Department. Mr. Black described the request and recommended the Planning Commission approve the request for the Re-zoning of 527 Saraland Blvd S from R-4, High Density Single and Multi-Family Residential District to B-2, General Business District. Andy Rutens, City Attorney spoke and recommended the approval of the zoning application to City Council subject to actual development of project be compliant with the City's Master Plan.

Motion was made by Barry Andrews, seconded by Austin Sealey to approve the petition for Re-Zoning 527 Saraland Blvd S from R-4 to B-2, filed by DRS Investments, LLC. Motion carried.

5. Site Review-123 Park Dr (Gun Store)

Public Hearing for proposed gun store. Parcel No. R0222020940000006.006, filed by Sands Stimpson.

Chairman Scooter Thronson asked for comments from Mike Black, Building Department. Mr. Black stated the site does provide proper access for ingress/egress. Andy Rutens, City Attorney, stated that this type of use is required to be heard by the Planning Commission. Mr. Rutens stated this is compliant with the uses of this area.

Chairman Scooter Thronson opened the floor for public hearing. No speakers. Hearing closed.

Motion was made by Barry Andrews, seconded by David Brown to approve the Site Plan application for 123 Park Dr for a potential gun store, filed by Sands Stimpson. Motion carried.

6. Site Plan-Chicken Salad Chick

860 Industrial Pkwy, Suite J

Consent to revise a previously approved site plan to allow construction of a drive-thru for a proposed restaurant, filed by Element 3 Engineering, LLC

Chairman Scooter Thronson asked for comments from Mike Black, Building Department. Mr. Black stated since the postponement from the February 9, 2021 Planning Commission meeting, the Building Department has received the revised plans for the drive thru. Per Mr. Black, after review, all comments and concerns were property addressed.

Motion was made by Barry Andrews. Wayne Biggs voiced concerns regarding the queue line. Spokesman from Element 3 Engineering, LLC addressed the concerns stating the lanes out front are being shifted to allow a line to act as a queue lane. They are creating a new lane and said the existing right lane would become the queue lane and the middle lane will become the drive thru lane. Time frame of completion is approximately 3 weeks. Wayne Biggs made note that the driveway cannot be operational until the drive thru project is completed. Mr. Biggs asked for Barry Andrews to amend his motion to state the drive thru is not to be used until operational completion of the road/drive thru widening process.

Motion was made by Barry Andrews contingent upon the operational completion of the road/drive thru widening process, seconded by David Brown. Motion carried.

7. Site Variance-505 Celeste Rd (Rehm Animal Clinic)

(Parcel No. R0219083330006066, filed by Jeff Jordan, Architect)

Requesting wood fence to be omitted from the site requirements except where an existing residence adjoins the property.

Chairman Scooter Thronson asked for comments from Mike Black, Building Department. Mr. Black described the request and recommended the Planning Commission approve the request for Site Variance at 505 Celeste Rd, filed by Jeff Jordan, Architect. Mr. Jordan spoke and

explained that the fence to the south side of the property will remain whereas the east side of the property, the fence will be omitted and a full vegetative barrier will be installed.

Motion was made by Wayne Biggs, seconded by David Brown to approve the Site Variance application for 505 Celeste Rd (Rehm Animal Clinic), filed by Jeff Jordan, Architect. Motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED:

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