

The Saraland Planning Commission convened in regular session on July 9, 2024, at the Saraland Municipal Court. The meeting was called to order at 5:57 p.m. by Chairman Scooter Thronson.

Roll call was as follows:

Present: Chairman Scooter Thronson  
Vice Chairman David Brown  
Mayor Dr. Howard Rubenstein  
Council Representative Wayne Biggs  
Chief Lee Smith  
Mr. Barry Andrews  
Doctor Wayne Lyssy  
Mr. Vincent Walker

Absent: Secretary Julie McGuire

Others present: Mike Black, Saraland Chief Building Official; Brendan Schwandner, Saraland City Planner; Andy Rutens, City Attorney, Jennifer Jemison, Zoning Inspector.

Motion was made by Dr. Wayne Lyssy, seconded by Mr. David Brown, to approve the minutes for the June 11 2024 regular meeting. All approved. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Dr. Wayne Lyssy, seconded by Mr. David Brown, to approve the July 9, 2024, Planning Commission agenda. All approved. Motion carried.

Chairman Scooter Thronson called for conflicts of interest of any agenda items for members of the Planning Commission. No conflicts.

Mr. Wayne Biggs said the invocation.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Public Hearing & Sketch Plan/ Preliminary Planned Unit Development Review for the proposed 781 lot Southwind Subdivision on Celest Road and Radcliff Road, concerning parcels 1903070000001.01, 1903070000018.000, 1903070000024.003, 1903070000024.001, 1903070000024.000, 1904180000001.068, 1904180000001.030, and 1903070000024.002, approx. 452 acres total, filed by Dwayne Smith on behalf of Susan Walter and Richard Family Properties, LLC

This is a proposed single-family residential development, located east of Celeste Road, and south of Radcliff Road. The sketch plan for this proposal was first discussed at the May Planning commission meeting, but as this was solely for sketch plan discussion, a public hearing and motion were not held. Since then, the plan has been revised to include

an additional entrance on Radcliff Road, and an additional 230 lots. The other two entrances remain in their initial locations: one directly off Celeste Road, just south of Whites Family Road, one connecting to Hardwood Drive, in The Woodlands Subdivision.

The plan proposes a density of 1.73 dwelling units per acre, with 313 lots of 75' in width, 406 lots of 60' in width, and 62 lots of 50' in width – lot sizes which require approval of zoning amendments to R-2, R-3, and R-1A zoning. The applicant submitted these zoning amendments applications concurrently with submittal of this application. The R-1A lots have been proposed with 7-foot setbacks subject to Planning Commission and City Council approval. Upon his counsel, Chief Sealy stated that fire code states that exterior walls with no fire resistance shall be 5 foot or greater from the property line, but that there is still a risk presented from constructing homes this close.

With the exception of a 33-acre portion (parcel 1903070000018.000), the property is located within the city limits, and is currently zoned R-1. The applicant intends to submit an application to annex the remaining portion at a later meeting.

A traffic study has been completed which incorporates estimated traffic from The Land sportsplex project, and provides intersection improvement recommendations at the three major subdivision entrances. The traffic study was not provided to allow sufficient time for the City Engineer to review prior to the meeting, but this review and recommendation will be expected in the coming days.

A significant portion of the property is delineated wetlands to remain undisturbed. The development is proposed to include amenities such as a pool with a covered area, pickle ball and/or tennis courts, a playground, and a general-purpose sports field.

If this application is approved, Planning staff recommends the approval be contingent upon:

1. Approval of the rezonings of the property to R-2, R-3, and R-1A.
2. City Engineer's review and approval of the traffic study, and implementation of any recommended revisions.
3. Revision to the PUD plan to show landscape islands in the amenity parking area, and to state all property owners.

Cannot be approved due to the unannexed portion.

A few citizens came up to speak in regards to issues against the subdivision. Some of the concerns mentioned were water service, road traffic, drainage, wildlife and crowding of the schools. The Mayor Howard Rubenstein said this is why this process is in place, appreciates everyone's input. Councilmember Wayne Biggs mentioned the Celest Road widening and grant to continue widening and the city works closely with the school superintendent. Vincent Walker stated that he sympathizes with the concerns as it affects him as well and he appreciates the input.

The applicant has submitted items B through G to rezone this property with the intent to develop the Southwind Subdivision. This property is classified as low-density single family residential in the City of Saraland Master Plan. If these applications are approved, the motion should be made conditional upon approval of the Southwind Subdivision PUD.

Motion was made by Councilmember Wayne Biggs, seconded by Dr. Wayne Lyssy, to postpone items A-G to the September meeting with the agreement of the applicant. All approved. Motion carried

- B. Recommendation to the City Council on the Zoning Amendment concerning a portion of parcels 1903070000001.01 and 1903070000024.001 approx. 35.04 acres, to be rezoned from R-1 (Low Density Single Family Residential) to R-1A (Patio Residential), filed by Dwayne Smith on behalf of Richard Family Properties, LLC and Susan Walter
- C. Recommendation to the City Council on the Zoning Amendment concerning a portion of parcel 1903070000001.01, approx. 28.63 acres, to be rezoned from R-1 (Low Density Single Family Residential) to R-2 (Medium Density Single Family Residential), filed by Dwayne Smith on behalf of Richard Family Properties, LLC
- D. Recommendation to the City Council on the Zoning Amendment concerning a portion of parcel 1903070000001.01, approx. 8.88 acres, to be rezoned from R-1 (Low Density Single Family Residential) to R-3 (Limited Multi-Family Residential), filed by Dwayne Smith on behalf of Richard Family Properties, LLC
- E. Recommendation to the City Council on the Zoning Amendment concerning a portion of parcel 1903070000001.01, approx. 35.00 acres, to be rezoned from R-1 (Low Density Single Family Residential) to R-3 (Limited Multi-Family Residential), filed by Dwayne Smith on behalf of Richard Family Properties, LLC
- F. Recommendation to the City Council on the Zoning Amendment concerning parcels 1903070000024.003, 1903070000024.001, 1903070000024.000, 1904180000001.068, a portion of 1903070000024.002, and a portion of 1904180000001.030, approx. 212.15 acres, to be rezoned from R-1 (Low Density Single Family Residential) to R-2 (Medium Density Single Family Residential), filed by Dwayne Smith on behalf of Susan Walter
- G. Recommendation to the City Council on the Zoning Amendment concerning parcels 1903070000024.002 and 1904180000001.030, approx. 99.12 acres, to be rezoned from R-1 (Low Density Single Family Residential) to R-3 (Limited Multi-Family Residential), filed by Dwayne Smith on behalf of Susan Walter

- H. Recommendation to the City Council on the Petition for Annexation of Lot 1A of the “Resubdivision of Lot 1, Shelton Beach Subdivision”, located at 1877 Shelton Beach Rd Ext., to be zoned B-2 General Business, approx. 0.59 acres, filed by Hess Enterprises, LLC / John Hess

The Property Currently holds a newly-constructed commercial structure which is not in use. No issues found following planning/engineering/public works/public safety reviews. This is a favorable recommendation.

Motion was made by Dr. Wayne Lyssy, seconded by Mr. David Brown, to give a favorable recommendation on item H. All approved. Motion carried

- I. Recommendation to the City Council on the Petition for Annexation of Lot 1B of the “Resubdivision of Lot 1, Shelton Beach Subdivision”, located at 1877 Shelton Beach Rd Ext., to be zoned B-2 General Business, approx. 22.84 acres, filed by Hess Enterprises, LLC / John Hess

Current use is a building materials supply business. No issues were found following planning/engineering/ public works/public safety reviews. This is a favorable recommendation.

Motion was made by Dr. Wayne Lyssy, seconded by Mr. David Brown, to give a favorable recommendation on item I. All approved. Motion carried

- J. Review of the Draft City of Saraland Comprehensive Plan

This item was tabled until the August 13, 2024 meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Planning commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

**ACCEPTED AND APPROVED:**

  
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