

Russellville Planning Commission Minutes
April 27, 2020 @ 5:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

The Russellville Planning Commission held a Virtual Meeting on Monday, April 27, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

Members Present

Chairman Wendell Miller
Vice-Chairman Don Jacimore
Secretary Nathan Barber
Justin Cothren
Luke Duffield
Larry Smith
Cody Black
Jim Lanier
Shirley Hatley
Council Liaison Justin Keller

Members Absent

None

Also present: Mayor Richard Harris, City Attorney Trey Smith, P/W Director Kenneth Duvall, City Planner Sara Jondahl, City Engineer Glenn Newman, Fire Marshal Richard Setian, Planning Assistant Lequitta Jones, Jim Lynch/City Corporation, Zayne Bryson/City Corporation, Dave Garza of Barrett & Associates, Rebecca Clark, Sarah Hann, Suzanne Alford, Rebecca Martin, Rebecca McMullen, Lisa Hulie, Don Erwin, Jana Martin Ritchie, Betsy McGuire, Vernon Williams/Cogswell Alan Covington, Randy Hendrix, Mark Auer/Americold, Laura Drown, Scott Steuber, Carrie Gibson/Americold, Ralph Wyngarden/Verizon, Mike Davis, Nick Carson, Tom Powers, Kelly Gibson, and Regina Watson.

Welcome Visitors

The First Order of Business is a request to review and approve the minutes of the Planning Commission February 24, 2020 meeting.

Commissioner Smith made the motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Black and approved unanimously.

The Second Order of Business is a request to review and approve an application for "Memorandum of Understanding" which would allow parking in the right-of-way along South Utica Avenue for property located at 1900 East Main Street. Submitted by GarNat Engineering on behalf of Cogswell Ford Lincoln. (SP.20.03.180)

City Planner Jondahl said the application is to request a Memorandum of Understanding regarding usage of public right-of-way along South Utica Avenue. The conditions where a Memorandum of Understanding: License in Land application may be: 1) A license is assignable only for the use of parking within the Right-of-Way. 2) The licensee shall not gain an interest in the land by granting of this license. 3) Future improvements to the Right-of-Way that include sidewalks may require the licensee to abstain from using land that this agreement may cover. 4) The licensee agrees that any expenditures of the licensee within the public Right-of-Way shall not be performed on the reliance of this license. 5) The licensee agrees that there are not any interests in the land to be coupled with this license. 6) The licensee shall not expand any more development within the public Right-of-Way than what is already presented as part of the application. 7) The license is revocable at any time. 8) The licensee understands and agrees that any improvement of the property owned by the City and covered by the license shall be solely at the Owner's expense and shall not be reimbursed by the City.

It is staff's recommendation that we forward the Special Use Permit to City Council for approval with the 8 conditions along with the requirement that vehicles be allowed no closer than 2 feet behind the curb with striping provided.

Randy Hendrix said he agrees to it all.

Engineer Vernon Williams on behalf of Cogswell Motors said they agreed with the Memorandum of Understanding.

Commissioner Duffield made the motion to approve the request as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jacimore and unanimously approved.

The Third Order of Business was a request to review and recommendation of approval for a Special Use Permit to allow shipping, receiving, and storage for property located at 3324 Bernice Avenue in a C-2. Submitted by Denise Frazier of EWI on behalf of Omega Solution. (SP.20.03.181)

City Planner Jondahl and city staff had no outstanding issues. Staff recommends forwarding this application to City Council for their approval.

Commissioner Duffield made the motion to approve the request as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Smith and unanimously approved.

The Fourth Order of Business was a public hearing requesting approval to update Article XIII Table of Permitted Uses in regard to Funeral Home Service–Crematorium. (MS.20.03.102)

City Planner Jondahl said the funeral home is proposing to make updates to their existing building to include a cremation chamber. The State of Arkansas allows those uses and makes approval in compliance with Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality requirements as long as the applicant is in compliance with all local building codes and environmental standards. Additionally, the state defines funeral homes separately from crematoriums and in order to ensure the health, safety, and public welfare of our residents it is legally our responsibility to list these separately in the Table of Permitted Uses.

Since we do not have a use listed for crematoriums and because we specifically state at the top of the Table of Permitted use "any use not specifically list is NOT PERMITTED". As a result of this statement, the separate definitions by the state, and the state permitting requirements we are recommending the addition of a line to the Table of Permitted Uses for Funeral Home Services - Crematorium. The staff recommends approval.

Commissioner Black made the motion to approve the request. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Smith and unanimously approved.

The Fifth Order of Business was a public hearing requesting review and recommendation for a Special Use Permit to allow issuance of the Tower Use Permit for a 100' monopole commercial communication tower, location is 634 W 5th Street, in an R-3. Submitted by Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless on behalf of the owner Bridge Church. (SP.20.04.181)

Chairman Miller stated he had received several calls requesting the meeting be held in a normal public hearing setting. Some stated they just didn't have the capability of joining a virtual meeting and would like to be recognized to speak. Commissioner Jacimore said he had received the same kind of requests.

Ralph Wyngarden of Verizon on the behalf of Bridge Church said they had no problem with this item being tabled.

Chairman Miller said it was his recommendation that this item be tabled to assure everyone had the ability to be heard.

Commissioner Jacimore made the motion to table until the May 2020 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Smith and passed unanimously.

The Sixth Order of Business was a request to review and approve vacating that portion of South Waterloo Avenue adjacent to Blocks 32 and 33 of the Poynter Addition to the City of Russellville (Corner of East 4th and South Waterloo Avenue), submitted by Dave Garza of Barrett & Associates on behalf of Americold Logistic LLC, Christopher Besterfeldt, and Shawn Partain. (ST.20.04.98)

City Planner Jondahl said this application is being brought to the Planning Commission to vacate the entirety of South Waterloo south of the intersection with 4th Street and 4th Street between South Waterloo and South Verona. The ROW in this section is unopened and South Waterloo improvements end just north of where 4th Street Intersects.

The Comprehensive 2020 Plan states in several of the goals that there are specific objectives that we can address and respond to in relation to the street closure.

Goal 1 – Land Use Development Objective 1: 1. Guide Development into locations where the land is most cost-effectively served by urban level services. This land is already located in the Airport Industrial District, is an expansion of an existing facility and is not hindered in height due to proximity to the airport although they will be applying for and obtaining and FAA approval for their project.

Goal 4 – Public Facilities Objective 3: 1. Develop New and Maintain existing traffic circulation. 2. Where appropriate, continue to extend the grid-pattern street network to interconnect streets throughout the City. The highest and best use of this property is not for the construction of residential property as originally platted, the highest and best use of this property is to allow the facility to expand as proposed as part of the Large Scale Development. As part of that development the applicant is providing adequate onsite parking and storage and is looking at options to include traffic movement through the property and not redirecting traffic back out onto Elmira.

The Draft ReImagine Russellville 2040 Comprehensive Plan encourages the same items and provides a more comprehensive plan for future street locations including the route connecting Weir Road to Elmira. A discussion with the applicant highlighted the potential of a north south connection being made along the Waterloo corridor connecting Weir Road to Elmira. Additional discussions have determined the possibility of such locations and have concluded that if the north south connection is made that there are two alternate locations that would provide better results.

The Engineering Department include that the Drainage Easements at the old alignment of 4th and Waterloo, road improvements along Waterloo if using that for truck access. Drainage easements along north side of existing and/or diverted drainage to 4th Street.

City Planner Jondahl said it is my recommendation that we forward this to the City Council for their consideration and approval, with the requirements for drainage and road improvements meeting Public Works approval as noted in their comments.

Dave Garza of Barrett & Associates on behalf of Americold said that staff and petitioner are in agreement to move forward.

Commissioner Black made the motion to approve as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Duffield and passed unanimously.

The Seventh Order of Business was a request to review and approve a Large Scale Development at the Americold Russellville Plan on South Elmira. The expansion will be a High Bay Automation Storage System. Submitted by Dave Garza of Barrett & Associates on behalf of Americold Logistic, LLC. (DV.20.04.165)

City Planner Jondahl said this application is for an addition of 108,670 square foot with a building height of approximately 155 feet to the existing 245,300 square foot building. The existing structure sits on the property along the railroad tracks and off of Elmira. The property to the South, East, and North adjacent to the subject property is all M-1, with a small portion to the west that is zoned M-2. The uses in this area are a mix of commercial and industrial.

In the review of this proposal in the M-1 Light Industrial District Section 2.10.2 refers you to the table of permitted uses where Cold Storage is a Permitted Use and is subject to the provisions contained in the Land Subdivision Code pertaining to Large Scale Developments. In the M1 and M2 zones a 25 foot setback is required from all property lines. Exterior lighting is not impacted or changed as a result of this project. Sidewalks in the Airport Industrial District Character Area along Elmira are not required. Any new signs will need to meet the provisions of Article V. of the City of Russellville Zoning Code and submitted to Community Development for Review.

Regarding Commercial Building Design. Due to the nature and the size of the structure the construction proposed does not directly meet the requirements of the commercial building design, a commercial building design waiver will be required.

Engineering Department requires Drainage Easements will be required and any public improvements made will require additional approvals.

It is staff's recommendation to approve the Large Scale Development with the requirement that the commercial building design waiver application be submitted and approved prior to permit issuance.

A video was submitted and shown at the meeting of the stages of the construction of the building. Mr. Auer of Americold asked approval of this expansion, which would allow us to distribute food in a proper way. This expansion will employ 70 jobs.

Dave Garza on behalf Americold said Americold is proposing a large expansion to their South Elmira Freeze Plant. The expansion will be the tallest building in Russellville and is estimated to cost \$80 million. The city staff, ourselves, and Americold design team has been to 2 separate meetings in the past month to get this project going. They hope to start construction late summer/early fall and it will take 2 years to complete. The new facility is a High Bay Automation Storage System. Americold is the global leader in temperature-controlled warehousing and transportation solutions in the food industry. They will meet all the city codes.

Commissioner Duffield made the motion to approve the request as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jacimore and unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned.

Chairman Wendell Miller