

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
March 2, 2023 @ 5:30 p.m.**

The Planning Commission held a meeting on Thursday March 2, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. in City Hall Council Chambers.

Commissioners Present

Wendell Miller, Chairperson
Don Jacimore, Vice-Chairperson
Larry Smith
Eric Westcott, City Council Liaison
Cheryl Monfee
Shirley Hatley

Commissioners Absent

John Choate
Luke Duffield
Justin Cothren
Cody Black

Visitors: City Planner Sara Jondahl, Planner I Victoria Marchant, Planning Assistant Caden Lemley, Mayor Fred Teague, Flood Plain Manager Ben Gray, Harley Mork and Dow Dollar.

Welcome Visitors

The First Order of Business is a request to review and approve the minutes of the Planning Commission Meeting February 2, 2023.

The Second Order of Business is a Special Use Permit to allow a Storage Building and Container Sales business in a C-2 zone, located at 3333 S Arkansas Ave. Submitted by Harley Mork on behalf of Dow Dollar. (SPUP-0223-000331)

City Planner Jondahl stated that this is a Special Use Permit for storage building sales. She stated that the commission would be familiar with this location because the area to the south, they had previously approved a Special Use Permit for storage building sales. She stated that this business talked with the adjacent property which is why we are here tonight. She stated that he has expanded his business, and he cannot just expand onto another property without going through the Special Use Permit process so that is why we are here tonight. City Planner Jondahl stated that the existing conditions are that this property has been vacant, it is located along South Arkansas in a C2 zone, and uses in this corridor include: metal recycling, auto sales, Greenway Tractor, Casey's General Store, Atwoods, and 420 Rx. She stated that it is just north of the railroad crossing. City Planner Jondahl stated that as staff was reviewing this they did note that building permits cannot be issued to a metes and bounds property, so they will need to complete a Property Boundary Verification. She stated that this is one of the new processes that they

included with the Zoning Code updates that they did, so instead of doing a full Incidental Subdivision plat of the property, they just have to provide the legal description and complete that property boundary verification. City Planner Jondahl stated that it is a much simpler process for property owners. She stated that the office does remain on the property to the south, and parking shows sufficient parking for the building. City Planner Jondahl stated that they do have an ADA van accessible space on site. She stated that storage buildings proposed located adjacent to the hard surface. City Planner Jondahl stated that the drive aisle hard surface shall be 10' in width. She stated that any units placed on the property shall be located adjacent to the hard surface. City Planner Jondahl stated that with the new code, they do have landscaping that will be required. She stated that they want to make this a premier storage building sales, so as seen on the site plan, they propose a water fountain in the front and a model home because these storage buildings can and are being used as pre-fabricated type structures. City Planner Jondahl stated that because of the size of the lot and the amount of area that will be hard surface, a drainage report will need to be provided prior to issuing the permit to the site. City Planner Jondahl stated that the City Engineer recommends the full buildout of what the property is supposed to be so that they only have to do one drainage report.

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. Provide drainage report and receive approval to commencing work.
2. Apply for a Property Boundary Verification prior to obtaining permits.

As a result of the findings below:

1. The applicant demonstrates compliance with the regulations within Article 2.10 of the Russellville Zoning Code; and
2. The proposed use is in line with the adjacent use in this district; and
3. Current traffic routes are constructed in such a way to handle the traffic from the business.

Commissioner Smith asked why they had to complete a boundary verification. He asked if these records were already available to the county or the city. City Planner Jondahl stated that this is not a platted property, so it is not "lot one" of "xyz subdivision" it is defined by metes and bounds. She stated that the property data that they have comes from AR County Data, but it is not accurate. She stated that that is why they need a legal description so that they could confirm what the property boundaries are for that property. City Planner Jondahl stated that they are mapping those boundaries in their GIS system so that in the future they will have it on file. Commissioner Smith asked if it has never been surveyed. City Planner Jondahl stated that it has been surveyed, but the information is not accurate at the county level.

Meeting Adjourned

Commissioner Smith asked if the property was in a flood plain. City Planner Jondahl stated that the property is not in a flood plain.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hatley and passed unanimously.

The Third Order of Business is a long range planning update.

City Planner Jondahl stated that the Long Range Planning Committee met; however, prior to that staff had officially submitted a grant application for the \$25 million RAISE Grant for multi-use trails. She stated that she wanted to show the presented map to show the Commission where the trail will be located. She stated that the map will be publicized in the next few days. City Planner Jondahl stated that it goes from Gum Street in the north with a pedestrian overpass on I-40. She stated that it connects to the bike trails on Phoenix and down to the Aquatic Center. She stated that from the Aquatic Center you can go to the Junior High. City Planner Jondahl stated that you could go all the way from the Junior High on the multi-use trail to the east following Prairie Creek to the Valley Park Center. She stated that it is an excellent connection, and it is a greenway connection because it follows the creek. City Planner Jondahl stated that at City Park on Knoxville, you can take a sidepath connection to 4th Street/Fairway which will have dedicated arms crossing the railroad tracks. She stated that you can jump on the 8 foot trail to Whig Creek and go from there to Lock and Dam Park. She stated that this is an excellent connection. City Planner Jondahl stated that it goes by the High School, and she has had conversations with the School, making sure that they do not have any conflict with what they are proposing on their property. She stated that staff walked the majority of the alignments to review them and see if there were any construction issues. City Planner Jondahl stated that they spent a lot of time on this application. She stated that when updating the Zoning Code they got only 300 responses, but on this public survey, open for 10 days, received over 1,200 responses.

City Planner Jondahl stated that additionally she wanted the commission to know that the Zoning Code is reviewed quarterly by the Long Range Planning Committee to review any Zoning Code issues that might arise. She stated that a majority of every application that they have had an easier path forward. She stated that there are a couple things that they noted that need to be revised. City Planner Jondahl stated that they noted that for sidewalks, there was no unit given, only “4”. She stated that for fences they have the requirement where for some uses the fence has to be 8 to 10 feet tall, but in the code it states that any fence over ten feet has to go over a variance. She stated that they are going to add language stating that if the height is required by code, you will not also be required to obtain a variance to be within code. City Planner Jondahl stated that most issues are missed words here and there, and the commission will be seeing the updates on the agenda next month. City Planner Jondahl stated that there are additional items that they have not seen an issue with so far, but will be reviewed quarterly to see if it is something that they would need to consider. She stated that they were going to clarify some language for grading permits, making sure that they are clear, and they are going to clarify the language for landscaping on a drive aisle because it almost sounds like if you put a drive aisle in, you do not have to do any of the side yard landscaping that is required. She stated that there is another section under landscaping that they are going to be clarifying the language on—when it is duplicating, clarifying language to confirm that within a ten foot strip there are so many trees. City Planner Jondahl stated that the last item will be for the fence adjacent from multi-family subdivisions to single family subdivisions. She stated that the fence requirement always stated the fence should be of wood, metal, or masonry, and someone had asked if it could be composite or an alternate material like vinyl. She stated that they were going to remove the word “metal” because they do not want just a chain-link fence, so they are just going to say “composite or alternate material,” similar to the language that they have in commercial building design so that it gives

them some more options going forward and meets the original intent of that language. City Planner Jondahl stated that they will be updating the table of permitted uses for cement facilities to allow them with a Special Use Permit in M1 zoned properties. She stated that there are three categories, two of them show Special Use Permit and the third similar category says not permitted. She stated that they were going to clean that up as well. City Planner Jondahl stated that nothing at this point is holding up any application. She stated that Dave Garza from Barrett and Associates is part of the Long Range Planning Committee, so he is bringing items to staff as well. City Planner Jondahl stated that next month the commission will see some updates to the Zoning Code.

Chairman Miller stated that he would like to personally thank City Planner Jondahl for all of her hard work. He stated that she has done a great job. He stated that seeing all the work staff has done makes it hard to wrap your head around, but staff has done a great job and it is very commendable.

Commissioner Smith asked if some of the trails being in remote areas how would an ambulance get in there. City Planner Jondahl stated that you will be able to access all points of the trail really quickly. She stated that it is a 10' wide trail and the City will make sure with engineering that it is feasible to get access there. City Planner Jondahl stated that there is only one section that is actually a remote section and that is south of the high school headed toward Jimmy Lile Road. She stated that the rest of the sections are really accessible through various sidestreets, and you are only a block in between each section. She stated that an ambulance would be able to get to either side.

Commissioner Smith stated that when he was on the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Committee, they built all of the Razorback Trails. He stated that there were areas where you could not get an ambulance, so they had to come up with these little side-by-sides to go down the trail. Fire Marshall Setian replied that the fire department already has side-by-sides designed to extract patients.

Commissioner Smith stated that he was unaware of the side-by-sides owned by the City. He stated that this was something that for the Razorback Trail they did not think about it until later in the process of developing it.

City Planner Jondahl stated that they will make sure that the accessibility will be addressed.

Meeting Adjourned.

Chairperson