
SYCAMORE PLAN COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES OF JANUARY 12, 2009

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairperson John Lewis called the meeting to order and City Clerk Candy Smith called the roll. Those Commissioners present were: Ron Bemis, George Bridgewater, Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Bill Lorence, Steve Nelson, and Chuck Stowe. Commissioners Marvin Barnes, Cindy Henderson, and Michelle Schulz were absent. Other staff members present were Assistant City Manager/City Treasurer Brian Gregory, Municipal Engineering Corporation Engineer John Brady, Building Commissioner/Zoning Officer Lyle Doty, and Plan Commission Attorney Kevin Buick.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 8, 2008.

Motion

Commissioner Lorence moved to approve the Minutes of December 8, 2008 and Commissioner George seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 9 - 0.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion

Commissioner Evans moved to approve the agenda and Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 9 - 0.

CONSIDERATIONS

A. Consideration of a Petition from the City of Sycamore to Annex Property Owned by Jerome Johnson at 401 N. Main Street and to Rezone the Property to "C-3," Highway Business District.

Chairperson Lewis said that in City Manager Bill Nicklas' absence, Plan Commission Attorney Kevin Buick would review the background for the City. He said they would proceed as usual by hearing the background first, then hearing from the petitioner, and then hearing from those in the audience wanting to speak.

Duane Slayton called point of order and said he was the attorney for Mr. Johnson and they felt it was important for Mr. Nicklas to be in attendance. He said they have only had two short sessions to reach an agreement and have only covered one issue. He asked for more time to reach an agreement on all issues.

Commissioner Schulz arrived at 7:05 pm.

Chairperson Lewis said the item was on the agenda and he would like to proceed and if after the discussion the Commissioners want to postpone it they would make the decision at that time.

Plan Commissioner Attorney Buick said Friday he spoke with Mr. Nicklas and he requested that given the fact that this was first before the Plan Commission in December and was continued to this month he wanted to proceed tonight. Mr. Buick said the Johnson parcel matter relates to 401 N. Main Street and is a petition to rezone the property initiated by City staff. He said at the December 8 Plan Commission annexation of three former railroad parcels were considered because a recent title search had revealed that the parcels were completely surrounded by the City, but were not annexed. He said this parcel is a 1.32-acre parcel and City staff is seeking C-3 Highway Business zoning because commercial zoning is consistent generally to what is developing to the north of the property as the gateway to the community. He said the reason this was continued from the December meeting was because Mr. Johnson's attorney Mr. Slayton identified a surveyor's error. He said there is no annexation agreement as a part of this and no proposed development plan. Mr. Buick noted that Mr. Slayton provided a document identifying the property owner's position. He said that Lyle Doty provided the Commissioner's with a report and a copy of the zoning map that identifies this parcel as M-1 zoning, but that is an error because it is not annexed and the City cannot zone it. He said this is before the Commission for annexation and rezoning from Ag zoning to C-3.

Duane Slayton, 452 State St., Hampshire, IL, said he was the attorney for Mr. Johnson and they were asking for a continuance to seek a voluntary annexation rather than a forced one. He said there are other issues they want to talk about before coming before the Plan Commission and he felt he should be talking with Council, too.

Chairperson Lewis asked if the Commission would entertain the notion of having this postponed to the February meeting or if they wanted to make a decision this evening.

Commissioner Henderson arrived at 7:14.

Motion

Commissioner Lorence moved to hold over until the next meeting and Commissioner Schulz seconded the motion.

Commissioner Davey asked why Mr. Johnson did not want to go ahead with this.

Mr. Slayton said they had other issues to discuss with the City.

Commissioner Davey asked what issues.

Mr. Slayton said he had not discussed those issues with the City yet and he was simply asking for more time.

Chairperson Lewis said it was important to point out that as a Plan Commission they have the authority and right to move ahead and theirs is a recommendation to the City Council. He said aside from that, he would follow the lead of his fellow members of the Plan Commission.

Commissioner Davey asked for Building Commissioner/Zoning Officer Doty's opinion.

Mr. Doty said the way things are shaping up in that part of town it would not be in the City's best interest to rezone this to M-1. He said that area is transitioning toward highway business type uses.

Chairperson Lewis noted that in general this area is a transition area and the Plan Commissioners should keep that in mind.

Aldersperson Stowe said that Mr. Johnson should get busy and get things done because this issue was delayed for a month and they could have resolved other issues during that time. He said he does not see a lot of negotiations that need to be done because they are surrounded on all sides.

Commissioner Davey said that they have one more month and that would be it for delays.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners Ron Bemis, George Bridgewater, Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, Steve Nelson, Michelle Schulz, and Chuck Stowe, voted aye with Chairperson Lewis voting nay. Motion carried 10 - 1.

B. Consideration of a Petition from the City of Sycamore to Annex Property Owned by Laura and Eric Mathey at 403 N. Main Street and to Rezone the Parcel to "M-1," Light Manufacturing District.

Plan Commissioner Attorney Buick said this is a much smaller parcel of .03 acres than the Johnson parcel. He said because of the adjacent property's current use as M-1, City staff is recommending M-1 zoning to bring this into conformance. He said eventually this is likely to go to C-3 zoning.

Motion

Commissioner Lorence moved to forward the annexation with a favorable recommendation to Council and Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners Ron Bemis, George Bridgewater, Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, Steve Nelson, Michelle Schulz, Chuck Stowe, and Chairperson Lewis voted aye. Motion carried 11 - 0.

C. Consideration of a Special Use Permit Application from DeKalb County Youth Services for the Property at 203 E. State Street.

Plan Commission Attorney Buick explained that DeKalb County Youth Services would like to modify the building to create a safe house juvenile detention facility that would be staffed full time by a foster family or County employees.

Ken Andersen, 407 Hadley Ct., representing DeKalb County, said the County has purchased the property at 203 E. State and this would make a perfect location for a safe house. He said that representatives from DeKalb County Youth Services were in the audience for questions.

Commissioner Bemis said he spoke with Library Director Sarah Tobias and she had no objections.

Motion

Commissioner Lorence moved to forward the Special Use with a favorable recommendation to Council and Commissioner Bridgewater seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners Ron Bemis, George Bridgewater, Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, Steve Nelson, Michelle Schulz, Chuck Stowe, and Chairperson Lewis voted aye. Motion carried 11 – 0.

D. Consideration of a Rezoning Petition from Commonwealth Edison Company for the Property at 385 South Avenue, with a Special Use Request for a Utility Substation.

Plan Commission Attorney Buick said the property is presently zoned R-3 and would more appropriately be zoned M-2 which is consistent with utility use. He said a Special Use would be required to build the proposed 15.6 foot high fire wall that would enhance the safety of the area.

Paul Callighan, 1512 Crayton Cir. E., DeKalb, explained that ComEd was upgrading the substations and at the request of Building Commissioner/Zoning Officer Doty, they are asking to upgrade to M-2 zoning to be consistent with the City's zoning ordinance. He said the fire wall is to meet current ComEd standards due to proximity of neighboring structures, to protect the substation from any fires that may occur at neighboring structures and to protect the neighboring structures from any fire that may occur at the substation. He said the target completion of the project would be June 1st so the substation could be completed by summer when they have their highest demand.

Commissioner Nelson asked if they were going to add a stain finish.

Mr. Callighan said they were going to leave as a natural stone-like look.

Motion

Commissioner Lorence moved to forward the rezoning with a Special Use with a favorable recommendation to Council and Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners Ron Bemis, George Bridgewater, Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, Steve Nelson, Michelle Schulz, Chuck Stowe, and Chairperson Lewis voted aye. Motion carried 11 – 0.

E. Consideration of an Amendment to the Special Use Request Granted to St. Mary's Church on August 18, 2008 to Allow for Certain Height and Area Revisions.

Plan Commission Attorney Buick said that St. Mary's asked to hold this over because they were still finalizing plans and were not prepared to proceed.

Motion

Commissioner Bridgewater moved to forward with a favorable recommendation to Council and Commissioner Lorence seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners Ron Bemis, George Bridgewater, Bill Davey, Lowell Evans, Ken George, Cindy Henderson, Bill Lorence, Steve Nelson, Michelle Schulz, Chuck Stowe, and Chairperson Lewis voted. Motion carried 11 – 0.

WORKSHOP ITEMS - NONE

REPORTS

PERSONS TO BE HEARD FROM THE FLOOR ON OTHER THAN AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Commissioner Lorence moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 p.m. and Commissioner George seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

Chairperson Lewis called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 11 - 0.

Approve:

Chairperson – John Lewis

Attest:

Candy Smith, City Clerk