

**BIG LAKE PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

MARCH 6, 2013

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Marotz called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Ketti Green, Doug Hayes, Seth Hansen, Scott Marotz, Patricia May, and David Schreiber. Also present: Planning Consultant Ben Wikstrom, Administrator Todd Bodem, and Administrative Assistant Sandy Petrowski.

3. ADOPT AGENDA

Commissioner May moved to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Hayes, unanimous ayes, agenda adopted.

4. OPEN FORUM

Chair Marotz opened the Open Forum at 6:31 p.m. No one came forward for comment. Chair Marotz closed the Open Forum at 6:31 p.m.

5. APPROVE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 6, 2013

Commissioner Green motioned to approve the February 6, 2013 Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Commissioner May, unanimous ayes, Minutes approved.

6. BUSINESS

6A. PUBLIC HEARING: VARIANCE AND SITE PLAN – TOWN SQUARE RESIDENTIAL SUITES (BRIGGS PROPERTIES, INC.)

Planning Consultant Ben Wikstrom reviewed the Staff Report pertaining to the submitted application for site plan and variance approval for the construction of a 3-story 33-unit apartment building to be located at 715 Martin Avenue. He stated that all the zoning and site requirements of either the R-3 District or a PUD have been met and the remaining issue is the variance request which is requesting approval to allow less than the required number of total parking stalls and enclosed stalls. The Ordinance requires 2.5 parking stalls per unit, one of which must be enclosed. Based on the number of units included in the proposed project, the site would be required to have 80 stalls, including 33 enclosed. The applicant is proposing 47 stalls, approximately 1.47 stalls per units – including 18 enclosed.

Potential solutions discussed were:

- Reduce the number of stalls
- Underground parking (which would be cost prohibitive to the developer);
- Acquisition of additional land to the west of proposed site (to provide more parking or proof of parking);
- Reduction in number of units of project (if reduced to 23 units and 47 stalls, which would put the number of stalls per unit at approximately 2.0, which is not unreasonable based on surrounding cities' ordinances);

Mr. Pat Briggs, of Briggs Properties, Inc., was present to discuss the proposed submittal. He stated that their goal for this site is to primarily target "baby boomers plus", with the approximately 50% of the units being 1 bedroom units. Mr. Briggs stated that, based on information from other facilities they manage, they found that no one parks in the detached garages but them for storage and that a 1 bedroom unit with a den would allow them to store their things indoors in a climate controlled environment. He also noted that their "magic" number of units is 29 because it is their goal for the project is to have an elevator.

Commissioner Green inquired if all the units would be market rate. Mr. Briggs stated that they would and that there will be no restrictions but the developer will have their own restrictions (45+), the units would be offered first to their clients in the neighboring complex, the Ashbury Apartments, and then be open to the public.

Commissioner Schreiber stated his concern that if the project is targeted for the 45+ age, there is a need for an elevator versus just stairs for a 3-story building. He also stated that he feels that the building height is too high and will not fit into the neighborhood and that the density is too much for this parcel. Commissioner Schreiber asked if there were plans for a sidewalk along Martin Avenue. Staff indicated that there is a sidewalk on the Coborn's side of Martin Avenue. Commissioner Schreiber stated that because of the concern for pedestrian traffic, he believes a sidewalk should be on the project side of Martin Avenue and the City should consider installing a 4-way stop at Martin and Phyllis Street.

Mr. Briggs also talked about the option of having "crossover parking" with the adjacent Ashbury Apartment complex (which the developer also owns/manages) and that there would be a walking path between both communities. Commissioner Green stated her concern that if one of the properties were sold, the new owners may not be agreeable to the crossover parking idea. Mr. Briggs if they sold one community, they would have to sell both under a blanket note. Chair Marotz stated his concern with no additional available land or parking along Martin Avenue for visitors.

Commissioner Hayes stated he could possibly be acceptable of 1.75 stalls per unit, however, he did not believe there was enough information to give a definite answer yet. He would like the site to take care of everything, with no crossover agreement and see the plans revised to have less units/more parking stalls.

Commissioner Green suggested that a tuck under garage (2-car deep - tandem) could possibly take care of the parking issue. Mr. Briggs indicated that they will consider that potential solution.

Commissioner Hayes suggested that Mr. Briggs come back to next month's meeting with more specific unit/stall numbers based on tonight's discussion.

Chair Marotz opened the public hearing at 7:18 p.m. p.m. No one came forward for comment. Chair Marotz closed the public hearing at 7:18 p.m.

Commissioner Hansen motioned to table the plans to allow applicant to revise their plans to bring the parking requirement as close as possible to 2 stalls per unit. Seconded by Commissioner Hayes, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Commissioner Hayes motioned to direct staff to author a letter to extend the 60-day decision. Seconded by Commissioner Hansen, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

6B. FOLLOW-UP: CHANGE IN DAY OF MONTHLY MEETING

Administrator Bodem reported that the discussion at the February meeting regarding changing the day of the Planning Commission's monthly meeting due to an unexpected scheduling issue for the Planning consultant and another jurisdiction's meeting schedule. Since that time, the other jurisdiction's meeting schedule issue had been resolved and it would not be necessary for the Planning Commission to change their meeting day.

This item was for information only; no action required or taken by the Commission.

6C. PLANNING COMMISSION VACANCY

Administrator Bodem discussed the three (3) application letters received for the vacant Planning Commission seat and asked the Commission to discuss and make a recommendation to the City Council. He noted that one of the applicants, Mr. Clay Wilfahrt, was present.

Commissioner Schreiber stated that, due to just receiving the third application letter a few days ago, he would like for this item tabled to the next meeting to allow additional time for the Commissioners to review all application letters and any others that may be submitted.

Commissioner Hansen motioned to table this issue to the April 3, 2013 meeting to allow time to review the applications. Seconded by Commissioner Hayes, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

The Commission discussed conducting interviews with each of the applicants at the next meeting. It was the consensus of the Commission to direct staff to draft five (5) interview questions and to invite all applicants to the April 3rd meeting, at which time interviews will be held by the full Commission.

7. PLANNER'S REPORT

7A. PROJECT UPDATE REPORT

Administrator Bodem reviewed the twelve (12) items in the March 2013 Project Update Report and answered questions of the Commissioners. No action required or taken by the Commission.

7. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Hayes reported that the 2013 Farmer's Market is scheduled to be held at Lakeside Park from mid-May to early October on Thursdays from 3:00-7:00 p.m.

9. OTHER

Administrator Bodem informed the Commission that people have mentioned to staff that the sign ordinance may be too rigid/inflexible (i.e., not allowing large enough signs in areas on the outer edge of the City where traffic moves at a faster speed). Chair Marotz stated that he would be willing to open the discussion at the Planning Commission level but noted that his concern would be that precedence could be set. Commissioner Hayes stated that he believed the ordinance fits the downtown area very well but he does see there could be an issue with areas that have traffic moving at a faster pace.

10. ADJOURN

Commissioner Green motioned to adjourn at 7:52 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Hayes, unanimous ayes, motion carried.