

The following minutes are from the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting on Thursday, October 28, 2021 in the Abita Springs Town Hall at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner Gruning called the meeting to order, and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioners in attendance included Chad Hall, Eric Templet, and John Pierce. Bryan Gowland was absent. Kristin Tortorich and Mark Fancey were also present.

The Commission reviewed the draft minutes from the September 30, 2021 meeting. Commissioner Gruning referenced the summary of the long discussion with Ray Pasqua near the end of the meeting. He noted that the minutes are not meant to be a stereographic record but rather a summary of the proceedings. He noted the importance of the last sentence of the summary that if the Mayor and Council direct the Commission to discuss the contiguous lot law then it should be included on the agenda.

Commissioner Templet motioned to accept the minutes of the September 30, 2021 meeting. Commissioner Pierce seconded the motion. All commissioners were in favor.

Planning Commission

No agenda items.

Zoning Commission

PUBLIC HEARING:

Proposed resubdivision of 71458 Hickory Street

The public hearing opened. The proposal is to subdivide a 2.061-acre property into two lots. Lot 1A would be 0.615 acres in size and Lot 3A would be 1.446 acres in size. Both lots would have frontage and access on Hickory Street. The property is zoned Residential District. Commissioner Gruning asked about the adjacent streets – Live Oak Street and Andrews Street that are undeveloped. He also noted that a portion of the property abuts the Tammany Trace. Kristin Tortorich said the property has adequate available access on Hickory Street.

No public comments were received. The Commission did not have any questions or comments.

Commissioner Templet motioned to approve the subdivision as presented. Commissioner Hall seconded the motion. All commissioners were in favor.

Discussion:

Draft Stormwater Management Ordinance

The Commission reviewed the October 21, 2021 draft ordinance. Mark Fancey noted the definitions added to the draft ordinance to clarify the phrase “litter or debris” in Section 9-906 – Specific Prohibition. The definitions added are from the Town Code chapter regarding litter. He noted the clarification that exempts trash or debris resulting from a storm event. Commissioner Templet said he like the proposed changes. Commissioner Hall asked about storm event trash or debris that was not removed in a timely manner. Mark Fancey said it would be difficult to legislate a specific time period for removal. He suggested that if a reasonable time period had passed after a storm event this might be an enforcement issue.

Commissioner Pierce motioned to bring the ordinance to a public hearing at the next available meeting. Commissioner Templet seconded the motion. All commissioners were in favor. The public hearing will be scheduled for the December 30, 2021 meeting.

Public Comment

Lovelle Blich said she is trying to obtain a map showing the Historic District boundaries. She is doing research in advance of the proposed rezoning on November 18, 2021 and needs to know the district boundaries. Mark Fancey said he would provide her with the information.

Ray Pasqua said he objects to not being able to place the contiguous lot law on the agenda for discussion. He said the Town Council referred him to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Kristin Tortorich said that in order for an item to be placed on the Commission agenda a commissioner must ask for the item to be added. Without that request, Mr. Pasqua is limited to the two-minute time limit for public comments.

Mr. Pasqua said that a smart growth committee would be meeting in Baton Rouge. He said this is the way to build a stable community and that a smart growth plan is needed for his property. He said the Harrison Avenue extension will be built and the plan is needed.

Mr. Pasqua said the Town’s Planning Department needs to be a planning department. He said the ordinance he objects to was not brought about by anyone who has anything to do with planning. He referenced a smart growth manual that describes everything he is talking about.

He said the contiguous lot rules only allow him to build on six (6) lots where 10 lots were originally platted. He said this creates sprawl. He read from the purpose statement of the adopting ordinance and said it is not valid. He said if the purpose statement is not valid then the ordinance it not valid.

Commissioner Gruning told Mr. Pasqua that his comments have been received.

Kristin Tortorich said the schedule of 2022 Commission meetings will be presented at the November 18, 2021 meeting for review.

Commissioner Templet motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Pierce seconded the motion. All commissioners were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Kristin M. Tortorich, Planning Director

Date