

**Planning Commission  
Public Hearing  
April 14, 2015**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dennis Thomas and the secretary called the roll.

Present: Nixon Adams, Simmie Fairley, Ren Clark, Dennis Thomas, Scott Quillin, Michael Blache, and Rebecca Bush

Absent: None

Also present: Louise Scott, Planning Director, and Mayor Donald Villere

The first planning case also had a corresponding zoning case and both were discussed in conjunction. The planning case discussed was P15-04-03 Recommendation to the City Council regarding Ordinance 15-05 to effect the annexation of a 0.33 acre tract of land designated as Parcel One and a 0.37 acre tract of land designated as Parcel Two located in Section 54, T7S, R11E, into the corporate limits of the City of Mandeville designating and assigning the property for purposes of zoning as B-2 Highway Business District and providing for other matters in connection therewith. The zoning case discussed was Z15-04-04 Recommendation to the City Council regarding Ordinance 15-05 to effect the annexation of a 0.33 acre tract of land designated as Parcel One and a 0.37 acre tract of land designated as Parcel Two located in Section 54, T7S, R11E, into the corporate limits of the City of Mandeville designating and assigning the property for purposes of zoning as B-2 Highway Business District and providing for other matters in connection therewith

Ms. Scott presented Ordinance 15-05 being an annexation request for two parcels known as 4450 Highway 22 with a B-2 zoning designation. The two properties were located in front of the Tiffany Lanes Bowling Alley. The properties were in single ownership of Daniel Sinclair, Jr. and would be redeveloped as a single development site. The land was currently improved with a nursery and retail which would be demolished and rebuilt with a retail center. The new building would contain 6,442 square feet with three retail businesses. The property was located in the infill and triangle area of the targeted annexation area. It was listed as Priority 1 and would be located in District 1.

Mr. Adams said annexations were the consideration of the Mayor and City being agreeable to any tradeoffs. The project was paying for their utility connections. Mr. Thomas asked about a property connection. Ms. Scott said they would connection with the adjacent property for parking.

Mr. Blache moved to recommend approval of Ordinance 15-05 for the annexation of the two parcels into the City limits, seconded by Mr. Fairley, and was unanimously approved.

The next case discussed also had two corresponding cases which were discussed in conjunction. The planning case discussed was P15-04-04 Recommendation to the City Council regarding Ordinance 15-08, an ordinance of the City Council of the City of Mandeville to effect the annexation of Lot X containing 0.31 acres and a parcel of ground containing 0.38 acres in Square 113, Town of Mandeville, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana into the corporate limits of the City of Mandeville designating and assigning the property for purposes of zoning as B-2, Highway Business district and providing for other matters in connection therewith. The zoning case discussed was Z15-04-05 Recommendation to the City Council regarding Ordinance 15-08, an ordinance of the City Council of the City of Mandeville to effect the annexation of Lot X containing 0.31 acres and a parcel of ground containing 0.38 acres in Square 113, Town of Mandeville, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana into the corporate limits of the City of Mandeville designating and

assigning the property for purposes of zoning as B-2, Highway Business district and providing for other matters in connection therewith.

Ms. Scott presented Ordinance 15-08 being an annexation request of two parcels of land with a requested B-2 zoning designation. The property was vacant land and the owners intended to construct a carwash. The survey was prepared by John E. Bonneau & Associates, Inc. dated September 9, 2014 and would be a single ownership, single development site. The property was identified as a target area for annexation, and would be located in District 3.

Ms. Scott presented some history of the property located on the corner of Girod and Florida Street being located in the Gateway Overlay District. The owners went through the permit process in the Parish, and were waiting for their permit issuance when they were informed that there were no utility services. The Parish suggested they meet with the City. They did meet with the administration and decided to request annexation. The Parish required 10' at the rear property line, but the City did not have that requirement. The Parish had eliminated the interior green space and placed it on the perimeter. The City requested to change the construction and green area. The owners were agreeable and had changed the plans to shield the entry from the street, and it already designed similar to areas in Old Mandeville. There was no green space along the parking aisles, but the City requested a way to work with the green. The owner had received a variance from the Parish so they could not deviate from the plan. They waited for six weeks to annex the property when they could have worked with the City to receive water and sewer and received their permit. Ms. Scott commended the owners on doing a phenomenal job on the site. They had included elements like the lakefront gazebo. The Design Review Committee was pleased with the plan, and they were recognized by EPA for their water recycling aspects. The proposed site plan did comply with the City's green space requirements.

Mr. Adams said the board had reviewed the carwash request on West Causeway Approach. He said this was not an adverse annexation. Ms. Scott said it was a nice project with the green space and softening of the area. Mr. Thomas asked about exiting the Florida Street entrance, could you turn right or left and could you only access the vacuums after the carwash. Todd Heiden, owner, said the driveway was on the left and everyone could access the vacuums. There was an agreement with McDonald's that the carwash would maintain the rear driveway and they were trying to stop the left hand turn out of the site. Mr. Adams said some traffic backed up for McDonald's. Mr. Quillin asked where the signage would be located. Mr. Heiden said slightly to the west of the corner, and they were working the location out with the utility companies. From the Florida Street curb, it would be 30' and to driveway another 15'. There were four existing driveways that would be removed and landscaped. Mr. Quillin asked about signage on Highway 59 with McDonald's access. Mr. Heiden said it would be small signage. Mr. Quillin said it might be beneficial for the business. Ms. Scott said an entry sign might be allowed with McDonald's for instructional access. Mr. Heiden said their other facilities had clean low sign. They wanted to create an icon on the corner. Mr. Blache asked for connectivity. Mr. Heiden said to the west there was no connectivity. Ms. Scott said none was available except from the back.

Mr. Quillin moved to recommend adoption of Ordinance 15-08 to annex the two parcels into the City limits with a B-2 zoning designation, seconded by Ms. Bush, and was unanimously approved.

**Public Comment**

None

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Adoption of the minutes was deferred until the next meeting

Mr. Quillin moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Bush and was unanimously approved.



Lofi Spranley

Lofi Spranley, Secretary

Dennis Thomas, Chairman

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Absent: None

Also present: Louisette Scott, Planning Director, and Mayor Donald Villere

Mr. Adams announced that written notice of decisions regarding zoning variances would be filed in the Board's office the following day of this meeting at which time applicable appeal time will begin to run.

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The next case discussed was V15-03-04 James and Cheryl Stephenson requests a variance to Section 5.2.3, Grading Supplement, 809 acres in Square 26, 2248 Jefferson Street, zoned R-1

Ms. Scott presented that the applicant was elevating a historic home built in 1911, and was listed as Contributing in Sally Reeve's book. The house was being elevated through the owner's ICC funds. They were required to meet the bfe, but the City required an additional 2' freeboard. The site could be eligible for an exception being listed as a historic structure, but the CLURO required a minimum of 12' or 1' above street grade. The owners were proposing an elevation to 11' which met the bfe, but they required a variance to the 1' to meet the 12' minimum. The variance was required because the CLURO required that the FEMA elevation and the 12' be met. A similar variance was granted on Marigny Avenue with a habitable accessory structure.

Mr. Quillin asked to confirm there was no impact to the City's flood ratings. Ms. Scott confirmed the elevation would meet the bfe as a historic structure. Mr. Blache reiterated that the reason for the request was for 1' to the 12' minimum requirement. Ms. Scott said there were marks from Hurricane Katrina and the elevation would be in compliance with FEMA and ICC.

Mr. Clark moved to approve the variance to the 1' deviation of the 12' requirement, seconded by Mr. Fairley and was unanimously approved.

The next case discussed was V15-03-05 Cedarwood School, Inc. requests a variance to Article 9, Parking and Landscaping, lots 42-47, Chateau Village Subdivision, 607 Heavens Drive, zoned R-3

Ms. Scott presented a variance request to parking. Cedarwood School was a private school with an existing site plan that was updated by Principal Engineering submitted March 16, 2015. The intent was to enclose the open air gymnasium. The enclosed parking calculation was for an auditorium using the Community Recreation of 50 square feet of assembly area. In accordance with the parking calculation table, there was a requirement of 95 spaces or 7,324 square feet divided by 50 which required 146 spaces, whichever was greater. The site proposed 73 spaces. There was a discussion at the work session that lots 42-47 were developed, the rear lot was the baseball field, and vacant lots 40 and 41 were owned by Cedarwood School. The board discussed creating the lots as a parking bank for the remaining 76 parking space deficit. There were questions at the work session and the staff reviewed the original variance creating a parking bank that was later developed into parking spaces. The existing two vacant lots would be the parking bank

Mr. Adams said enclosing the building would still allow the same activities, and not increase any parking demand. Ms. Scott said any expansion would be required to be presented to the board for approval. Mr. Clark reiterated that a parking bank was not developed space. Ms. Scott said if the area was designated as a parking bank. Ms. Leblanc, owner, said four times a year there were events that challenged the parking but not on a daily basis.

Michael Willkerson, 540 Heavens Drive, stated he lived three houses down from the school. He was not opposed to growth of the school, but there was not

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enough parking for the daily operations. He understood between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. it was difficult because of school drop off. He was concerned because he had stopped and assisted children to get across the road. He attended the original meeting creating the parking bank. The gym area was originally designated as parking, and now there was a request to enclose it without additional known parking. He asked why additional parking was not already installed. He thought Cedarwood was a wonderful school and was in favor of it, but he was concerned that it had overgrown being a neighborhood school. He stated the two vacant lots could be developed as available parking and requested that happen before allowing construction to enclose the gym.

Mr. Adams asked Mr. Wilkerson if he would rather remove trees and build the parking lot. Mr. Wilkerson said there was not enough parking and how it would be established was not up to him. Mr. Blache said drop off and pick up times was not about actual parking. Mr. Wilkerson said Heavens Drive traffic was heavy because of the bottleneck on the side of the road with it being used as lanes of traffic. Mr. Clark reiterated that it was being stated as a traffic not parking problem. Mr. Wilkerson suggested the installation of a circular driveway or area for parking. Mr. Adams said if it was determined there was not enough space for parking, the board could call for paving. He suggested approving the parking bank and review any traffic problems. Mr. Wilkerson suggested before approving the variance, the board should decide how to handle the parking. Mr. Adams said the board could require construction of the parking at any time.

Mr. Clark asked if the school staff parked on the streets. Mr. Wilkerson answered no. Mr. Clark said these were the same issues as Our Lady of the Lake School. Mr. Wilkerson said there was a building on top of a parking bank. Mr. Quillin said Ms. Scott presented the previous parking variances of which one was for the gym, but the variance was changed as buildings were built. The parking bank was moved around and was now proposed to be on the west two lots. Mr. Adams said no variance was required until this request to enclose the exterior of the building. Mr. Wilkerson said all but two spaces were occupied daily. Mr. Adams said every school had a parking variance. The board did what they could to accommodate education. The board also tried to preserve the trees. Mr. Fairley said there would still be a traffic flow problem. Mr. Wilkerson said a driveway would have the cars off the main thru way. Mr. Adams said the cars parked 5-10 minutes before the end of school and cleared out quickly. If it was dangerous, it needed to be changed. Mr. Clark said children should not be dislodged on the wrong side of the street. He asked if the neighborhood was saying it was an unsafe situation and Mr. Wilkerson was in agreement. Mr. Adams felt the police had looked at this.

Mayor Villere said Chief Richard had looked at the site and observed the situation. If it was operated as designed, the children entered or exited inside the safe area. He was at the site a few days and did not view any children running across the street. He was not saying it would not happen and it was not a safe situation. Mayor Villere suggested having Chief Richard send patrols to look at the site and check with Ms. LeBlanc for any additional remedies. Mr. Adams said most people pull on the side of the road to leave the travel lane open. Mr. Clark asked if the site was in compliance since there was resident testimony that it was not the case. Mr. Thomas asked to have Chief Richard determine if using one of the lots would alleviate the traffic. Mayor Villere said a design was based on traffic flow rather than a parking situation. He would work with the school. Mr. Clark said it would unfortunate to lose the tree canopy, but safety first.

Lynn Mitchell, architect, 240 Girod Street, had recently attended a public hearing on Heavens Drive and traffic calming was reviewed. The solution was

sidewalks. He did not know of any progress on the idea, but that may take care of both problems.

Kathy LeBlanc, owner, said the school started with one building and nothing but woods. She could not have anticipated the tremendous success. The traffic was at pick up and drop off times and if children were crossing the street, she did not know about it and would not condone it. Part of the design would be a car pool line off the street and in front of the gym area. They would like to design access through the back of the campus, but that would come after the gym was finished. After the children were in their classes there was no traffic issue. She thought there were 10 parking spaces not being utilized on a daily basis. She said Mayor Villere had helped a few days with carpool traffic. Heavens Drive was two lanes and cars did stack up and moved as directed. There were four events in the school year with added parking. The usage of the gym would be the same, and they wanted the children to stay out of the cold and rain. This would provide a place to eat, play and have an assembly. Mr. Thomas asked when construction would begin. Ms. LeBlanc said late spring or early summer when school was out. The goal was to be finished before school resumed.

Mr. Quillin commented if the parking on the two lots was installed, he did not think it would help with the school layout from a convenience standpoint of parking a car and walking the children. He would like to see the parking used and he did not think it would be used regularly. Cutting down trees did not make sense. If the parking was laid out differently for a loop or covered area, it would make sense. Mr. Fairley was in agreement. Ms. Scott said a parking realignment could pick up more spaces.

The board agreed it was a traffic not a parking problem. If Heavens Drive was changed to one way during drop off and pick up hours, it would require traffic to change all the way to Highway 22 with a left turn that was not as safe for 15 minutes of inconvenience. Folks had allowed traffic to move in both directions. It had been manageable for years. The board agreed if there were safety issues then Chief Richard would be recommending an alternative.

Maxie LeBlanc, owner, said there were 52 employees and 74 parking spaces. He did not know of any children crossing the street. When there were events there was parking everywhere. They tried to do the best they could.

Mr. Wilkerson said he was not talking about special events. There were children crossing the street this morning. The biggest problem was not the flow of the traffic. There was an opportunity for Libra Drive to be created as a thru way and not take down all of the trees. He suggested going against traffic to make the circle and go out. He was asking before the board gave an approval to determine what was the next plan. Mr. Quillin said Mr. Wilkerson was suggesting a larger loop. Ms. Scott said the board could ask to study the circulation and give a report. The board could speculate, but the request was on the use that was not changing. Gaslight Square Condominiums was located on Libra Drive. Mr. Mitchell said Libra Drive was a narrow street with open ditches. It could be a future artery, but it was not practical at this time. Mr. Adams suggested a path. Mr. Quillin suggested a longer parking loop. Mr. Clark said the issue was not a parking problem, but a traffic problem. Mr. Adams suggested approving the request with a condition for a review. Mr. Thomas would like to see Chief Richard's recommendation. Mr. Blache said the issue was they met the parking requirements and traffic would still an issue.

Mr. Blache moved to approve the variance as submitted to include a parking bank with a one year review for traffic parking issues. Mr. Clark said the board was

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abrogating the safety issue. Mr. Adams said the parking bank had nothing to do with the problem. The board could not stop a project because of something not involved in the case and the board should stick to the issue. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bush. The motion passed 4-3, with Messrs. Clark, Quillin and Thomas voting against. The board suggested looking at the road winding to the lot for more stacking lane.

**Public Comment**

None

**Enforcement**

Mr. Thomas asked about the sea cans at Our Lady of the Lake, the live oak tree replacement at the shopping center on Florida Street and the parking lot behind the Lake House.

Ms. Scott stated there was a new attorney for Mr. Cella who was putting together a new landscape plan. The Lake House equipment had been moved and space was being leased north of Highway 190 for trucks. Mr. Crovetto had not built the canopy, and it was a legal process to be followed. The containers at Our Lady of the Lake were determined to be in compliance.

Mr. Blache asked about the gravel pit area at the Town Center.

Adoption of the minutes was deferred until the next meeting

Mr. Quillin moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Bush and was unanimously approved.

  
Lori Spranley, Secretary

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Nixon Adams, Chairman

