

OAK RIDGE MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES

APPROVED

Meeting Date: April 21, 2016

Call to Order: The regular meeting of the Oak Ridge Municipal Planning Commission (Planning Commission) was held in the Municipal Building, Oak Ridge, TN on April 21, 2016. The meeting convened at 5:33 p.m. with Mr. Whitson presiding.

Members in Attendance: Charlie Hensley, Sharon Kohler, Austin Lance, Claudia Lever, Jane Shelton, Stephen Whitson, Hans Vogel, and Zabrina Minor. Staff Representatives – Kathryn Baldwin, Sherith Colverson and Andrea Kupfer.

Members not in Attendance: Patrick McMillan and Todd Wilson

Visitors/Others: See attached sign in sheet.

Approval of Agenda: Unanimous vote (8 – 0) to approve the agenda as presented.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Ms. Lever to approved the February 18, 2016 minutes. Seconded by Mr. Hensley and followed by unanimous vote (8 – 0) to approve.

Consent Agenda:

- a. Motion made by Mr. Hensley to approve the April Bond Report. Seconded by Mr. Lance and followed by unanimous vote (8-0) to approve.

Business Items:

- a. Signage to Allow EMCs (Electronic Message Centers) for Religious Institutions

Ms. Baldwin reviewed the proposed text amendments to Article XIV (Sign Regulations) of the Zoning Ordinance, which include allowing one, 32 square foot ground sign to be located on a legal lot on which the Religious Institution is located. Additionally, the proposed sign shall not be located within 200 feet from a single-family attached or detached structure or 100 feet from a multi-family structure.

Two members of the First United Methodist Church spoke in support of the proposed amendments. Mr. Garver noted the church is surrounded by other businesses with EMCs, as they are in a zoning district that permits these sign types. He stated the rezoning process is difficult, and this text amendment would benefit the church. Mr. Colvais added it is easier and safer for drivers to quickly read the message on an EMC rather than the existing older signs.

There was discussion about whether a religious institution set back from the road could be granted this type of sign. Ms. Baldwin stated the limitations of the size of the ground sign would not benefit churches in these locations. Ms. Minor inquired if all applications for EMCs, whether or not they meet each of the seven criteria, would be submitted to the BZA for consideration. Ms. Baldwin stated staff would take all cases to the BZA to determine compliance.

Motion made by Mr. Hensley to approve the proposed text amendments. Seconded by Ms. Shelton and followed by a unanimous vote (8-0) to approve.

- b. Stormwater Requirements

Ms. Baldwin reviewed the proposed text amendments to several sections of the Zoning Ordinance, which are primarily wording revisions necessary to match the wording of the adopted Stormwater Management Ordinance. The phrase “Erosion Control and Storm Water Management Ordinance” will be replaced with “Stormwater Management Ordinance.” She also stated a few items were added to Section 16.11 (b) including the location and width of existing and proposed utilities, easements and riparian buffer zones.

Motion made by Mr. Hensley to approve the proposed text amendments. Seconded by Ms. Lever and followed by a unanimous vote (8-0) to approve.

c. Discussion of Accommodating Emory Valley Center in IND-1 Zone District

Ms. Baldwin recommended removing this item from the agenda, as staff has received a letter with an exact description of the Emory Valley Center's principal uses that are permitted in the IND-1 zoning district. In the future, staff may propose an amendment to the IND-1 zoning district to include job force training as a principal use in addition to other accessory uses. Ms. Baldwin mentioned the Emory Valley Center broke ground at their new site this week.

Motion made by Mr. Lance to remove this item from the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Hensley and followed by a unanimous vote (8-0) to approve.

d. Variance from Subdivision Regulations

Ms. Baldwin reviewed a request from Eric Tobler to grant a variance from the existing requirements for sidewalks on Cottage Court and Cobblestone Court in the Crossroads at Wolf Creek subdivision, as the lots are no longer multi-family and due to the short length of the cul-de-sac. These requirements are part of the Subdivision Regulations rather than the Zoning Ordinance. Staff will be proposing an amendment to the Subdivision Regulations at a later date to remove the requirement for sidewalks on residential cul-de-sacs with single-family detached lots and a length of less than 300 feet. Mr. Vogel inquired if the 300 feet distance would be measured from centerline to centerline, and Ms. Baldwin confirmed this is correct.

Motion made by Ms. Lever to approve a variance for Crossroads at Wolf Creek for removing the requirements for sidewalks on residential cul-de-sacs due to the fact that they are now single family houses and not multiple family dwellings, and because of the smaller number of lots, they will not be required to have sidewalks. Seconded by Mr. Hensley followed by a unanimous vote (8-0) to approve.

e. Final Plat Approval for Main Street Resubdivision

Ms. Kupfer stated a revision to the resubdivision plat for Main Street Oak Ridge, which was approved by the Planning Commission on January 7, 2016, was submitted to include one additional lot. There were no staff comments on this resubmittal.

Motion by Mr. Lance to recommend approval of the final plat. Seconded by Ms. Kohler followed by a unanimous vote (8 – 0) to approve.

Other Items:

None

Reports

a. City Council Actions – Mr. Hensley reported City Council has been receiving a lot of inquiries regarding the possibility of allowing chickens in zoning districts other than RG-1. Based on the discussion at the April 18, 2016 meeting, City Council is recommending some wording changes based on the current City of Knoxville ordinance. There was discussion about who would be enforcing the regulations if chickens were to be allowed in other districts. Staff feels this is not a land use issue and should not be regulated by the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Hensley also reported there is new technology to catch speeding vehicles that the Oak Ridge Police Department is considering.

b. Staff Report – Ms. Baldwin mentioned staff and a few Planning Commission members will be attending the East Tennessee Quality Growth meeting on Thursday, April 28th. She also stated several other events related to marketing Oak Ridge and promoting healthy cities are happening over the next few weeks.

c. TSAB (J. Shelton) – Ms. Shelton reported TSAB has been working on the continuity of sidewalks to ensure pedestrians can reach destinations when walking. Ms. Baldwin stated staff previously digitized missing sidewalk links when the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was underway and can make this available.

- d. Anderson and Roane County Regional Planning Commissions (Staff) – Mr. Henley reported Anderson County Planning Commission has been reenacted. Ms. Baldwin added the county has been contracted with the East Tennessee Development District for planning services.

Bruce Applegate, assistant to the City Manager, spoke briefly to the Planning Commission about the More 2 Energy Efficiency upgrade program. The program is free to low and moderate income residents for improvements to mechanical equipment such as HVAC units and electric water heaters. The program is mandated to assist 230 people. An event is scheduled for April 26th to promote the program.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:17 p.m.



Chairman
Oak Ridge Municipal Planning Commission

5/18/2016

Date of Approval