

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
Tuesday, January 19, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ben Westerburg  
Jo Ann Thomas  
Brian Bendily  
Judy Poole

MEMBERS ABSENT: Vernon Guy

OTHERS PRESENT:

Bruce Fleming, Zoning Director	Chris & Ballie Johnson	Brenda Fletcher, Zoning Asst.
Christi R. (illegible)	Laura Kilpatrick Marchelos	Joey Riggin, Lazenby & Assoc.
Tex Kilpatrick	Tonya Auttonberry	Brenda Aiken (Kilpatrick)
Yvette & FC Frantom	John Guteo	Gretchen Kovac
Kevin Marcante	Ronald Turner- Water Superintendent	Joe Holyfield
Judge Charles Joiner	Robbie George – City Engineer	John & Jane Ellett
Jay & Staci Mitchell	Dan Lane	Nell Young
Shelby Ainsworth	Cheryl & Bonnie Hales	A.J. Burns
Mike & Sandy Hudson	Eileen Greer	Bob & Helen Montgomery
Richard McConnell		

The Tuesday, January 19, 2016, Planning Commission Meeting was called to order by Ben Westerburg. The Commission approved the minutes of the December 21, 2015, Planning Commission meeting.

The FIRST application for review was:

**APPLICATION NO:** REV-15-50000003  
**APPLICANT:** West Monroe High School  
**ADDRESS:** 201 Riggs Street  
**REQUEST:** Revocation of a portion of Cryer St (600 block of Cryer) and Revocation of a portion of North 4<sup>th</sup> Street between Cryer and Claiborne Street.

Shelby Ainsworth, West Monroe High School Principal, and Dane Lane, West Monroe High School Assistant Principal, told the Commission that West Monroe High School needs additional room for a practice field and that connecting the existing practice fields south of Cryer Street with the new practice fields north of Cryer Street will create a continuous and manageable safe student space. They discussed maps that were submitted with the application, showing location of future construction of Vo-Tech Building. Shelby told the Commission that there were 2 (two) houses (506 & 510 Cryer Street) and that eventually the Ouachita Parish School Board would acquire ownership of those properties. Judy Poole asked if they were occupied and Mr. Ainsworth said they were currently occupied and that there is access to these homes. The Commission discussed the Department Reviews: Public Works Water & Sewer Superintendent, Ronnie Turner, had previously spoken with Principal Lane regarding existing 12” water line and 8” sewer line located in this section of Cryer Street. Mr. Lane & Mr. Turner discussed and agreed that the easement should always be accessible for any necessary city maintenance on the utilities. The Sewer Department Supervisor, Nathan Moore, had no objections to the revocation. The City Attorney comment included the need for a “T” turnaround for emergency vehicle access. The West Monroe Fire Department Inspector, Charlie Simmons, noted that the Fire Department had no objections to the revocation as long as a 60 feet of Cryer Street and 60 feet of North 4<sup>th</sup> Street were retained to facilitate turning around fire trucks at this dead end. ATMOS Energy Representative, Pat Epps, stated that ATMOS will abandon (kill) the existing 2” steel gas main along this section of Cryer Street. The removal of this section will not affect gas flow in the area. Bruce Fleming stated that he would speak with the West Monroe Fire Department regarding specifics of the access needed for emergency vehicles. At this time Brian Bendily made the motion to **APPROVE** the request. Judy Poole seconded. All in favor, motion approved. The West Monroe City Council will hear this case on February 9, 2016.

The SECOND application for review was:

**APPLICATION NO:** ZC-15-45000010  
**APPLICANT:** Willow Place Properties, L. L. C. (Christopher Johnson)  
**ADDRESS:** 201 Hines Lane  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** A certain lot or parcel of ground in the NW/4 of SE/4 of Section 28, T18N, R3E, Described as follows: BEGINNING at a point on the West line of NW/4 of the SE/4, 495 feet South of the Northwest corner; thence running in a Southerly direction along the West line of said 40 acres, a distance of 185.625 feet; thence in an Easterly direction on a line parallel to the North line of said NW/4 of SE/4 a distance of 704 feet; thence in a Northerly direction on a line parallel to the West line of NW/4 of SE/4, a distance of 185.625 feet; thence in a Westerly direction on a line parallel to the North line of NW/4 of SE/4, a distance of 704 feet to the Point of Beginning.  
**REQUEST:** Zone Change from R-1H (Higher Residential District) to R-2 (Multiple Family District).

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Chris Johnson and Joey Riggin took the podium to discuss the plans for building duplexes at 201 Hines Lane. Chris told the Commission that he had built duplexes on Wallace Dean Road and actually lived in one for six months and that he managed the property. All were rented mostly to senior couples that did not want a big yard to take care of. Chris also told the Commission that those duplexes did not have carports but that these would and he would have an 8' privacy fence. He plans to cover the drainage ditches. Chris told the Commission that these would be brick/stucco and look more like a house. - *Inaudible due to Audience Noise* - Ben Westerberg called for order. The Department Review responses included a review from Ronnie Turner, Public Works Water and Sewer Superintendent, that stated they have no issues with the Willow Place Properties Development and that all sewer taps for this project must be made in a new or existing manhole at the developer's expense. Nathan Moore, Street Department Superintendent, stated that the City will need to inspect construction of storm drainage system in front of property. Charlie Simmons, Chief of Fire Prevention with the West Monroe Fire Department, provided a drawing showing location of existing fire hydrants. He expresses concern of accessibility for Fire Apparatus and provided suggestions for marking the Fire Lane to overcome the issue. Judy Poole asked if Willow Place Properties LLC plans to manage or sell this development. Chris told the Commission that he would manage these for long term at least 15 to 20 years. Judy Poole asked as to the type of people who would be attracted to this development. Chris told the Commission that it would attract seniors and young couples. Chris told the Commission that as far as traffic that there would be more traffic. The Commission discussed the plans and drawings that were submitted for the project. Chris told the Commission the 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom rental fee would be approximately \$1,000.00 a month, and the 3 bedroom rental fee would be approximately \$1,200.00 a unit. Ben Westerberg asked why the developer was choosing to build duplexes when single family homes or townhouses were already allowed in the existing R-1H zoning. Chris Johnson told the Commission that he had built duplexes 4 years ago and that he already had plans. - *Inaudible* - Joey Riggin, Lazenby & Associates Inc. Engineer for the Project, told the Commission that Chris Johnson could build one big townhouse with the current zoning. Bruce Fleming explained that in the district they were in that he was allowed to build townhouses. He could build 15 per acre. Brian Bendily said let me understand we could go from 20 units to 30 units and it would not have to be approved by this Commission. Bruce Fleming said what they would have to do is to resubmit as a Planned Unit Development (PUD), as long as it meets all the guidelines. Ben Westerberg asked Robbie George, City Engineer, to come to the podium. Robbie George told the Commission that Hines Lane was a narrow road that is 18' wide, and that his concerns would be turning in and out of the development. Joey Riggin told the Commission that they would have the ditch covered all the way down so it would make for a wider turn onto Hines Lane from the townhouses. Robbie George, City Engineer, and Joey Riggin, Project Engineer, will need to meet to discuss the project prior to issuance of permits, etc. The discussion turned to drainage issues in the area - *inaudible* - . Brian Bendily asked Chris Johnson if they need additional drainage would he be willing to give up the storage building area. Chris Johnson told the Commission that yes he would give it up that he did want onsite storage but understood and would do whatever is required. Brian Bendily asked about the patio on the back and who would maintain the landscaping on the property. Chris Johnson told the Commission that he would maintain or hire someone to maintain the whole thing and said that he may even live on site as he had done on other projects that he had developed. The discussion turned to trash and garbage pick-up. Bruce Fleming told the Commission that it would be considered a commercial project and that the developer would have to acquire trash collection services. Chris Johnson told the Commission the last project he had Ouachita Waste and the units had individual trash cans and every Friday the company would pick up. Ben Westerberg asked if townhouses and individual houses were allowed in an R1H Zone. Bruce Fleming told the Commission "yes", that he could build single family homes or townhouses. Ben Westerberg told the audience that change was coming and that it is something they all should know, it backs up to a B-1 (Transitional Business District) as the town grows. Chris Johnson told the Commission that he was approached today (1-19-2016) about buying some other property on the street. Jay Mitchell, homeowner at 210 Hines Lane since 2013, approached the front to review the plans. Ben Westerberg told Chris and Joey to have a seat so that the Commission could hear from the people in the audience. Gretchen Kovac took the podium and told the Commission that she had a development/construction company and that Ben Westerberg was correct that change was coming because most of Cypress Street was business that backs up to this property. Gretchen Kovac told the Commission that the investment of \$2.3 million in this property would be an economic boost to the community. Gretchen Kovac told the Commission that she was interested in seeing the city grow and wanted what was best for the city and she felt that this was good. Richard McConnell objects to it because of increased traffic. - *inaudible* - . Jay Mitchell was concerned when they started clearing the land. He stated that if the property was developed to build the townhouses that he would not have a problem, as they had already been told that the townhouses would be built. He stated that the citizens in the neighborhood are not happy with duplexes because usually when people build duplexes they are mostly renters but townhouses usually own the property. Brian Bendily told Jay Mitchell that the way he understands it that the biggest factor is not traffic but duplexes. Jay Mitchell told the Commission that was their biggest concern the duplexes. He would hope that the townhouses are to be built. Brian Bendily told Jay that if Chris built the townhouses but used cheaper material and decided to rent for \$ 500.00 to \$600.00 a month then you would have something not as desirable. Ben Westerberg told Jay that what Brian Bendily was trying to say was that there can be a worst case scenario no matter which way we go.

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–inaudible– Bruce Fleming stated that the developer could build single family homes as Gretchen Kovac had approval to build single family homes. The density could be higher with townhouses, let’s just say with 2 acres 15 units per gross acres. Judy Poole asked Bruce Fleming if this was zoned for single family. Bruce Fleming told the Commission that it was also zoned for townhouses. Bruce Fleming discussed the options that are available for development of the property. –inaudible– Judge Charles Joiner and Nell Young spoke and said the traffic and conditions of the road along with increased crime were their concern. Chris Ware stated that this is a dangerous intersection. Ben Westerberg confirmed that the majority of the residents in attendance were opposed to the proposed project. Issues of concern are drainage, traffic, increased crime rate, road conditions, lack of privacy, etc. Brian Bendily made a motion to approve the application with restrictions regarding drainage. JoAnn Thomas seconded. Brian Bendily voted to send this application to the City Council with a favorable recommendation subject to restrictions regarding drainage. JoAnn Thomas, Judy Poole, and Ben Westerburg voted to send this application to the City Council with an unfavorable recommendation. By a vote of 3 to 1, the Planning Commission sends this application to the City Council with an **UNFAVORABLE** recommendation to allow the Zone Change. The West Monroe City Council will hear this case on February 9, 2016.

The THIRD application for review was:

**APPLICATION NO:** PBG-15-30000003  
**APPLICANT:** Willow Place Properties, L.L.C. (Christopher Johnson)  
**ADDRESS:** 201 Hines Lane  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** A certain lot or parcel of ground in the NW/4 of SE/4 of Section 28, T18N, R3E, Described as follows: BEGINNING at a point on the West line of NW/4 of the SE/4, 495 feet South of the Northwest corner; thence running in a Southerly direction along the West line of said 40 acres, a distance of 185.625 feet; thence in an Easterly direction on a line parallel to the North line of said NW/4 of SE/4 a distance of 704 feet; thence in a Northerly direction on a line parallel to the West line of NW/4 of SE/4, a distance of 185.625 feet; thence in a Westerly direction on a line parallel to the North line of NW/4 of SE/4, a distance of 704 feet to the Point of Beginning.  
**REQUEST:** Planned Building Group for Willow Place Duplex & Triplex Development at 201 Hines Lane.

This application was discussed in conjunction with the above application. Brian Bendily made a motion to approve the application with restrictions regarding drainage. JoAnn Thomas seconded. Brain Bendily voted to approve the application with stipulations, JoAnn Thomas, Judy Poole and Ben Westerburg voted to deny the application. By a vote of 3 to 1, the application is **DENIED**.

The FOURTH AND FINAL application for review was:

**APPLICATION NO:** ZC-15-45000011  
**APPLICANT:** Kilpatrick Funeral Homes LLC & Kerola Properties, LLC  
**ADDRESS:** 1320 & 1326 N 7<sup>th</sup> St.  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** Lots 1 & 4 of Block 4 of Hinkle Subdivision.  
**REQUEST:** Zone Change from R-1 (Single Family Residential) to B-2 (Neighborhood Business District) to develop shopping center.

Joe Holyfield and Tex Kilpatrick told the Commission that they wanted to build a shopping center on North 7<sup>th</sup> Street (strip mall). Joe Holyfield told the Commission that they would remove the 4 (four) existing homes. Ben Westerberg asked if they owned the property. Tex Kilpatrick told the Commission that they owned all that property and if granted the approval that it would be a nice center with a privacy fence built around it and that the lighting would make it safer in the neighborhood. Ben Westerberg wanted to know if they had any tenants lined up. Joe Holyfield told Commission that they already had 2 (two) tenants lined up. Robbie George, City Engineer, took the podium and explained the drainage situation. There was no one in the audience to speak for, nor against the application. The public notice for this meeting stated 1318 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street, and 1324 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street that was corrected to 1320 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street and 1326 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street – the legal description of Lot 1 and Lot 4 Block 4 of Hinkle Subdivision was correct. Judy Poole made the motion to send to the City Council with a **FAVORABLE** recommendation to all the Zone Change from R-1 (Single Family Residential) to B-2 (Neighborhood Business District). JoAnn Thomas seconded. All in favor, motion approved. The City Council will hear this case on February 9, 2016.

As there was no further business to be discussed, the meeting was adjourned.