

**MINUTES OF THE  
TUPELO PLANNING COMMITTEE  
January 4, 2010**

There was a regular meeting of the Tupelo Planning Committee held Monday, January 4, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Committee members present were Chairman Michael Gratz, Jr., Mr. Mitch Ellett, Mr. Rud Robison, Mr. Russ Wilson, Mr. Bob Myers, Mrs. Gloria Gasaway, Mr. Scott Davis, and Mrs. Patti Thompson. Development Services staff present were Director BJ Teal, Mr. Pat Falkner, Ms. Marilyn Vail, and Mrs. Nikki Burton.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Gratz called the meeting to order. Mr. Ellett gave the invocation and Mr. Robison led the Pledge of Allegiance. After an introduction of the committee and staff, Mr. Gratz explained the meeting's procedures and confirmed the agenda.

**REVIEW/APPROVE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 2009 meeting. Mr. Ellett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**REPORT ON COUNCIL ACTIONS**

Mr. Falkner stated that the Planning Committee's action from the October meeting did not require action from the City Council.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**RZ10-01: Jackie and Cindy Grammer request to have approximately 0.33 acre located at 106 & 108 Lawndale Drive rezoned from an R-1M, Medium Lot Residential Zoning District to a C-2, General Commercial Zoning District.**

Mr. Falkner stated that the property on Lawndale adjoins the commercial zoning district on Main Street. Mr. Falkner stated that one of the lots has a residential structure on it, and the other is vacant. Mr. Falkner stated that the surrounding residential property is in a state of transition and several properties in that location have a number of code violations. Mr. Falkner stated that there are very few occupied residences on the north Lawndale block. Mr. Falkner stated that the Development Services staff has to determine if a zoning amendment is viable to a neighborhood anytime there is a request to extend or expand a commercial area that is adjacent to a residential area. Mr. Falkner stated that the Comprehensive Plan envisions an area in where there is a blending of uses and where there is more inter-play between the residential and commercial area as opposed to areas that need to be separated. Mr. Falkner stated that staff also reviewed the possible impact on city facilities if the property were rezoned to commercial, but none of the city

departments that were consulted felt that the impact would be major. He stated that typically, commercial property value will increase as opposed to residential property value. Mr. Falkner stated that property is small, but it is feasible that the property can be combined with the adjacent vacant lot for commercial use.

Mrs. Cindy Grammer, Route 6, Tupelo, stated that her husband bought the property on Lawndale with the intention of just fixing it up and reselling it. Mrs. Grammer stated that she is a part-time photographer and would like to use the existing residence as a photography studio. She stated that the studio would be a part-time business for the next four or five years and would take customers by appointment only and would mostly be on the weekends.

Mr. Wilson asked Mrs. Grammer if she would plan to move the proposed photography studio to another location once it became a full time business. Mrs. Grammer stated no.

Mr. Gratz asked if the residence was previously used as rental property. Mrs. Grammer stated that she and her husband have not used it for anything since purchasing it.

Mr. Ellett asked if the existing trees on the property would be protected. Mrs. Grammer stated yes.

Mr. Gratz asked Mrs. Grammer her intentions for parking. Mrs. Grammer stated that she did not plan to have more than one customer at a time, so parking should not be a problem.

Mr. Gratz asked if there was anyone present to speak either for or against the application. No one was present.

Mr. Wilson stated that after reviewing the site, a major conditional use seems more appropriate for photography studio. Mr. Falkner explained that in order for a major conditional use to apply, the existing residence must be occupied.

Mr. Gratz asked about another rezoning request located near the proposed property. Mr. Falkner stated yes a separate lot in the area had been rezoned. Mr. Wilson stated that he remembered the rezoning application coming before the Planning Committee and that it was to allow a fast food restaurant to be located near the corner of Lawndale and West Main Street.

Mrs. Thompson stated that she inspected the property on Lawndale and confirmed that the property on the corner of Lawndale and West Main is for lease. She stated that the old Modern Cleaners building will continue to be leased as is. Mrs. Thompson asked if it would be very difficult to fill in the existing lot located adjacent to the proposed lot in order to make the property one large commercial zoning area. Mr. Falkner stated that he thought filling the lot would be problematic due to the amount of dirt needed. He suggested the property be used as is for a while.

Being as there was no further discussion, Mr. Gratz asked for a motion.

Mr. Ellett made a motion to approve the rezoning request. Mr. Robison seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Orientation of new Planning Committee Members**

Mr. Falkner stated that the new members were given some orientation at the work session held the previous week. Mr. Falkner explained that the Planning Committee and the Department of Development Services are in the process of writing a new Development Code. He stated that the staff has been reviewing a lot of codes on line and looking at them in comparison as to what the city's newly adopted Comprehensive Plan says the Development Code should be. He then gave all committee members a summary of what the Comprehensive Plan says about codes (Attachment "A") and explained their role in re-writing the code.

Mr. Gratz stated that in order to apply the Comprehensive Plan, the entire city would need to be rezoned. Mr. Falkner agreed and stated that the Comprehensive Plan contains a Future Land Use Map that gives some generalized categories that will become the basis for new zoning districts.

Mr. Falkner stated that the Development Services Department will hold a meeting to discuss the new code sometime in the month of January. He stated that local developers and realtors have been invited to the meeting in order for staff to gather their input on new zoning laws and development requirements.

Mr. Gratz stated that the committee would be electing new officers in March. He explained that officers are elected once a year and are in progression, moving up from Secretary to Vice-Chair, then Chair.

## **ADJOURN**

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.