

Plan and Zone Commission Minutes

Meeting Date: April 15, 2021

The Eldridge Plan and Zone Commission met in open session on Zoom at 6:28 p.m. on April 15, 2021. Present were Nancy Gruber, Duane Miller, Mike Martin, Terry Harbour, Karl Donaubauer, Tisha Boussetot and Brad Merrick. Also present were James Martin, Lisa Kotter, Joe Stutting, James Simmons, Bryce Johnson, Matt and Brittany Murphy, Betty and David Griffin, Kevin Kohr, Mark Ridolfi, Pam and Myron Anderson, Kali Peterson, Don and Lynnette Gradin, Tracy Lindaman, Bob and Carol Kuehn, Angerla Hartin and Katie Huggert.

The minutes from the March 18, 2021 meeting were presented for approval. Motion by Gruber, second by Merrick to approve the minutes. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

The public hearing was opened at 6:31pm by Donaubauer. Rules for the public hearing were laid out and staff made their report, sharing the rezoning exhibits and concept plan for the five lots. Staff read into the record letters from Peggy Ohl, David and Betty Griffin and Craig and Mary Gerhls who were opposed to the rezoning and R John Kutcher of 612 S 4th Street in support of the rezoning. Furthermore a petition from Change.org was presented. Another signed petition was also entered and the petition met the 20% threshold for Title D, Chapter 2, Section 18.08 A3 which states: "in case of a protest against such change signed by the owners of twenty (20) percent or more either of the area of the lots included in such proposed change or of those immediately adjacent in the rear thereof extending the depth of one (1) lot or not to exceed two hundred (200) feet from there, or those directly opposite lots, filed with the Clerk, such amendment shall not be passed except by the favorable vote of three-fourths (3/4) of all the members of the Council." The petition is sufficient to trigger the ¾ majority of Council to approve.

Donaubauer invited the school to lay out their case for rezoning. Stutting, Simmons and Bruce Johnson spoke about the need for the lots, the use for the lots (student built home lots) and the drainage improvements to be done as part of this project. They spoke at length about the student built home project and necessity for reasonably priced lots and homes.

Donaubauer opened the meeting to anyone who wished to speak against the rezoning. Don & Lynnete Gradin of 612 W Oak St spoke about the drainage issues, the green space and their desire to see lower priced lots and houses built in Eldridge. They spoke again several times throughout the public hearing portion. Betty and David Griffin spoke about the history of the student built home program, their support for it and their desire to see it continued in another location. Matt & Brittany Murphy asked questions about the detention pond, raised concerns about loss of parking and traffic and about community use of the space. Katie Huggert inquired about the steps involved in a rezoning and who ultimately would have final say. Angela Hartin of 713 S 7th St reiterated her support for the project but not for this particular location.

Donaubauer closed the public meeting portion at 7:37 pm. Tisha Boussetot asked questions about other developments and explained how land prices, development costs and materials costs drive home prices. She offered to speak to developers about the possibility of lots in their subdivisions soon. Nancy Gruber asked about the number of students involved with the project and the length of time they spent on the job site. Mike Martin expressed his concerns about public outcry. Harbour made a motion to recommend approval but it did not gain a second and Harbour withdrew it. Boussetot made a motion to recommend denial, seconded by Gruber. After a few more comments, a roll call vote showed Donaubauer and Merrick voting to recommend approval, Boussetot, Harbour, Gruber, Martin and Miller voting to recommend denial. The Commission put forward a recommendation to deny the rezoning request.

Motion by Merrick, second by Gruber to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James C. Martin, Assistant City Administrator