

BENTON PARISH METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

Monday, December 6, 2021 – 6:00 P.M.
Benton Town Hall
105 Sibley Street
Benton, LA 71006

MEMBERS PRESENT

Martha Reyenga
Steve Vercher
Michael Jorgensen

MEMBERS ABSENT

Bryan Kauffer

OTHERS PRESENT

Carlotta Askew-Brown
Daniel Besinaiz
Kurt Nixon
Michael Kelsch
Kenneth O'Briant
Charles Grubb
Wayne Cathcart
Ryan Estess
Mayor Shelly Horton
Pat Doane
Neil Erwin

Martha Reyenga, Chairman called the meeting to order.

(A) Carlotta Askew - Brown, MPC Executive Director, called roll and stated a quorum was present.

(B) PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. BP-29-21 – The application of Nixon Engineering Solutions, LLC requesting Minor Plat approval for Linton Road Subdivision, being 1.51 acres, more or less, located in Section 10, Township 19 North, Range 13 West, Bossier Parish, LA. (Police Jury District 3)

Kurt Nixon, Nixon Engineering, was present to answer any questions.

Nixon: Based on some comments from the Parish, there is a little revision. We have added a little more to make Lot 2 bigger. Other than that, there are only two lots.

Vercher: What is the purpose?

Nixon: Vexcon is wanting to keep all the frontage. They are selling the back section for a barndominium.

Askew-Brown: So this will actually be split-zoned. At some point, the property owner will have to rezone.

As there were no further comments from the Board or the public, the Chairman called for a motion.

A motion to approve the application with the conditions that a zoning change is made to solidify the property was made by Vercher and seconded by Jorgensen.

A roll call vote was held and the motion carried unanimously.

2. T-19-21 – The application of Kenneth O'Briant requesting Master Plat approval for Lost River South Master Plat, being 18.9 acres, more or less, located in Section 5, Township 19 North, Range 13 West, Benton, LA. (Town Council District 5) (Police Jury District 3)

Michael Kelsch, Raley and Associates, was present to answer any questions.

Kelsch: It is an 18 lot master plan. They vary in size from about half an acre to more.

Askew-Brown: Before we delve into the details, we are going to have one recusal because we have a board member who lives in Lost River. With that, we do not have a quorum to make any decisions on Lost River. We will have to delay this until such time that we do have a quorum.

Vercher: Do we want to discuss this tonight?

Askew-Brown: It is up to you.

Vercher: Can you explain how this application came to be?

Kelsch: He is separating from the Lost River subdivision. It is going to be a new subdivision. He can have his own HOA.

Vercher: Why?

O'Briant: The point is to separate from the HOA. There is not really an established HOA yet so the decisions go under DSLD.

Vercher: You do realize that you will all have to work together. You share the same entrance so there will have to be cooperation.

O'Briant: I understand and we do work together.

Vercher: I guess they could merge together eventually?

O'Briant: I suppose they could but that is not a part of the plan.

Vercher: What kind of streets are these?

Kelsch: The new streets will be concrete.

Grubb: We have some concerns about maintenance of the common area.

Cathcart: Since the beginning, the residents have been concerned about the new developer and how the new construction will affect property values. The question that I have is in reference to density. Mr. O'Briant's plan is about 18 acres. That leaves a remainder to the south and to the east of Mr. O'Briant's property. Will the developer that develops that land have an impact on the overall density? Can they make smaller lots since Mr. O'Briant's development has slightly larger lots?

Vercher: No, when we voted on this in the past, they can be no smaller than the original master plan.

Cathcart: Individual lots?

Vercher: That is correct.

Cathcart: Is the green space behind the fountain considered green space? If not, how can we get it designated to be green space?

Vercher: We can get that answer before we vote on it.

Askew-Brown: It is on this plat because it exists but it is not a part of O'Briant's application.

The application was tabled due to lack of a quorum.

3. T-20-21 – The application of Kenneth O'Briant requesting Preliminary Plat approval for Lost River South Unit No. 1, being 10.088 acres, more or less, located

in Section 5, Township 19 North, Range 13 West, Benton, LA. (Town Council District 5) (Police Jury District 3)

Michael Kelsch, Raley and Associates, was present to answer any questions.

Askew-Brown: With the recusal of one of our board members, we have a lack of a quorum.

The application was tabled due to lack of a quorum.

4. T-18-21 – The application of Ryan Estess requesting a Zoning Amendment to change the zoning classification of a tract of land being 19.99 acres, more or less, from R-A (Residential Agriculture) to R-1 (One-Family Residence District) for a proposed residential subdivision located in Sections 29 and 32, Township 20 North, Range 13 West, Benton, LA. (Town Council District 5) (Police Jury District 3)

Ryan Estess, Raley and Associates, was present to answer any questions.

Estess: There is a PUD application that will be submitted with this development.

Vercher: For what reason?

Estess: There are specific reasons. We are planning on open ditches. We are requesting on-site septic systems in lieu of town sewer. We know there was concern over town sewer system capacity.

Vercher: We have talked about this for over one year now. I like the size of the lots. We are not the recommending board for the drainage. That is someone you will need to talk to the town about. The Police Jury does not like open drainage. It causes issues with culverts. We do see how the septic tanks have caused problems in Haughton. We do not make recommendations for sewer but that may be something you will want to talk to the town about.

Estess: So we will just rezone and address the rest of these things in the platting process?

Askew-Brown: Yes.

Estess: I will state for the drainage that the land drains to the northeast side of the site. We are projecting shallow ditches.

Vercher: You would be creating more water runoff.

Estess: I do not agree with that.

Vercher: I do think you would need to talk to the town about that. I do not want to pay for another sewer system and the residents will want that in the next twenty years.

Mayor Horton: Mr. Estess is welcome to contact the town engineers. With the reduction in lots, there may be enough capacity for the development. The city council will have to address some of these other issues like open ditches and streets. As far as applying for a PUD, it has always been my understanding that amenities are supposed to be given with it. I do not see them.

Vercher: I agree.

Reyenga: All the drainage will flow to the northeast?

Estess: It goes southwest towards the northeast. A lot of times, the problem with open ditches is that the land is flat. On this case, we are trying to stay shallow and allow the water to drain into the detention pond. This is a compatible lot size for

what the town will request. We would like to know how many lots they can handle in their sewer system.

Askew-Brown: At such time that you submit the PUD with the plat, the town regulations may be modified in the case that the plan for the communities has adequate public spaces, improvements for circulation, recreation, things like that.

Reyenga: I thought the back side of this property was extremely low.

Estess: We are above the Cypress Black Bayou flowage easement so it is in a buildable area.

Vercher: Have you done any tests back there to see if the soils can handle anything more? Is it already saturated?

Estess: I have not done any of that. We can get in touch with the town engineer and see what kind of sewer capacity the town can support. We will go from there.

Mayor Horton: I have an objection. Mr. Estess was going to ask our town engineer what the maximum number is that we can take in our sewer system. We are not going to do that. He is going to submit the number of lots and then Balar will decide if that number works. We are applying to raise the permit but that may take years. We may have more capacity in the future but we will not allow him to base his development on that number.

Estess: How do I go about talking to the Town Council? At the Town Council meeting?

Mayor Horton: You will have to be on the Town Council agenda.

Estess: I would like this to be moved to public meeting and then table it at that level if necessary.

Vercher: I do not see a reason to do that.

Estess: Alright, then we will be tabled.

As there were no further comments from the Board or the public, the Chairman called for a motion.

A motion to table the application was made by Vercher and seconded by Jorgensen.

A roll call vote was held and the motion carried unanimously.

(C) PRELIMINARY HEARINGS

N/A

REGULAR MEETING

1. Approval of Minutes

- a. A motion to approve the November 1, 2021 minutes with corrections was made by Vercher and seconded by Jorgensen.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. Old Business

N/A

3. New Business

- a. Adopt Amended Benton MPC 2021 Meeting Dates

- i. A motion to adopt the amended meeting dates was made by Jorgensen and seconded by Vercher.

The motion passed unanimously.

b. Adopt the Benton MPC 2022 Meeting Dates

- i. Besinaiz: We are moving the application deadlines to be one week earlier so that staff has more time to review the applications.

Askew-Brown: This is for both the meeting dates and deadlines but only the deadlines are changing.

A motion to adopt the Benton MPC 2022 meeting dates was made by Jorgensen and seconded by Vercher.

The motion passed unanimously.

c. Appoint 2022 Chairman

- i. Reyenga: Do we want to leave it the same?

Jorgensen: I think we should leave it the same.

A motion was made to appoint Martha Reyenga as Chairman was made by Vercher and seconded by Jorgensen.

The motion passed unanimously.

d. Appoint 2022 Vice Chairman

A motion was made to appoint Steve Vercher as Vice Chairman was made by Jorgensen and seconded by Reyenga.

The motion passed unanimously.

e. Adopt amended MPC, BOA and Zoning Compliance/Site Plan Review Fees

Askew-Brown: We have included a master plat fee because of the new regulations. We have also included a refund check processing fee. We have a lot of people that submit applications and withdraw their applications after staff has already done the work.

Reyenga: We should increase the master plat fee to \$500.

Askew-Brown: It is up to you.

Jorgensen: For the telecommunication tower, is the listed price normal?

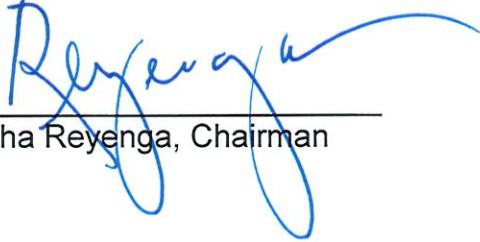
Reyenga: They could pay more.

Askew-Brown: We could raise it to \$750.

Reyenga: I think we should raise the master plat fee to \$500 and the tower fee to \$750.

A motion to adopt the amended MPC, BOA and Zoning Compliance/Site Plan Fees with the amendments of listing the master plat fee to \$500 and the small telecommunication tower fee to \$750.

4. Adjourn


Martha Reyenga, Chairman