

**Minutes of Meeting
Belton Planning Commission
City Hall Annex, 520 Main Street
November 19, 2012**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Holly Girgin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Commission: Chairman Girgin, Mayor Pro Tem Gary Lathrop, Councilman Scott Von Behren, Commissioners Sally Davila, Tim McDonough, Chris Christensen, and Larry Thompson.

Staff: Jay Leipzig, Community Development Director; Robert Cooper, City Planner; Zach Matteo, Assistant City Engineer; and Ann Keeton, Community Development Secretary.

Absent: Commissioner Jeff Fletcher

MINUTES

Commissioner Davila moved to approve the meeting minutes of the November 5, 2012, Planning Commission meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Von Behren. All members present voted in favor, and the motion carried.

DISCUSSION - Amendment - Stormwater Pollution Prevention - Illicit Discharges

Mr. Matteo presented an overview of the proposed amendments to the Unified Development Code (UDC). He provided information about the proposed revisions to Chapter 32 of the UDC and reported the changes are due to the incorporation of an illicit discharge article to the city code as a requirement of the **City's** MS4 Permit. According to Mr. Matteo the MS4 permit is administered by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

PUBLIC HEARING - Digital Billboard at 8009 E. 171st Street

Mr. Leipzig introduced Case #SUP 12-31 which was consideration of a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a digital billboard sign at 8009 E. 171st Street. He reported the proposed billboard is not consistent with the recently adopted ordinance and staff has concerns about this project including the size and location of the sign.

Mr. Cooper pointed out on an aerial photo the proposed location of the digital billboard sign. According to Mr. Cooper, staff approved the billboard sign structure at this location a "**couple** of months **ago**." He reported it is only the digital face of the sign that is being considered for a SUP. He provided information about the sign size / height and the setback distance from the property line. A history of the property and onsite building was given by Mr. Cooper. According to the applicant, the digital billboard will provide display time for public service announcements in the case of public emergencies, in addition to AMBER and SILVER alerts. Mr. Cooper listed the

zoning districts surrounding the proposed sign and the potential effect of the large billboard sign on area property owners. The intent of the recently adopted sign code regulating off-premise and billboard type signs was shared by Mr. Cooper.

Chairman Girgin opened the hearing at 7:15 p.m., to receive public input regarding an SUP to allow a digital billboard sign at 8009 E 171st Street. Jim Boeh, owner of Ad Trend, 14450 S 71 Highway, Kansas City, Missouri was present to speak in favor of the SUP application. According to Mr. Boeh, the billboard sign is already approved, and he indicated the proposed sign is smaller than what is allowed by code, to reduce the impact. He added that the billboard sign will meet city sign code requirements for electronic message center signs and he went over that data. A history of digital signage was presented by Mr. Boeh, and he referenced studies that have been conducted regarding their effect. It was reiterated there will be display time donated to the City and they would become a member of several alert networks.

Mr. Boeh was questioned about the source and accuracy of some of the study data provided by the applicant concerning the link between digital billboards and traffic accidents. He presented details about the benefits of the alert networks, and the business investment Ad Trend has made in the City of Belton. An explanation of the advantages of digital sign displays was given by Mr. Boeh. Mr. Leipzig pointed out the billboard in this location would not meet the current sign codes for billboards and he went over specific examples. He mentioned the sign application for a billboard was submitted before the new ordinance was adopted, and reviewed the options available to the Commission in consideration of the SUP application. As there was no further public input, Chairman Girgin closed the public hearing at 7:26 p.m. Commissioner McDonough moved to deny the Special Use Permit for a digital billboard sign at 8009 E. 171st Street. Commissioner Christensen seconded the motion. When a vote was taken, the following was recorded: Ayes: 7 - Chairman Girgin, Mayor Pro Tem Lathrop, Councilman Von Behren, Commissioners Davila, McDonough, Christensen, and Thompson. Noes: none. Absent: 1 - Commissioner Fletcher. The motion to deny carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Leipzig presented the director's report which included the following topics:

- Research is still being conducted on the amendments to the mobile home provisions.
- Items that will be on the December 3, 2012, Planning Commission agenda
- An update on the I-49 opening
- Pizza Hut delivery / carryout building permit application in Crossroads at Belton
- The withdrawal of the proposed Jack in the Box application
- Proposed rental property inspection program

Mr. Leipzig reported there is concern about the lack of building permits for single-family homes in the city. He indicated staff will pursue feedback and conduct additional research regarding the issue. Chairman Girgin asked about available data for home and lot sizes of the houses that are being built in neighboring cities, and to investigate whether those preferred sizes are available to builders in Belton. Mr. Leipzig responded that it appears building of the lower price homes has essentially stopped, while home building in the upper price range is continuing. There was also discussion about the City building permit fees and whether they are competitive with other

metropolitan cities and Mr. Leipzig reported staff has been looking into this. Potential ways to stimulate single-family home building were discussed.

There was additional discussion about the approved billboard location and if there is a way to prevent the construction of the large sign at that site. Mr. Leipzig reported that when the billboard sign was applied for, the sign code allowed billboards on federal and state highways, so the sign was approved and can be built on 58 Highway (171st Street). Staff reported about circumstances that led to the review and recent amendment approval to the sign code.

There was a brief conversation about a business that is placing tires and rims out by their business sign.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Von Behren moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Davila seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor, and the meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Ann Keeton
Community Development Secretary