

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE THATCHER PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

Tuesday, March 8, 2022 – 6:00 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Ray Tuttle, Vice-Chair Wayne Layton, David Griffin,
Billy Orr, Machael Layton, Brandon Homer
Tom Palmer, Town Engineer

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jerry Hoopes

VISITORS: Gary Allred, Brock Layton, Sherri Layton, Jake Hansen

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Chair Tuttle called the meeting to order and established that a quorum was present. At the time of roll-call, Ms. Layton was not present.

2. Approval of Minutes

The Commission unanimously approved the minutes from the December 2021 meeting.

3. Assignment of zoning – Shadow Lane

Mr. Tuttle asked Mr. Palmer to explain this item. Mr. Wayne Layton stated for the record that he has one of the parcels in this area under contract for purchase.

Mr. Palmer explained that the recent annexation area, which includes Shadow Lane, has now been through the appeal period and is ready for Town Zoning to be assigned. State law requires that the assigned zoning cannot allow for a higher use than what the County zoning allowed. Mr. Palmer explained that the annexation area was zoned AR in the County (agricultural residential) and that an equivalent zone would be R1-43 in the Town. However, several of the lots on Shadow Lane are less than one-acre in size and would not be in compliance with the R1-43 zoning. Mr. Palmer recommended that the Town assign a zoning of R1-22 to the houses on Shadow Lane and that all the vacant land in the annexation area be assigned a zoning of R1-43.

Mr. Griffin recommended that Mr. Palmer's Zoning recommendations be supported and sent to council for approval. A vote was taken and the vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Ms. Machael Layton arrived at this point in the meeting.

4. Public Hearing

Public Hearing to consider the matter of a proposed re-zone of a portion of parcel 104-13-076 from C-2 (Highway Commercial) to MU (Mixed Use) with the purpose of building a multi-family development. The total parcel is approximately 9.2 acres and is located at just west of the intersection of Reay Lane and 4th Street in Thatcher. Approximately 6.5 acres is requested to be re-zoned.

Mr. Tuttle opened the hearing and asked if there was anyone that would like to speak on the matter.

Ms. Sherri Layton said that she and her husband, Lance, own the property and are hoping to re-zone the property to Multi-Use (MU) so they can build a 4-plex and consider further development. She said the re-zone to MU would give them more options for development than the current C-2 zone.

Mr. Griffin asked if they were planning on building just one 4-plex. She said they'd start with one and see how it goes, but likely build more in the future.

Mr. Palmer stated that he got a call from Fertizona regarding the re-zone. They are not opposed to the request, but want to make sure any residential developments that go in are aware of Fertizona's operations and that "they were there first".

Mr. Griffin asked Ms. Layton why only a portion of the property was to be re-zoned. She stated that they would like a buffer between the existing C-2 zoning (storage units behind Tom's Service Center). They have thought about potentially doing storage units themselves and those would not be allowed in MU, but would be allowed in C-2.

Mr. Tuttle closed the public hearing and the commission discussed the matter.

Mr. Griffin said that he thinks this is a perfect place for mixed-use development. There are apartments across the street and commercial nearby. It's already a pretty mixed-use area and he does not see any objection.

Machael Layton asked if letters were sent to the neighbors and if a sign was posted on the property. Mr. Palmer stated that they were. Furthermore, the Laytons held a neighborhood meeting and nobody showed.

Mr. Homer asked how many residential units would be built. Ms. Sherri Layton reiterated that a single 4-plex was likely to be built first & then they would consider more.

Mr. Griffin asked Mr. Palmer if they would have to pave their roads and do other improvements. Mr. Palmer stated that the code does require drive lanes and parking areas to be paved for multi-family developments.

Mr. Wayne Layton said that he agreed with Mr. Griffin that this parcel seems a perfect place for this type of zoning.

Mr. Billy Orr made a motion “to recommend approval of the request to re-zone to MU”

Mr. Griffin Seconded the motion

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion

5. Public Hearing

Public Hearing to consider text amendments to the Town’s Subdivision Ordinance

Mr. Tuttle opened the hearing and asked Mr. Palmer to introduce the proposed changes.

Mr. Palmer went through a spreadsheet showing the Town’s current street standards compared to other municipalities. He explained that the Town is small compared to many Arizona Cities & Towns on some of our street sections and very wide compared to others on our local streets. He also mentioned the proposed addition of a “large lot” street section.

There was a lot of discussion between the commission and Mr. Palmer regarding the street sections. A narrow street is difficult to maneuver, but slows people down. A wider street is easier to maneuver but hard to control traffic speeds and more expensive to maintain. There was discussion of what the ranges of widths meant on the spreadsheet and the fact that they correspond to specific street sections. There was question about whether the bike lanes included the gutters (and whether they should include the gutter). There was discussion about whether the proposed changes would affect on-going developments.

Generally, the commission agreed that a large-lot standard was needed. There was not a general consensus about local street widths. Three of the commissioners would like to see local streets be wide and three are in favor of narrower local streets.

There was discussion about what defines an arterial, collector & local street. There was a discussion about cul-de-sacs on public roads and whether trash trucks can maneuver when people park in the road.

Mr. Palmer went through the proposed changes in the ordinance, including whether we should require turn-around easements on private driveways when people share them (4.16.B.2). There was a general consensus that we should, at some point, require turn-arounds. There was not a general consensus about the length of the drive or how many homes should be on it. At the end of the discussion, most agreed that requiring a turn-around easement for shared lots with drives in excess of 150’ is probably a good thing.

The remainder of the “Small Subdivision” changes were discussed (Section 4.16), with some recommended changes by the commission. The commission recommended only allowing a reduced street section for 7-15 lot subdivisions if the lot sizes are greater than 20,000 sf.

Mr. Billy Orr made a motion “to recommend approval of the proposed text amendments to the Subdivision Ordinance with the changes discussed”

Mr. Griffin Seconded the motion

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion

6. Staff Report

Mr. Palmer gave a report on the on-going projects in town.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.