

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

JUNE 3, 2024

The Planning Board of the City of Texas City met in a regular meeting on Monday, June 3, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. Planning Board members present: Chairman Dickey Campbell (via telephone), Commissioner Jami Clark (via telephone), and Alternate Member Aric Owens. Staff members present: Kimberly Golden (Secretary), Casey Bennett (Chief Building Official), David Kinchen (Deputy Building Official) and Veronica Carreon. Guests were: John Wagner, Will Crane, and Matt Robinette (Bluestem Energy Solutions); Pai Lam Chu (P. L. Chu & Associates); Nicole Niu; Russ Nelson (Lone Star Builders), Jake Dahm (Spearmint Energy); Allan Rhodes (Fluence Energy); Moruf Jimoh (PermitUSNow); Simon LaBrosse and Guillaume Dufay (AOP Renewables).

Alternate Aric Owens indicated a quorum was present and called the meeting to order.

1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes of May 6, 2024, was made by Chairman Dickey Campbell/Commissioner Jami Clark. All other members present voted aye.

2) PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

3) REGULAR AGENDA

- a. **Tabled at the May 6, 2024 meeting. Consider and take action on the Development Plan for Texas City Plaza. Located at 2423 25th Avenue North (southeast corner of 25th Avenue North & 25th Street North).**

Ms. Golden began the presentation and stated that this site is a little over ½ acre lot located at southeast corner of 25th Avenue North and 25th Street North.

It is currently a vacant lot. The Applicant is proposing to construct a new 6, 240 sq. ft. retail plaza. There are no tenants specified. They will also be building 32 parking spaces, 2 of which will be designated for accessible parking.

The location is zoned District “E” (General Business), which is appropriate for the proposed retail use. It is also in the Gateway Overlay District (GWD) which requires masonry construction and enhanced landscaping. The Applicant has agreed to all of the requirements of the GWD.

The Applicant will have to build a screening wall between the back side of their property and the adjacent residential uses. Everything else on the three other sides is currently developed as commercial and operating.

They are requesting approval of their development plan and have answered all of staff's comments. Staff have no objection to approval of the development plan.

Alternate Aric Owens asked if there were any questions.

Chairman Campbell asked what is the idea for the strip center? Will it be fully retail? No office?

Mr. Pai Lam Chu, Applicant, replied they are still not sure who the tenants are and that will be up to the owner.

Chairman Campbell then asked if the shell would have windows. His reason for asking is because the other two shells that were built down the street to the west were built without any windows or

storefront and believes that is why there are no tenants in those buildings, and it is troublesome. He is just concerned that the city is not running into another situation like that.

Ms. Golden replied that the Applicant submitted an Elevation Plan and that there will be windows but only on the storefront. Chairman Campbell replied that is fine and that is all that is needed.

A motion was made by Chairman Dickey Campbell/Commissioner Jami Clark to approve the Development Plan for Texas City Plaza. All other members present voted aye.

b. Tabled at the May 6, 2024 meeting. Consider and take action on the Development Plan for Quick Quack Car Wash. Located at 3325 Palmer Hwy (formerly Schlotzsky's Restaurant).

Ms. Golden stated the Applicant is proposing to demolish the existing building, which is the former Schlotzsky's Restaurant and construct a new 3,506 sq. ft. automated car wash structure with 14 vacuum stalls, including one that will be designated as accessible.

The size of the lot is approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre and is currently zoned District "E" (General Business), which is appropriate for a car wash, which is actually a named use in the Ordinance.

It is located on the GWD. Staff have discussed with the Applicant finishes, the enhanced landscaping, underground utilities and everything has been covered.

The Applicant will also be participating in the City's Decorative Light Program and will install two pedestals on the property.

The development plan appears to be in compliance with the City Ordinance. Staff have no objection to its approval.

Alternate Aric Owens asked about access from Palmer. He added that he works next door to an automated car wash and ingress/egress does get problematic because they share an entrance and exit on Palmer Hwy.

Mr. Russ Nelson (Lone Star Builders) replied that there will be shared access with the commercial neighbor and the two accesses from 34th Street North will be closed.

Alternate Owens voiced his concern about the traffic of the shared access. He added that he sees it every day with 500 – 600 cars visiting the car wash throughout the day, and it creates a "snarl". He assumes this is a TxDOT issue and not the City.

Mr. Nelson replied that they have a decent number of customers that come to their sites and with this project they have "over-engineered" the plans to contain all traffic on site. He indicated on the exhibit how everyone would access and then route into the car wash. The development plan shows 10 stacking stalls, but there are actually about 22 before the traffic backs up.

Alternate Owens stated that is not his concern. His concern is people coming in and out of Palmer Hwy. At his neighboring car wash traffic stacks up on Palmer Hwy in front of his work building.

Mr. Nelson replied that he can look into this and then get back to staff.

Ms. Golden added that the city had an Access Management Study completed back in 2011 and this is compliant with that study.

Alternate Owens stated that the beauty of this project is that there is no "turn-right only" lane like the one in front of his work building and the car wash.

A motion was made by Commissioner Jami Clark/Chairman Dickey Campbell to approve the Development Plan for Quick Quack Car Wash. Located at 3325 Palmer Hwy. All other members present voted aye.

c. Consider and make recommendation on the application from Bluestem Energy Solutions to rezone from District “F” (Light Industrial) to District “S-P” (Site Plan for a proposed 9.9 MW, 19.98 MWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) installation to be located at 410 Hwy 146 N, south of TNMP Heights Substation.

Ms. Golden stated this project came to the Planning Board before and was approved in May 2023 and was under a different process. The approval expired before the Applicant was in position to pull a building permit and this is why it is back before the Board.

Staff is taking it through the process of District “S-P” (Site Plan) because that is the way all of the BESS projects are being treated now.

The Applicant adjusted their site plan from what was previously approved so that it is now compliant with the required safety measures.

They have worked with the Fire Marshal per his request on the 15’ extra spacing. They have also provided a 20’ paved perimeter access road and two additional access roads to the site.

The site is in an area that is industrial in nature and is very close to an existing substation.

Staff have no objections to approval of the development plan and the Fire Marshal has not expressed any objection.

There are several items that will need to be worked out and considered during the actual permitting process with the Fire Marshal and the Building Official. As far as their commissioning and decommissioning plan and the security for that. Also, containment, safety practices and several items that they know are still being worked out.

The Applicant has been working with staff and understand that this is new and evolving technology, and the city’s processes are trying to keep up with that and they have been very accommodating and good to work with.

This factors in that the request is being brought before the Planning Board with a lot of thought and consideration.

Staff feel that given these projects are coming, this would be the part of Texas City that probably would be best suited for them.

Commissioner Jami Clark asked if this was going to be on 1.5 acres. Ms. Golden replied that was correct and added that the site is actually 2.79 acres, but the BESS covers 1.5 acres that will be nine containers and is a fairly small project. The existing project on 34th Street North is on a half-acre and contains six containers.

Alternate Aric Owens asked if there were any questions.

Chairman Dickey Campbell asked Ms. Golden what the thoughts about the decommissioning process are and where that needs to be before they receive a permit. Ms. Golden replied that is something that an internal workshop was held earlier in the day and is very much a work in process with the Fire Marshal and the two Building Officials.

They know that these projects tend to have issues in the first two to three years, and they are working on a plan. They have had some industry experts that have been offered to them for consultation. Staff are setting up that exchange of information.

There are some cities in other parts of the country that have worked through this. Staff is also working with Mr. Davis, the technical consultant that assisted with the previous workshop.

Chairman Dickey Campbell is well with Ms. Golden's reply and stated this is a much better location. He asked if staff would be reporting back with decommissioning requirements. Ms. Golden replied that she would expect to have another workshop with the Planning Board and Zoning Commission to keep them informed of developments on that side.

Alternate Owens asked about the purpose of the 20' street access that runs behind the neighboring hotel. Mr. Matt Robinette (Bluestem Energy Solutions) replied that it was there as an existing ROW for the city per the Fire Marshal's request. The Fire Marshal requested two access points that were basically opposite of each other.

There were no further questions.

A motion was made by Chairman Dickey Campbell/Commissioner Jami Clark to recommend approval to the Zoning Commission of the zoning change from District "F" (Light Industrial) to District "S-P" (Site Plan). All other members present voted aye.

4) GENERAL UPDATES

Alternate Owens asked if there were any General Updates.

Ms. Golden replied there are a few more BESS projects coming. Staff have also received the overall site plan for the COM project, and she hopes to have this ready for presentation at the next board meeting.

5) OTHER BUSINESS (Any conceptual development proposal requesting to come before the Planning Board)

Alternate Aric Owens asked if there was any other business to which there was none. **A motion was made by Commissioner Jami Clark/Chairman Dickey Campbell to adjourn. All members present voted aye.**

Kimberly Golden, Secretary

Date

Minutes approved by the Planning Board at its meeting on _____.