

## **ZONING COMMISSION OCTOBER 21, 2025**

The Zoning Commission of the City of Texas City met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, October 21, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. Staff members present were: Kim Golden (Secretary), Casey Bennett (Chief Building Official), David Kinchen (Deputy Building Official), Curt Kelly (Engineering & Planning Administrator), Veronica Carreon (Planning & Zoning Technician), Danica Vaughan (Administrative Assistant), and Mario Aguilar (Fall Intern). Guests were: Kristin Edwards, Chris Jennings, Terry Melancon, Glen Cullinane, Elmo Johnson, Walter Lawson, Nasser Zia, Jason Cuomo, and Juan Pablo Gomez.

Co-Chairman Perry O'Brien asked Commissioner Thelma Bowie to chair the meeting. All members present concurred in the request. As acting chair, Commissioner Bowie indicated a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

### **(1) ROLL CALL**

The following members answered roll call: Co-Chairman Perry O'Brien, Commissioner Thelma Bowie, Member David Zacherl, and Member Fernando Tello.

### **(2) PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

### **(3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A motion to approve the minutes of July 15, 2025, was made by Co-Chairman Perry O'Brien/ Member Fernando Tello. All other members present voted aye.**

### **(4) Pastor Walter Lawson seeks to rezone property from District "F" (Light Industrial) to District "S-P" (Site Plan) for development and operation of Come and See (CAS) Friends Men's Discipleship Program House. Located at 917 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Texas City, TX 77590.**

#### **a. Staff Report**

Ms. Kimberly Golden stated this site is currently zoned District "F" (Light Industrial) and the Applicant is requesting it to be rezoned to District "S-P" (Site Plan) due to the property being used as a halfway house. Under the definitions in the zoning ordinance, it is considered a halfway house because it is a facility which provides housing, rehabilitation and/or training to three or more people who are on probation or parole or with chemical dependencies. The halfway house use is only allowed in the District "S-P" (Site Plan) zoning designation.

Ms. Golden explained that the Development Plan/Site Plan was presented and approved by the Planning Board on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025. It was approved by a majority but not a unanimous vote of 3-1. The Planning Board approved the Development Plan/Site Plan subject to completing a couple of items to the site plan which condition has been met. The Site Plan now progresses to the Zoning Commission to consider the actual rezoning request and to make a recommendation to the City Commission.

There is an existing structure on the site. The current existing structure setback does not meet the setbacks of District "F" (Light Industrial). The current use does not meet the District "F" (Light Industrial) zoning designation. District "S-P" (Site Plan) doesn't specify setbacks.

When a site plan is approved, it establishes the setback requirements. The intended use is transitional dormitory style housing, counseling, and limited services.

The site is currently zoned District "F" (Light Industrial). To the west it is currently zoned District "E" (General Business). All other adjacent properties are zoned District "F" (Light Industrial). The zoning designation changes to residential on the east side of 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Therefore, there is not likely to be any conflict with any existing residential uses or districts based on current zoning. There is a hotel in the area and an apartment complex that are both zoned District "C" (Multi-Family Residential (High Density)).

Ms. Golden explained that in preparation for this hearing notification was mailed out to all the surrounding property owners in the area as required by city ordinance and state law. There were no comments received back either for or against it. There was also a sign posted on the site to inform the public of today's public hearing. The sign was posted and has remained posted on the site since October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Ms. Golden stated the use as a halfway house has been ongoing for about four years.

In accordance with the requirements of the Planning Board, the applicants updated the site plan to show the designation of specific areas at the site. At the entry of the building from 8<sup>th</sup> Street North the space is a designated living area for communal gathering of the residents, then there is a common dining area with kitchen. The sleeping area is to the rear and then an outdoor patio area. The existing structure is a zero-lot line with no front or side setbacks. There is no designated onsite parking for the location but there are 30 parking spaces along the street and the church across the street will allow parking. Again, the program house is not a new use to the area. It has been operating for about four years without proper zoning. As soon as the owners were made aware of the zoning requirements, they started the process of rezoning so the use could be compliant. Staff are not aware of any complaints from the four years of actual operation.

Ms. Golden went on to explain the owners became aware of the zoning requirements as the result of a routine inspection by the Fire Marshal which found some conditions that needed to be mitigated. The active use as a halfway house was shut down and the building is currently not being used. Until the rezoning is made, the owner cannot reoccupy the site for use as a halfway house. Every indication is that the owner/operator of the halfway house was simply not aware of the zoning requirements. Once they became aware of the requirements, they have been taking steps to become compliant.

The Planning Board voted (4-0) to approve the site plan subject to the rezoning. Planning Board also voted (3-1) to recommend the rezoning. Staff have no objection to the rezoning.

Commissioner Thelma Bowie asked if there were any other questions. There were no other questions.

#### **b. Public Hearing**

At 5:14pm Commissioner Bowie declared the Public Hearing to be open and invited anyone in opposition to the rezoning to speak.

Mr. Chris Jennings, who owns a business across the street at 920 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, and two empty lots next to the hotel stated he has had his business there for about fifteen years.

Mr. Jennings mentioned that he did not pull the police reports but the traffic around 917 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North area when Come and See (CAS) Friends Men's Discipleship Program House

occupies the building and there is a lot of loitering, trash, drug use and prostitution.

Two years ago, they occupied the building next to his and people were living in the building going back and forth between houses morning and night. Mr. Jennings stated that with that same group of people they brought in an RV behind his shop, behind the building and were running prostitutes out of the RV. They were then run off by the police.

Mr. Jennings mentioned that he drives around his building every day between 5:30-7:00am before he meets with his employees and there is loitering 24/7 when CAS are occupying 917 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North. Mr. Jennings stated he has this on camera and has caught it on camera for years.

Mr. Jennings expressed his frustration that when the occupants get out of wherever they were and are in between getting into the halfway house they sleep in front of his front door, in front of his shop. They use the restroom behind and next to his shop and the buildings around. They use the water from their buildings to shower and trash the area.

He feels that if the area is zoned "Light Industrial" he does not see the reason to make it somewhere people can sleep and stay the night and trash out front.

He stated that there are couches out front of the building, and zero parking in the area regardless of what anyone says. He stated that someone had just moved into the building next door, and it is basically a junk yard now. Mr. Jennings thinks that the city should be working on removing that. He doesn't see any benefit to turning that into a building to house people, he's been in that building, and he thinks there may be another place for this to happen, though he thinks it's great what they are trying to do.

He also stated that traffic has a direct site to the area when driving to the dike and all you see is these people loitering out front and sitting out front. Mr. Jennings has offered to pay people to help pick up trash in the area, but everyone is just looking for a free handout. He feels that it is becoming more of an eye sore than a benefit to the city of Texas City.

Mr. Jennings stated that if we went to the Police Department and pulled records, we would find records of prostitution and drugs in the area. He stated that this may be because of the hotel in the area. Mr. Jennings did mention that the hotel has been updated, cleaned up to where it looks nice, but has still got pictures on his phone of prostitutes there two nights ago. He feels this is not a good place to put people coming out of prison going into a halfway house. He believes that what CAS are doing is a great thing, but he feels this just isn't the place.

Mr. Jennings opposes the rezoning of 917 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.

Commissioner Bowie thanked Mr. Jennings for his comments and then asked if there was anyone who wanted to speak in favor of the zoning change.

Terry Melancon, who is the house manager at CAS is in favor of the rezoning for the building. He stated he differs with the gentleman and denied that there was any trash. Mr. Melancon stated that there is a NA (Narcotics Anonymous) next to their building and the entire building has no trash around it and doesn't know about the couches he is talking about. There are no prostitution and no drugs. None of the men can leave the program house without being accompanied by someone else as an accountability partner.

Mr. Melancon stated that every person that comes into the halfway house is always accompanied by another person who is their accountability partner. No man ever leaves the house without one. These men are never left alone. There is always someone with

them, there is always someone at the house and no one other than authorized personnel is allowed into the house. Each person is transported to and from the house by the program.

Mr. Melancon also stated that each occupant that comes into the house has to sign a document that states they are not allowed to have a car or a telephone while at the house for 45 days. This means there are no outgoing calls from the house. He stated that they cannot control the NA (Narcotics Anonymous) personnel who have cars on the streets, but it is not the occupants from his building.

Mr. Melancon mentioned that the trash in the area that Mr. Jennings is talking about is not under their control. He stated that the men from the house pick up their trash and place it in their own trash bin. He also stated that the men in the house sit in their back patio area that was mentioned and shown by Ms. Golden. Mr. Melancon stated that the only time they have trash in the alley way is when they have called the city to remove bulk trash and it is taken out of their water bill.

Commissioner Bowie asked if there was anyone else desiring to speak for or against. There were none.

**There were no further questions to which a motion was made by Member David Zacherl/ Member Fernando Tello to close the Public Hearing. All other members voted aye.**

**c. Preliminary Zoning Approval - Consider and take action on the zoning change request from Pastor Walter Lawson.**

**A motion was made by Chairman Perry O'Brien/ Member David Zacherl to approve the zoning change request from Pastor Walter Lawson to rezone from District "F" (Light Industrial) to District "S-P" (Site Plan) for development and operation on Come and See (CAS) friends Men's Discipleship Program House. Located at 917 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Texas City, TX 77590.**

Chairman O'Brien stated he thought it was a good move when he voted for it on the Planning Board and he still thinks it's a good move as a zoning matter. As far as the other things that have been brought up during the public hearing, he thinks that is a police matter and not a zoning board matter. **Three Members voted aye and Member Tello voted nay.**

**Motion carried 3 – 1.**

**(5) Nasser Zia seeks to rezone property from District "F" (Light Industrial) to District "D" (Neighborhood Service) for the purpose of remodeling and bringing the existing convenience store and fuel station into compliance. Located at 1025 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.**

**a. Staff Report**

Ms. Golden stated this site is currently zoned "F" (Light Industrial) and they are requesting to be rezoned to "D" (Neighborhood service). This is an existing building on the property which was used as a convenience store with a fuel station. The fuel station and tanks were removed.

This originated as a code enforcement issue years ago which then progressed to the point where there was an order to have it demolished. Pursuant to that order there was an

agreement to forbear from demolition so that the prospective buyer could bring the building back into compliance. The new owner removed the fuel station and tanks and filled them in. The site plan is in compliance with zoning if the rezoning is approved. This is in terms of the current setbacks. They also resolved the code violations which had to do mostly with setback violations.

Ms. Golden informed the Board that the owner worked with Texas City Economic Development Corporation (TCEDC) so they could have an easement to the east for an additional driveway. This allows them to move the tanks to the side of the building which helped them come into compliance with the setbacks. Previously, the tanks were in front of the building and the fuel station canopy was not in compliance. The tanks had to be placed in the front because that was the only way the trucks could get to the tanks. With the additional driveway the trucks can come into the area to the east.

Ms. Golden stated that the Planning Board reviewed the site plan, subject to Applicant completing the transaction with TCEDC to obtain the easement. The site plan was approved, and the rezoning was recommended by the Planning Board and is now before the Zoning Commission for review.

Ms. Golden stated that across 10<sup>th</sup> Street North, the area is zoned as District "E" (General Business). To the east and north is zoned District "B" (Single Family Attached Duplex Residential) and the area has some single family residential in there. She also stated that District "D" is one step less intensive than General Business. She stated it is not the kind of zoning that draws people into the neighborhood but the kind that serves the neighborhood.

Ms. Golden stated the convenience store is not considered a bad fit for the neighborhood and does provide some buffering for the existing residential from the existing Light Industrial uses to the south. She also advised that the Planning Board voted in support of the rezoning and staff had no objections.

Commissioner Thelma Bowie asked if there were any other questions. There were no other questions.

#### **b. Public Hearing**

At 5:28pm Commissioner Bowie opened the Public Hearing and asked if anyone was present to speak in opposition to the zoning change. She asked if staff had received any written opposition.

Ms. Golden stated that in accordance with state law and city ordinances letters were sent out to the properties around the area and a sign was physically posted on the property giving notice of the public hearing today. The sign has been posted at the site continuously since October 10, 2025. Staff have not received any comments for or against the rezoning.

Commissioner Bowie asked if anyone present would like to speak in support of the zoning change.

Ms. Kristin Edwards, Director of TCEDC, spoke in favor of this rezoning.

Ms. Edwards stated that the TCEDC approved the easement for the driveway. They did take into account that the City of Texas City utilizes the area further south and the piece of property to the right. They made sure they worked with Public Works to make sure there would be no missteps in operations or any impact on them.

She stated the TCEDC is in support of the rezoning.

There were no further questions to which a motion was made by Member David Zacherl/ Member Fernando Tello to close the Public Hearing. All other members voted aye.

**c. Preliminary Zoning Approval - Consider and take action on the zoning change request from Nasser Zia.**

A motion was made by Member David Zacherl/Member Fernando Tello to approve the zoning change request from Nasser Zia to rezone from District "F" (Light Industrial) to District "D" (Neighborhood Services) for the purpose of remodeling and bringing the existing convenience store and fuel station into compliance. Located at 1025 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North. All Members voted aye.

Motion carried 4 – 0.

**(6) The City of Texas City Economic Development Corp., Mae Budwine, and Bay Area Habitat for Humanity seek to rezone property from District "D-1" (Limited Service) to District "A" (Single-Family Residential) for the development of single-family homes. Located at 4<sup>th</sup> Street North & 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North. Being a minor replat of Block 135 Texas City Second Division part of Lots 6 & 7 and all of Lots 8 thru 16 and abandoned 15 ft alley way.**

**a. Staff Report**

Ms. Golden stated this is one of the things that should have been taken care of back when the property went through the process of an abandonment of the alleys to consolidate the property into four lots.

Ms. Golden stated this was a project with TCEDC where they acquired this property and took it through a process of consolidating several small lots that were not buildable and replatting them so there would be four bigger lots to build on area is currently zoned District "D" (Neighborhood Service) and should have been rezoned to District "A" (Single Family Residential) when the lots were replatted.

Ms. Golden stated that the property around this area is zoned District "C" (Multi-Family Residential (High Density)) but is actually built as single family homes. Across 4<sup>th</sup> Street is District "A" (Single Family Residential). She noted it is very appropriate for this area to be zoned as single family residential, they just missed bringing it to the board sooner.

Ms. Golden informed the Commission that two of the lots actually have been transacted and had houses built on them and that is why those property owners are also applicants. The other two lots are still owned by the TCEDC and Ms. Edwards was here as a representative for all the applicants.

Ms. Golden stated there were notices sent out and a sign posted at the property to which staff had not received any comments back for or against the rezoning. Staff also agree with the rezoning.

Member Zacherl asked Ms. Golden if the lots meet the minimum square footage to which Ms. Golden responded with "Yes, they do now."

Commissioner Thelma Bowie asked if there were any other questions. There were no other questions.

**b. Public Hearing**

At 5:33pm Commissioner Bowie opened the Public Hearing and asked if anyone wanted to speak in opposition to the zoning change. No one responded.

Commissioner Bowie asked if anyone wanted to speak in favor of the zoning change.

Ms. Kristin Edwards spoke in favor of the rezoning. She spoke in terms of what TCEDC was able to do with these four lots after the replat. She also stated she was greatly appreciative of the assistance with getting the replat done.

Ms. Edwards stated that one of the four lots was able to have a home built on it and was able to transfer to a wonderful lady as a result of the EDC's Land Swap Program. She stated she is now getting a nice new home on a nice piece of property. The other lot was given to Habitat for Humanity, and they were able to start construction on a new home for a gentleman that may not have been able to afford a home otherwise.

Ms. Edwards then stated one of the remaining two lots that still belong to the TCEDC may possibly go to Habitat for Humanity for another home. Also to be available to the TCEDC's land swap program in general, which will allow them to move individuals out of the Industrial Business District to get them further away from the industrial activity, for their own safety. Ms. Edwards stated the properties are going to very good use and hopes to continue that.

**There were no further questions to which a motion was made by Member Fernando Tello/ Member David Zacherl to close the Public Hearing. All other members voted aye.**

**c. Preliminary Zoning Approval – Consider and take action on the zoning change request from City of Texas City Economic Development.**

**A motion was made by Member David Zacherl/ Chairman Perry O'Brien to approve the zoning change request from The City of Texas Economic Development Corp., Mae Budwine, and Bay Area Habitat for Humanity to rezone from District "D-1" (Limited Services) to District "A" (Single-Family Residential) for the development of single-family homes. Located at 4<sup>th</sup> Street North & 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North. Being a minor replat of Block 135 Texas City Second Division part of lots 6 & 7 and all lots 8 thru 16 and abandoned 15ft alley way. All Members voted aye.**

**Motion carried 4 – 0.**

**(7) GENERAL UPDATES**

Ms. Golden informed the board that we have a new board member. Member David Zacherl is now a member of the Zoning Commission, formerly he was an alternate. She also gave us an update on the current members and alternates which is as follows; Chairman Perry O'Brien, Commissioner Thelma Bowie, Member David Zacherl, Member Fernando Tello and member Bruce Clawson. She also stated Alternate Lisa Salinas was a previous alternate and has been reappointed as an Alternate. Ms. Becky McLaughlin is a newly appointed Alternate Member to the Zoning Commission.

Ms. Golden asked the board members to review the current contact information we have on file and to make sure it is correct. She asked that they reach out to Ms. Veronica Carreon if any changes need to be made. She also informed them that on the sheet is our contact information at the bottom of the page.

Ms. Golden stated that the City Attorney is going to prepare a memo for her to provide them about the Open Meetings Act. She informed the board members that as appointed members of a board they are now subject to the restrictions of the Open Meetings Act. As appointed members they are not allowed to have group discussions with each other about anything pertaining to the zoning meetings unless they are in a properly called and noticed Zoning Commission Meeting. A group email sent to all board members may be considered a "walking quorum" and so they cannot send group emails to each other about zoning matters. The only group emails they should be seeing or receiving about zoning matters will be from Ms. Carreon and strictly about the scheduling of the meetings.

Ms. Golden informed the board that they need to elect officers. Chairman Perry O'Brien has been serving as Chair and will do so until he is replaced but they no longer have a Co-Chair and asked if they would like to have an agenda item for the election of officers at the next meeting to convene. All were in favor.

Ms. Golden also stated there are several more things coming through so we should have at least one more meeting before the end of the year.

**(8) ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Member Fernando Tello/Member David Zacherl to adjourn. All members present voted aye.**

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Kimberly Golden, Secretary                      Date                      2/17/2026

Minutes approved by the Zoning Commission at its meeting on 02/17/2026.