

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

April 20, 2026

The Planning Board of the City of Texas City met in a regular meeting on Monday, April 20, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Staff members present: Kimberly Golden, P.E. (City Engineer, Secretary), Casey Bennett (Chief Building Official), David Kinchen (Deputy Building Official), Lauren Atkinson (Plans Examiner), Veronica Carreon (Planning & Zoning Technician), Curt Kelly (E&P Administrator), Jack Haralson (Public Works Director), and DJ Hutchinson (Project Administrator). Guests were Jonathan Bellock, Chris Campbell, Ashley Astor, Clarence Blackerbyed, Tammy Webb, Christian Johns, John Rudloff, Cody Blanchard, and Caitlin King. Mayor Dedrick Johnson joined the meeting after it started.

Chairman Dickey Campbell indicated a quorum was present and called the meeting to order.

(1) ROLL CALL

The following members answered roll call: Commissioner Jami Clark, Co-Chairman Perry O'Brien, Chairman Dickey Campbell, Commissioner Thelma Bowie, and Alternate David Zacherl.

(2) PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Dickey Campbell acknowledged the request by Ashley Astor to provide public comments regarding the matter on the agenda concerning Mister Car Wash.

Ashley Astor, Project Manager for Development, Mister Car Wash spoke about the alignment of land uses permitted by the Crystal Lagoon District PUD with the proposed project for Mister Car Wash, emphasizing that the core issue is whether the proposal aligns with the aesthetic and performance standards of Lago Mar and meets the land use criteria. Ms. Astor believes it does align. She indicated that while a standalone car wash isn't listed as a permitted use in the PUD, the PUD explicitly allows an automotive service station that includes an accessory car wash. Ms. Astor referred to Texas City's Ordinance 160.006 to define an automotive service station.

In her opinion, a service station has more significant impacts than what is being proposed, including fuel deliveries, extended hours of operation, increased lighting, and security concerns. On the other hand, a contemporary express car wash offers quick and predictable visits, does not sell fuel or operates late at night, and functions entirely within a controlled, enclosed environment. From a planning standpoint, this suggests a lower-impact option of a use that is already permitted by the PUD, rather than an expansion or alteration of it.

It is also important to analyze the comparisons made regarding car washes. She noted that the accessory car wash at Buc-ee's received approval in 2023 but has not begun construction. Additionally, she stressed that Buc-ee's acts as a highway-focused travel center, and any car wash associated with it is secondary to the primary high-intensity use that results in substantial traffic and longer customer wait times.

HEB car washes generally operate as automatic washes. They serve as a convenience for grocery shoppers and are not intended to function as independent commercial operations. Neither Buc-ee's nor HEB employs a membership-based model for their car washes since this is not their main business focus. Mister Carwash, on the other hand, operates as a professionally managed standalone establishment, maintaining full site control and long-term ownership.

The property is subject to private deed restrictions linked to HEB, which bans convenience stores. As modern automotive service stations depend on convenience stores as their primary function, this use is not viable. Since neither the City nor Mister Car Wash can modify this restriction, an express standalone car wash becomes the only feasible solution to deliver the car wash function envisioned for this location.

Chairman Campbell acknowledged the request by Chris Campbell to provide public comments regarding the matter on the agenda concerning Mister Car Wash.

Chris Campbell, Director of Development & Engineering, Mister Car Wash, stated his focus would be on the operational impacts related to the presence of a Mister Car Wash (MCW) facility. From an operational perspective, understandable concerns exist regarding traffic, noise, and the overall intensity associated with a car wash, but the data and experience with the MCW model are important. MCW primarily operates on a monthly subscription model. Most customers are local, with many being repeat users rather than regional traffic; their visits are short, usually taking about 3 to 5 minutes, with no prolonged dwell times or event-driven spikes. The access to the site is meticulously planned and reviewed; there is no direct access from the frontage road. City staff evaluated the circulation as part of the overall development to guarantee that traffic flows safely and efficiently. MCW also proactively consulted with sound experts to assess the site. Considering the existing background noise from I-45, the analysis indicates that MCW operations do not cause a noticeable increase above the current noise levels.

The MCW wash tunnel is entirely enclosed, with vacuum equipment shielded up to 8 feet with concrete masonry unit walls, and all lighting is down shielded to minimize impact, designed to stay on-site. Operations are restricted to reasonable daytime hours, typically from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. This use is well-regulated. Moreover, MCW went further by engaging the community for feedback. Last week, on Thursday, he and Ashley Astor conducted a community open house that approximately 20 Lago Mar residents attended, who asked many insightful questions. Out of those, 10 residents voiced their support, one requested further information, and two opposed the project. Ashley provided those comment cards to the staff.

The concerns raised about traffic, noise, lighting, and safety mirror those addressed in the city staff report, the technical studies, and the operational controls outlined tonight. Together, these elements reinforce that this proposal should be viewed as a low-impact, well-managed commercial operation.

Finally, regarding Mister Car Wash, the company. It was established in Houston in 1969 and has expanded to become the largest car wash operator in the U.S., with over 550 locations, including around 40 in the greater Houston area. MCW successfully operates in communities like River Oaks, West University Place, Memorial, Katy, and Pearland, all of which have high standards for design, quality, property upkeep, and operational discipline. MCW is not a transient user or speculative developer; it is a long-term owner and operator, and its business relies on being a good neighbor and maintaining clean, well-managed facilities year after year. In closing, he believes this proposal aligns with the intentions of the Lago Mar PUD; it meets all municipal and PUD requirements, activates a site currently restricted by private governance, and provides essential convenience services with manageable impacts. They respectfully ask for your support and approval. Ashley, our engineer, the landowner, and he are available to answer any questions.

Chairman Campbell acknowledged the request by Jonathan Bellock to provide public comments regarding the matter on the agenda concerning Mister Car Wash.

Jonathan Bellock, First Hartford (FH) Realty Corporation, represents the main developer for the Lago Mar Commercial Project. FH has over 40 acres in total, having sold around 15 acres to HEB, and is planning a retail shopping center in conjunction with that. FH has faced some challenges recently, one of which continues to arise and has caused a delay in the Mister Car Wash development.

This issue pertains to the Lago Mar Crystal Lagoon Overlay District, which regulates the uses for this particular tract. He's sent several emails discussing this in detail but would like to review some of the uses listed as permitted and explain why they present a challenge for this specific site. There are six acres of highway frontage that is ideal for standalone uses. This includes restaurants, car washes, and various other types of facilities typically found near grocery stores. FH wants to support the community with diverse offerings for local residents, avoiding clustering to the same kinds of businesses. Some of

the permitted uses listed include multifamily housing, and clearly, a wedding venue is not suitable for a highway-facing location. Other items on the list include an outdoor stage, parking garage, auditorium, gas station, antique shop, art gallery, catering service, farmers' market, hotels, hobby studio, meat market, music store, tanning studio, nightclub, tobacco shop, and more.

The issue is that this overlay district conflicts with the objective of establishing a neighborhood shopping center, and Mister Car Wash exemplifies this challenge. FH aims to include restaurants, automotive services, car washes, medical facilities, and various other business types, avoiding an overabundance of any one category. Too many of the same types of business can lead to conflicts down the line; they often do not perform optimally and may eventually shift to something else, which FH seeks to prevent. Therefore, he is here to address this issue and hopes to navigate it effectively in this context. As they look to develop something appealing and sustainable, one comment raised was about the demand for a car wash in Texas City.

HEB has another location right here on SH-146 near the expressway, and there are five car washes within a 1.3-mile radius. The closest car wash to their location is 6.3 miles away, and reaching it requires crossing two major highways. Thus, he would contend that if there is enough demand for a new store, a car wash could also be justified in that vicinity. The vision and purpose of the Crystal Lagoon were meant to create a distinctive boardwalk environment as a destination. He recognizes that and is eager to support it in the best way possible. However, a six-acre highway frontage tract next to a grocery store may not be appropriate for some of the listed uses, such as a wedding venue, multifamily housing, or a parking garage. Those simply do not mesh well with the location. That's all he wanted to highlight, both for Mister Car Wash and as part of the broader development vision. FH is striving to introduce great options in a neighborhood shopping center that will endure over time and supports Mister Car Wash's efforts in contributing to that goal. Thank you.

(3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES- April 6, 2026

Minutes were not available, so this item was passed over until the next meeting.

(4) REGULAR AGENDA

a. Consider and take action on the requested location for EZ Burgers Mobile Food Truck. Located at 230 Dike Road (Lee's Bait & Tackle), Texas City.

Ms. Golden stated the Board's responsibility regarding mobile food trucks involves evaluating the suggested location and assessing it against the criteria outlined in the ordinance. The actual permitting process is handled by the police department. This particular site is located on Dike Road, situated between Lee's Bait and Tackle Shop and the levee. A two-year lease has been established with Lee's Bait Shop, with options for extension. Lee's has agreed to allow usage of their parking lot and restroom facilities, and there will be trash receptacles provided.

When examining the criteria and the ordinance, the first aspect to consider is the site's location and its impact on nearby businesses. While there is another restaurant, their menu differs significantly. Additionally, this food truck offers a different option compared to traditional restaurants, likely to attract visitors to the Dike and keep them on-site. The duration of the permission in the lease is also a relevant criteria which is met by the two-year lease with the possibility of an extension. Regarding the number of similar food trucks operating in the area, there are currently no other approved food trucks located in the area, nor have any applications been submitted.

The mobile food unit's appearance and quality of construction are quite appealing; it's a well-designed trailer. Any additional requirements related to parking, landscaping, and seating have been addressed in the agreement with Lee's Bait and Tackle Shop. Consequently, staff have reviewed everything, and Ms. Golden believes they meet the criteria established in the policy and considered in the ordinance, so staff have no objections to granting approval.

Chairman Campbell asked if there were any other questions, there were not.

- a. **A motion was made by Co-Chairman Perry O'Brien/ Commissioner Thelma Bowie to approve the requested location for EZ Burgers Mobile Food Truck. Located at 230 Dike Road (Lee's Bait & Tackle), Texas City.**

All other members present voted aye.

Motion carried 5-0.

- b. **Consider and take action on the Development Plan for White Tree Defense Co. to operate a small scale, appointment-based Federal Firearms License (FFL) transfer business. Located at 7500 FM 1765, Texas City.**

Ms. Golden stated that the proposed site is vacant and will be used for local firearms transfers between federally licensed dealers and individual customers. The transfers will occur in a controlled, secure indoor environment and will be by appointment only, minimizing traffic impact. The application is submitted for site approval, and all necessary regulations will be adhered to. There are no objections to the proposal.

Chairman Campbell stated that he thought that the site was Galveston Limousine. Mr. Christian Johns, the Applicant, stated that the main side is, but there is an office space that is unused.

Commissioner Thelma Bowie asked if it was by appointment only. Mr. Johns explained that if an individual purchases a new firearm online, they can ship it to him, and the purchaser can legally receive it from the business. But if it is a person selling to another person, he is not needed for that transaction.

Chairman Campbell asked if there were any other questions, there were not.

A motion was made by Commissioner Jami Clark/Co-Chairman Perry O'Brien to approve the Development Plan for White Tree Defense Co. to operate a small scale, appointment-based Federal Firearms License (FFL) transfer business. Located at 7500 FM 1765, Texas City.

All other members present voted aye.

Motion carried 5-0.

- c. **Consider and take action on the Development Plan for the new Municipal Complex. Located at 1801 9th Avenue North, Texas City.**

Ms. Golden explained that this is the site of the existing, obsolete, 71-year-old City Hall, which is scheduled to be demolished and replaced with two new state-of-the-art municipal buildings. One of the buildings will be two stories tall and positioned at the site of the existing City Hall. This two-story structure will include additional space for what is currently in City Hall, and the Municipal Court will relocate there. Additionally, the Texas City Economic Development District staff will have its offices in this new building, along with the Office of Community Development. These offices, together with the existing City Hall functions, will occupy the two-story structure. The mayor's suite, as well as Human Resources, Purchasing, Finance, Communications, and the Innovation and Technology Departments will also be included.

Furthermore, there will be a second building, shown on the site plan, which will serve as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Presently, the EOC is located in leased space at the Gulf Coast Transit District terminal on Magnolia Avenue. The new EOC will be constructed on city-owned property and designed as a durable structure to withstand floods and hurricanes, ensuring continuity of operations. Both buildings will be elevated relative to their current level, and the EOC will be raised a few extra feet to enhance flood resilience. The existing parking lots will be replaced with concrete, and the rear lot will be enclosed with secure fencing. The number of parking spaces will increase due to the anticipated

influx of visitors and the greater public use of the courtroom.

The site plan will maintain the existing locations of driveways without creating new ones and will refurbishing the driveways, such as the one off of Palmer, which currently suffers from flooding issues. The fountain and centennial monument will be preserved, along with the memorial rose garden. Special measures will also be taken to protect existing trees and minimize the removal of any. The landscaping will feature a variety of native plants that thrive in the area. A hard surface will also be added for the fire lane, and it is expected to resemble grass while being durable.

The project is on schedule to begin construction this summer, with hopes to finish by next summer.

Co-Chairman Perry O'Brien asked if the contract had been awarded. Mr. Jack Haralson stated the City has contracted with a Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) to build the project.

Alternate Member David Zacherl asked whether the building will have room to accommodate increased personnel over the next 15 to 20 years, and whether the court will relocate to the new complex. Ms. Golden stated the projections were based on staffing needs through 2035, and the courtroom will serve as a multi-use space for court and City Commission meetings. Alternate Member Zacherl noted the relocation of Municipal Court will free up space for the Texas City Police Department in the existing facility.

Chairman Campbell asked if there were any other questions, there were no more questions.

A motion was made by Alternate Member David Zacherl /Commissioner Jami Clark to approve the Development Plan for the new Municipal Complex. Located at 1801 9th Avenue North, Texas City

All other members present voted aye.

Motion carried 5-0.

- d. Consider and take action on the Development Plan for Mr. Car Wash Located North of Lago Mar Blvd and west of the I-45 southbound frontage road at P3721 Gulf Fwy (Lot 3 of Lago Mar Commercial Replat No. 6), Texas City.**

Ms. Golden explained that the Crystal Lagoon District within Lago Mar was intentionally established in 2021 as one of the most highly restricted and curated development areas in Texas City. The purpose of these restrictions is to create a distinctive, memorable destination that attracts visitors, encourages longer stays, and enhances the overall image of Texas City. The District is divided into seven subareas, each with its own specific list of permitted uses. These lists of permitted uses were crafted to ensure that development within each subarea contributes to the overarching vision of quality, placemaking, and architectural character.

The lot under consideration lies within Subarea 1, the Commercial Subarea. While this subarea contains the broadest range of potential uses, it is still governed by a curated and intentional use list. Nearby development activity on adjacent lots includes pending site plan review for a Chase Bank, a likely fast-food establishment, additional commercial pads, and a prospective Longhorn Steakhouse. These uses align with the District's intent to create a high-quality, destination-oriented commercial environment.

The other aspect mentioned in the specific PUD Amendment concerning PUD, is the authority granted to you all as the Planning Board, allowing you to evaluate uses not listed and determine if they are appropriate. Ms. Astor did an excellent job outlining the criteria for what does not fit, emphasizing that it does not align with the vision for this district. This isn't focused on impact; instead, it's about whether it contributes to the intended vision. Ultimately, this area was meant to be a highly curated, appealing destination.

When you review some of the excerpts Ms. Golden has gathered from the PUD, it emphasizes architectural elements and aims to create a memorable place that people want to visit—an area that

reflects placemaking, which in turn enhances the city. Keep in mind that Lago Mar has always aimed to be a distinctive feature for Texas City, intending to reshape its image since the early 2000s. Moreover, the Crystal Lagoon District aligns perfectly with that vision. There is nothing surprising or new about this.

It is important to note that the applicant, Mister Car Wash, was informed early in the pre-development process about the heightened restrictions associated with the Crystal Lagoon District. The question before the Board is not an impact-based analysis, but a determination of whether the proposed use “fits” within the established vision and development framework for this particular subarea, as allowed under the PUD’s evaluation authority.

For context, only a small portion of the I-45 frontage falls within the Crystal Lagoon District (the gray-shaded area). The adjacent pink commercial areas are general commercial zones under the larger PUD, where a broader range of typical business uses is allowed. The proposed car wash use could be considered appropriate within those general commercial areas but must be evaluated for compatibility within the more restrictive Crystal Lagoon frontage.

Finally, should the Board choose to deny the Development Plan, the Applicant has the right to appeal that decision to the City Commission. The request must be in writing and submitted within 10 days of the meeting at which they received the denial.

To ensure a clear record, staff recommends that the Board treat this as two distinct questions:

1. Whether the proposed use is consistent with and fits the vision of the Crystal Lagoon District PUD for Subarea 1; and
2. Whether to approve or deny the Development Plan based on that determination regarding the use.

Chairman Campbell asked when the Lago Mar TIRZ was created and when did the Developer acquire the property. Ms. Golden explained that the original PUD was in 2006 or 2007, and the amendment was in 2021. The Developer acquired the property in 2024 and was made aware of the restrictions.

Co-Chairman O’Brien stated that his perspective is this: there has been a considerable amount of contemplation, a clear vision, and numerous expectations established from the outset. We have previously encountered items that failed to meet compliance, and he was among the first to reject them due to non-compliance. He doesn’t wish to alter the vision without specific justifications for doing so. What he heard today was highly professional, and it was an outstanding effort. However, it does not change his belief that this does not meet compliance. This is the framework you have created. There are additional areas where that is applicable, yes. So that’s his feedback. He has yet to see anything that persuades him this is a viable destination, which was the original purpose of that area. It was intended to be a place worth visiting. This was the same thing that the Board ran into with the tire shop. There are a lot of places the car wash can go, just not the Crystal Lagoon area. He stated he saw it as a promising project, but it’s simply not located in an ideal area.

Commissioner Bowie stated that she attended their presentation. They managed to persuade many people, which was their goal. However, there was also an informal survey conducted on Facebook when this first came up for the residents of Lago Mar. The results showed a similar number of people opposed as reflected in your findings. Therefore, she believes reaching out to the community was a very positive approach, but she had hoped they would have garnered more participation than they did, as the survey does not accurately represent 4,000 homes, if you understand what she means. She truly thinks it looks appealing, but if it doesn’t align, it can’t go.

Alternate Zacherl stated that he sees the area we’re discussing as similar to the northeast corner of Baybrook Mall, where the restaurants and other establishments are located. He stated he was not sure that having a car wash in the center of that type of area would be ideal and therefore, he does not see it as aligning with the vision for the area.

Commissioner Clark stated that she likes the design but agrees it doesn't fit the PUD.

Chairman Campbell asked if there were any questions for staff or the representative. There were no questions.

1. Chairman Campbell called for the vote on whether the proposed use is consistent and fits the vision of the PUD.

A motion was made by Co-Chairman Perry O'Brien/Commissioner Thelma Bowie deciding the proposed use by Mister Car Wash did not meet the requirements of the Crystal Lagoon District PUD because it does not meet the vision and objective of the District.

All members present voted aye [to deny the proposed use].

Motion carried 5-0.

2. Chairman Campbell called for the vote on whether to approve or deny the development plan based on the fact that it does not meet the vision of the PUD.

A motion was made by Co-Chairman Perry O'Brien/Alternate David Zacherl to deny the Development Plan for Mister Car Wash because the proposed use does not meet the vision and objective of the Crystal Lagoon District. Located north of Lago Mar Blvd and west of the I-45 southbound frontage road at P3721 Gulf Fwy (Lot 3 of Lago Mar Commercial Replat No. 6), Texas City.

All members present voted aye [to deny the Development Plan because the proposed use does not meet the vision and objective of the Crystal Lagoon District PUD].

Motion carried 5-0.

(5) GENERAL UPDATES

Ms. Golden mentioned to the Board that starting in August, the meetings will be held in the Alamo Room at the Nessler Center until the renovations are completed in the current location.

Chairman Campbell asked if there were any other items or questions which there we not.

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

None

(7) MOTION TO ADJOURN

A motion was made by Commissioner Thelma Bowie/Commissioner Jami Clark to adjourn. All members present voted aye.

Kimberly Golden, Secretary

Date

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