

1 City of Pass Christian  
2 Municipal Complex Auditorium  
3 105 Hiern Avenue

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5 **Planning Commission**  
6 **Meeting Minutes**  
7 **Wednesday, July 20, 2016, 6:00 PM**  
8

9 **CALL TO ORDER**

10 Chairman Tom Phares called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. In attendance were Commissioners  
11 Margaret Jean Kalif, Michael Lizana, Rebecca O’Dwyer, Ken Austin, Steve Hunter, Lisea Johnson and Lisa  
12 Smith. Commissioner Adam Pace was not in attendance.  
13

14 **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

15 The first order of business was the adoption of the minutes from the monthly Planning Commission  
16 meeting held on June 1, 2016. A *Motion* by Commissioner Austin, seconded by Commissioner Kalif, was  
17 made to adopt the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.  
18

19 **NEW BUSINESS**

20 ○ *Open Public Hearing*

21 A *Motion* by Commissioner Austin, seconded by Commissioner Kalif, was made to open the public  
22 hearing. The motion passed unanimously.  
23

24 ○ *Application PD-25-2016, Jerry Conrad as agent for Eagan Q Properties LLC, 220 E Scenic Drive & O*  
25 *Highway 90, Parcel #0313H-02-096.000 & #0313H-02-097.000, Planning Commission Approval for*  
26 *parking in the First Layer in the T4+ Mixed-Use Zone.*  
27

28 Chairman Phares introduced the project.  
29

30 The City Planner, Danit Simon, briefed the Planning Commission on the project: The applicant is  
31 requesting to place seven parking spaces in the first layer, which is between the office building and  
32 Scenic Drive. By right, they could have four parallel parking spaces in the City’s easement along Scenic  
33 Drive, just as the neighboring building to the east has. But, the applicant has agreed to create seven  
34 perpendicular parking spaces that will be open to the public. The seven spaces will be constructed by  
35 the applicant on a combination of private and City Property, at no cost to the City. Please reference the  
36 site plan in your packets.  
37

38 As development increases in the City’s downtown neighborhood, the demand for additional parking also  
39 increases. Along Scenic Drive between Market and Davis there are few on-street parking spaces. There  
40 are a few parallel parking spaces on the north side of scenic, close to Market. And, you can also park in  
41 the City easement on the south side of Scenic, but only when the topography permits. The SmartCode  
42 emphasizes parking to the rear of structures to create pedestrian friendly environments that are  
43 walkable. The proposed parking spaces will not interfere with the pedestrian friendly sidewalk on the  
44 north side of Scenic Drive.  
45

46 The proposal meets the Standards for Planning Commission Approval, including the standard to “provide  
47 an essential service to the community.” The additional parking spaces will help to ease congestion and  
48 to best utilize the City’s existing easement by providing additional on-street parking to the community at

49 no cost to the City. This concludes my report; the contractor is here to answer any questions you may  
50 have.

51

52 Commissioner Kalif asked how close the spaces will be to the edge of the street.

53

54 Jerry Conrad answered that the spaces are 18 feet in length. Depending on the length of the car, will  
55 determine the distance from the back of the car to the street. My car is 14 feet, which would leave four  
56 feet to the street. I know this is a concern for the parking spots by the bank, on the corner of Davis &  
57 Scenic, but our spaces are deeper than that. When an average size vehicle is parked in the spaces, it will  
58 not extend into the street.

59

60 Commissioner Austin added that when cars are parked in the City's right of way along Scenic Drive they  
61 often end up with part of the vehicle in the street, so this should be an improvement.

62

63 Chairman Phares added that the front parking is not the only parking; there is additional parking under  
64 the residential building. The front spaces are primarily for the public and the two offices in the  
65 commercial building.

66

67 Simon added that there are 11 parking spaces underneath the building, and if the request is  
68 approved tonight, there will be a total of 18 spaces. They are required to have a total of 15 spaces,  
69 which they will meet even if this isn't approved and they end up having parallel spaces along Scenic  
70 Drive.

71

72 Chairman Phares stated that pull in parking is not always ideal, but it is more efficient in terms of the  
73 number of spaces, as they increase from four to seven. And parking is a big challenge for the  
74 downtown, so every additional space helps.

75

76 A *Motion* by Commissioner Kalif, seconded by Commissioner Hunter, was made to allow for parking in  
77 the First Layer. The motion passed unanimously.

78

79 A member of the public came up to address the Commission; he did not state his name. The parking by  
80 the bank is terrible; my vehicle has been hit there several times. Also, during Bacchus's busy times the  
81 parked cars are partially on the road. And, these cars are going to be parked on the road too.

82

83 Commissioner Austin responded that the pull in spots will provide space for parked cars; they will be  
84 parked off the road.

85

86 The member of the public continued, stating that the cars will be parked close to the road. And the  
87 same problem exists over by O'Dwyer Realty where cars are on the road. Is this going to be normal?

88

89 Commissioner Austin responded that with seven parking spaces that are 18 feet in depth, cars will be  
90 able to pull in and get off the road. This proposal creates a much better parking situation than the  
91 parallel parking that is allowed by right.

92 The member of the public continued stating that there is a problem with cars parking in the street.

93

94 Commissioner Lizana suggested that he call the police if cars are parked in the street, but do not dial 911  
95 for the complaint.

96

97 Karl Gorbort of 255 E Scenic Drive stated that parking in this area seems to be a done deal. 18 feet is not  
98 an adequate length, the back of vehicles will be sticking out onto the street. This section of Scenic Drive  
99 is a state highway, technically you should not cross that line or back out on a state highway. The bank  
100 got away with it, the lady who put a fence up on the City's easement east of O'Dwyers building is getting  
101 away with it. Bacchus is problem with its parking, and all these parking issues need to be addressed. As  
102 a resident do I need to start calling the state police on the bank and O'Dwyer and this new  
103 development?

104

105 Chairman Phares responded that this Commission is aware of the problem that exists regarding parking.  
106 And, the average size of a vehicle in America as of 2011 is 16 feet. So the majority of vehicles will be  
107 able to park in these spaces without a problem, and people who drive extremely large trucks will have to  
108 be smart enough not to park in a space that doesn't accommodate their vehicle. Thank you for  
109 attending and participating, the motion stands and we will be moving on to the next item.

110

111 The member of the public who did not state his name then asked how they already have a temporary  
112 electric pole at the site, how did they get a permit already?

113

114 Simon answered that the applicant received a foundation permit, and based on tonight's meeting either  
115 the parking will be parallel as is allowed by right, or pull in if approved by the Planning Commission and  
116 the Board of Aldermen.

117

118 ○ *Application PD-26-2016, Timber Ridge POA as agent for Samuel D Robinson, northwest corner of*  
119 *Orange Street & Henderson Avenue, Parcel #0312K-03-118.000, Planning Commission Approval for*  
120 *lighting a monument sign in the T3R Single-Family Residential Zone.*

121

122 Chairman Phares introduced the project.

123

124 Commissioner O'Dwyer recused herself and left the room.

125

126 The City Planner, Danit Simon, briefed the Planning Commission on the project: The Applicant is  
127 requesting to light a monument sign in the T3R, single-family residential Zone. The sign itself is allowed  
128 by right, as the code allows for one at each subdivision entrance. Today you are only reviewing the  
129 request to light the sign in a residential zone that prohibits lit signs.

130 Each zone has distinctive signage standards to foster the character of each neighborhood and to create  
131 distinctions between neighborhoods. Commercial zones allow for more signage than mixed-use zones,  
132 and mixed-use zones allow for more signage than residential zones. The Single-Family Residential Zone  
133 allows for minimal signage without lighting in order for the neighborhood to maintain its residential  
134 appeal.

135 The applicant's sign is located in a neighborhood with existing residential houses, and a zoning  
136 designation that nearly only allows for the single-family residential use. So if you look at the use table,  
137 in the T3R Zone you cannot have a duplex or other multi-family building, you can't have most forms of  
138 lodging or any retail. It's a zone specifically designated for single-family houses. Please reference the  
139 aerial map, where you can see the existing houses, and the zoning map, which indicates that  
140 development in the surrounding area will be restricted to the single-family residential use.

141  
142 A lit sign does not meet the Standards for Planning Commission Approval, including the requirement for  
143 the development to be in harmony with the existing character of the neighborhood in which it is  
144 located. Permitting a lit sign in a residential zone will set a precedent and lead to additional unsuitable  
145 signage requests throughout the City. There are residential subdivisions throughout the City that could  
146 make the same request, for example along highway 90 there is Jackson Colony, Beach-Vista, Beach-  
147 Hurst by Wisteria & Camelia that also has an entrance along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and Timber Ridge has several  
148 entrances. All of these subdivisions are zoned T3R. And there are several more located throughout the  
149 City. This concludes my report; there is a representative here to answer any questions you may have.

150  
151 Chairman Phares asked about the type of lighting they are proposing to use.

152  
153 Simon answered, that they have proposed fully shielded downward facing lighting, per the SmartCode's  
154 requirements.

155  
156 The representative stated that the proposed lighting will be the same as the lit signs by Timber Ridge's  
157 main entrance, but a little bit smaller. The sign itself is two-thirds the size.

158  
159 Simon explained that those signs were redone about a year ago and they are in a T4+ Zone, which allows  
160 for lit signs. It's a different zone, different neighborhood, and different lighting standards.

161  
162 Commissioner Austin stated that he likes the lit signs; they look great, are attractive, and are well done.  
163 And, there are homes that are a lot closer to the main signs than to this proposed sign. Henderson and  
164 Orange is an incredibly dark corner, some of the residents have put reflectors out to help. I don't think  
165 it will have a negative impact on the neighborhood. If anything, the lighting will enhance the corner. If  
166 other subdivisions make similar requests, we will need to review them on a case-by-case basis. Each  
167 case needs to be looked at individually. The proposed sign in front of us tonight is very tastefully done  
168 and will enhance the neighborhood.

169  
170 Commissioner Kalif stated that the Commission needs to be very careful about setting precedents, as  
171 there are other subdivisions. What if Oak Park wants to put a lit sign on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and on North Street.  
172 There are so many subdivisions along Highway 90, and then there is Camille Village on the eastern end  
173 of North Street. Timber Ridge already has two existing lit monument signs- that is adequate. I don't  
174 know why we would want to put lit signs in additional areas of the City.

175  
176 Commissioner Austin added that while the proposed sign will be Timber Ridge's third lit sign, it is for a  
177 completely separate entrance that does not internally connect to the rest of the subdivision. Houses  
178 located off of Henderson and Orange cannot be accessed from another Timber Ridge entrance. And, I  
179 would have no problem if Beach Vista or Jackson Colony or any of the other subdivisions wanted to put  
180 a tastefully lit sign at their entrances. Nice monument signs with downward facing lighting can enhance  
181 the neighborhood and community.

182 Commissioner Lazana stated that over the last several months the Commission has been reviewing and  
183 recommended SmartCode amendments. This is the first request we have received regarding lit signs.  
184 We should review this topic with our next round of amendments, just as we have addressed other  
185 concerns brought up by residents in complying with the code.

186  
187 A *Motion* by Commissioner Austin, seconded by Commissioner Hunter, was made to approve the  
188 request to light the monument sign. Commissioners Kalif and Lizana opposed, Commissioners Smith and  
189 Johnson approved, and the *Motion* passed (four to two).

190  
191 Commissioner O'Dwyer returned to the room.

192  
193 ○ Close the Public Hearing

194 A *Motion* by Commissioner Kalif, seconded by Commissioner Lizana, was made to close the public  
195 hearing. The motion passed unanimously.

196  
197 **OLD BUSINESS**

198  
199 Chairman Phares updated the Commission on illegal signs. It is a constant problem- as soon as they are  
200 taken down new ones are put up. Shad, the Building Codes Office, with the help of Public Works has  
201 been very diligent and persistent regarding enforcement. The Commissioners discussed this topic and  
202 the ongoing actions being taken.

203  
204 Commissioner Austin mentioned the positive affects of the slab removal ordinance and the program's  
205 progress. The Commissioners agreed.

206  
207 **OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENT**

208  
209 **ADJOURN**

210 A *Motion* by Commissioner Kalif, seconded by Commissioner Lizana, was made to adjourn the meeting  
211 at 6:30 P.M. The motion passed unanimously.