

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MARCH 16, 2000**

**Members Present:** Betty Waters, Melton Wolters, Dottie Kaminski, Hal Lawler, Sandie George, and Ross Morris

**Members Absent:**

**City Staff Present:** Planning Director Doug Kneupper, City Planner Brad Ellis, Planning Coordinator Masood Malik, Police Chief Richard Reff, Fire Chief Joe Sease, Director of Public Works Steve Gillett, City Attorney Knox Askins, Planning Secretary Peggy Lee

**I. CALL TO ORDER.**

Meeting called to order by Chairperson Waters at 6:00 PM.

**II. APPROVE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 17, 2000, REGULAR MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING.**

Motion by Melton Wolters to approve the minutes of February 17, 2000. Second by Dottie Kaminski. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**III. ELECT VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

Motion by Dottie Kaminski to elect Melton Wolters as Vice-Chairperson. Second by Hal Lawler. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**IV. OPEN PUBLIC HEARINGS.**

Chairperson Waters opened the public hearing at 6:02 PM.

- A. CONSIDER ZONE CHANGE REQUEST #R99-005 FOR A 5.0809 ACRE TRACT, BEING PART OF TRACTS 8A, 8C, AND 8E, W.J. PAYNE SUBDIVISION; BLOCK 2 OF THE W.JONES SURVEY, A-482, IN THE 10000 BLOCK OF SPENCER HIGHWAY, LA PORTE, HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS. THE APPLICANT IS SEEKING A ZONE CHANGE FROM HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (R-3) TO GENERAL COMMERCIAL (GC) TO ALLOW CONSTRUCTION OF A STORAGE BUILDING WITH AN ADDITIONAL PARKING AREA FOR THE BUSINESS KNOWN AS TWO CAJUNS CAFÉ.**

City Planner Brad Ellis presented staff's report for Rezone Request #R99-005. Zelda Wright, applicant and owner of Two Cajuns Café, and co-applicant Eddie Gray, have requested a zone change from High Density Residential to General Commercial for 5.08 acres, which includes La Petite Academy, Two Cajuns Café,

and an undeveloped parcel. A restaurant is not an allowable use in a High Density Residential zone and Two Cajuns Café is a non-conforming use. Ms. Wright intends to construct a new building to the north with additional parking to the east of the existing building.

Staff recommended approval of the zone change.

**1. PROPONENTS**

There were none that spoke in favor of the request.

**2. OPPONENTS**

There were none that spoke in opposition to the request.

**B. CONSIDER ZONE CHANGE REQUEST #R00-001 FOR LOTS 1 THROUGH 32, BLOCK 329 OF LA PORTE OUTLOTS LOCATED BETWEEN NORTH 2<sup>ND</sup> AND 3<sup>RD</sup> STREETS ALONG BARBOURS CUT BOULEVARD. BLOCKS 328, 330 & 331 WILL BE LOOKED AT AS A COMPREHENSIVE REZONING OF THE AREA. THE APPLICANT IS SEEKING A ZONE CHANGE FROM GENERAL COMMERCIAL (GC) TO BUSINESS INDUSTRIAL (BI) TO ALLOW CONSTRUCTION OF A TRUCK SALES CENTER.**

City Planner Brad Ellis presented staff's report for Rezone Request #R00-001. The applicant, Aryn Narsi, requested a zone change from General Commercial to Business Industrial in order to open a used truck sales center in the 300 Block of Barbour's Cut Blvd. Truck sales are not an allowable use in a General Commercial zone. In addition to the applicant's request to rezone Block 329, the City requested that Blocks 328, 330, and 331 be considered as part of the rezone request in order to provide a more uniform zoning district along Barbour's Cut Blvd.

**1. PROPONENTS**

Davis Wilson, an Architect with Wilson Zetty Associates, stated that in addition to used truck sales, the proposed business would also sell new trucks. There will be an indoor showroom, as well as an outdoor showroom.

**2. OPPONENTS**

There were none that spoke in opposition to the request.

**V. CLOSE PUBLIC HEARINGS.**

Chairperson Waters closed the public hearings at 6:16 PM.

**VI. CONSIDER RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL FOR ZONE CHANGE #R99-005.**

Motion by Melton Wolters to recommend City Council approval of R99-005. Second by Sandie George. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**VII. CONSIDER RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL FOR ZONE CHANGE #R00-001.**

Motion by Dottie Kaminski to recommend City Council approval of R00-001. Second by Melton Wolters. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**VIII. REVIEW DRAFT OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE.**

Chapter 5 – Transportation Thoroughfare System

Bret Keast led discussions regarding transportation planning. Mr. Keast noted that the proposed Farrington Road extension has been a significant issue for numerous residents in the Lomax area. Residents from the area attended a steering committee meeting and stated their objection to the road extension. Wilbur Smith Associates, addressing the technical aspects of extending Farrington Blvd., prepared a technical memorandum for city staff. Mr. Keast reviewed with the Commission, the advantages and disadvantages that were listed in the memorandum.

Fire Chief Joe Sease addressed the Commission. Chief Sease described a need for north to south connector roads within La Porte. Cross streets are not present in the subject area possibly due to the fact that the Lomax area originally was a city unto itself. The location for the proposed Fire Station 3 remains undecided until such time that a decision is made regarding Farrington Blvd. Other streets to consider as north to south connectors might be Airport Blvd., on the east side of the airport, and Valleyview, between "P and "L" Streets. A major incident occurred during the last year at the railroad overpass on Spencer Hwy. Sens Rd. was shut down and the only way to move ambulances out of the area, because they were located down wind of the spill, was via Underwood Rd. Chief Sease also noted that a unit responding from Fire Station 2 to North "H" Street at Lomax School Road currently travels 3½ miles. The distance would be reduced to ¾ mile if Farrington were extended. Extra starts and stops for fire trucks mean longer response times.

Police Chief Richard Reff addressed the Commission. Chief Reff stated that a crime study was recently conducted to determine where activities were occurring within the City. With this information, the Police Dept. is better able to deploy officers with quicker response times. The subject area had the second highest number of activities reported in 1999. When comparing response times, this area had a considerable delay due to the fact there are only two ways to gain access. The connection to Lomax School Road would allow easier access with lower response times. Chief Reff agreed with Chief Sease that additional north to south

connections, such as Airport Blvd. and Valleyview, would also help facilitate the demand for easier access with quicker response times.

Mike Claussen, Director of Operations for the La Porte School District, addressed the Commission. Mr. Claussen stated he lives one block off Farrington and travels Farrington to go home. There is a problem routing school buses in northwest La Porte because of the limited north to south routes. Mr. Claussen favors the extension of Farrington to help alleviate the district's transportation problem. There is a safety concern for buses and parents that must travel the busy roads of Underwood and Spencer in order to transport children to and from school. As a member of the LEPC, quick evacuation of a school might be necessary and this roadway would help in that situation. The district could realize a savings since shorter bus routes cost less money.

Director of Public Works Steve Gillett addressed the Commission. Mr. Gillett is sympathetic to the need for north to south roadways. Responding to comments made previously about utilizing Airport Blvd. for a north to south route, Mr. Gillett informed the Commission that Airport Blvd. is located on airport property, therefore can not be considered. He added that airport activities have slowed down considerably since the departure of the flight school that operated from there. In order to attract a new tenant to that location, approximately six acres in the center of the airport, previously leased by the Texas Air National Guard, will soon have a looped road with utilities constructed up to the paved ramp. When asked about the possibility of future airport expansion, Mr. Gillett answered that the surrounding residential development has limited the chances for runway expansion.

Mr. Keast noted that at the time the last Comprehensive Plan was prepared, it was anticipated that the Lomax area would develop with a higher density. Since this is not the case, the City may wish to consider establishing a rural residential designation for the area, which would limit density to large residential lots. If a collector roadway is constructed then the city should conduct a review of the future land use plan in order to control and manage growth in that area.

Chairperson Waters stated that the steering committee, as well as the Planning and Zoning Commission, during previous meetings, discussed and were in favor of designating a large lot rural residential designation for the northwest area of La Porte.

The consultant and staff will work on creating a new zoning district for large rural residential lots for the Commission to consider at a future meeting.

The Commission recommended the extension of Farrington Blvd. to North "H" St. be included in the Thoroughfare Plan. Neither the Commission, nor the consultant recommended the extension of Farrington Blvd. from North "H" Street to SH225 be included.

The Commission discussed the extension of Valleyview between “H” and “L” Streets as another north to south connector. It was noted there is a pipeline corridor that runs somewhere along that route.

The Commission recommended Canada Rd., between Fairmont Pkwy. and Spencer Hwy., also be included in the Thoroughfare Plan.

Chapter 6 – Utility Infrastructure System

Bret Keast led discussions regarding the Utility Infrastructure System. Mr. Gillett described the existing condition of the City’s utility infrastructure system. The Commission was pleased with the contents of this chapter and did not recommend any changes or additions.

**IX. STAFF REPORTS**

The Commission agreed to review Chapters 7 through 10 at the April 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**X. ADJOURN**

Chairperson Waters adjourned the meeting at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Peggy Lee  
Planning and Zoning Commission Secretary

Approved on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of April, 2000.

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Betty Waters  
Planning and Zoning Commission Chairperson