

Woodlands Board
Meeting Minutes
August 7, 2010

Attendees: Ed Wohler, Joe Casey, Elsie Witt, Jessica Williams, Brian Rower, Kathy Master, Kay Ready, and Bill Swanson and Tom Johnson

McDonald's Update:

- Bill and Joe met with city planners to learn more about the new development application process, and the status of the proposed development of property at Citrus Ave. and Oak Grove Road by McDonald's Corp. City planners said that when an application is received they have 30 days to review it and respond. The city may send application back if it does not contain all needed elements which include:
- arborist review when trees will be removed, and they noted that city ordinance states only elected officials can give final approval for tree removal;
- adequate parking slots must meet requirement according to proposed use
- traffic and circulation study must be included.
- None of these elements were included and the application was returned.
- The developer will prepare a plan for which and how many trees will need to be removed. Bill estimated between 12 and 15 trees including large redwoods. This includes tree removal for joining the property to the adjacent parcel which has a covered parking garage with unused slots. The parking slots proposed in the developer's plan are not sufficient and even with the adjacent slots, would still not meet the requirement for 50 slots.
- The city will prepare a traffic and circulation study and bill the developer.
- Bill noted that the lot is not large enough to accommodate a large delivery truck, and such trucks are prohibited from parking in the street to make deliveries
- The planners also brought up odor and noise factors, which require neighbors within 300 feet of the site to be notified.
- This lot has a drive thru (formerly a bank used this), but the developer would still need to request a zoning change for the purpose of building a restaurant with a drive thru component.

Board Discussion:

- Ed said that he talked to the owner/manager of the Carl's Jr. franchise located in Citrus Center. He said that he was aware of the proposal for a fast food restaurant on this lot, and checked with the city. He was told that because of the zoning changes needed and other requirements, it was not worth pursuing, so he did not continue.
- Bill said that Planning District Zoning #15 would need to be changed for use of the land, a parcel zoning change would be for only ½ the parcel. In

- these matters, the city refers to their Master Plan (2008), which can only be changed by vote of the city council.
- Bill said that, fortunately we are at the beginning of this process. The process is with the Design Review commission which considers architectural details, appearance, and compatibility of the design for the area. Next it goes to the planning commission which is more concerned with legalities, such as requiring zoning changes which must go before the city council. After that it is sent back to the Planning Commission for final changes.
 - Ed said that at each step in the process, public comment must be offered.
 - Bill said that the process continues until plans are accepted. Then a Decision Meeting is held. The Board and neighbors need to be involved throughout the process, and especially be present at the Decision Meeting giving “meaningful comment (focus on what is relevant to the meeting).
 - Since Citrus Walk development, Woodlands Board has been included on the city planning commission email list.
 - No official notification will be sent to the public until the design review is complete and ready to go to the planning commission.
 - Joe said that Kish Rajan, our city council representative, has said he would stand with the Woodlands in the position that they take.
 - Ed said this site is not a great revenue producer for the city, and has been underutilized.
 - Bill said that the city in trying to increase their revenue base and wants to see the downtown McDonalds and two adjoining businesses relocated, so the parcels can offer high density development. For the Citrus & Oak Grove site, the property use may not be pre-determined, because the city has many concerns. Bill believes that they will honor the review process.
 - Ed added that an environmental review is written into the General Plan, and if the developer wants changes, it involves a city council vote.
 - This initial study is the first of three levels in the process and is the least expensive to prepare.
 - When Board members or neighbors attend a meeting, they should ask city for what you know they should do. Our position when we give it should focus on the land use relevant to the application and changes that are needed in the zoning.
 - Joe said he senses that there are hurdles to overcome to meet city requirements. He said that a representative of McDonalds has contacted him and asked for a meeting with the Woodlands Board.
 - Bill reminded us that we should consider all opinions; not be ‘obstructionists’ in making demands before we will accept this development. Stay with the process and take concerns to the city as they work through their process.

Board Action:

- Board will continue to follow the process, collect information and give feedback

- Board is not ready to take a position, and will set up a community meeting in mid- or late September to hear more concerns. The city representatives should be invited to give information on the proposed development
- Communication is key at this point
- We will not meet with developers at this time
- Other concerns voiced by Tom were that if we do not collect membership dues, how do we define our constituents? Is the Board representation of the neighborhood valid?
- Ed said that each year there is a motion that member dues which are nominal will be waived for the year.
- Ed asked Board to check their calendars and send him dates that we would be available to attend a neighborhood meeting, and he will check on a meeting space.
- Bill said that we as individuals can write letters to the city council voicing any concerns
- Ed asked that we send copies of our newsletter with articles about the proposed development to the city council members
- Brian asked that an article/response be posted on the website for all those who signed up for email contact to keep them informed.
- Ed said that an article will be prepared for the September issue and can be also sent to email list before it is published in the newsletter.

Respectfully submitted,

Elsie Witt, Secretary