

**MINUTES OF THE
TUPELO PLANNING COMMITTEE
OCTOBER REGULAR MEETING
Monday, October 3, 2022
6:00 PM Council Chambers**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Pam Hadley called the meeting to order. Committee members Scott Davis, Patti Thompson, Leslie Mart, Chair Pam Hadley, Mark Williams and Bentley Nolan and Lindsey Leake were present. Gus Hildenbrand was absent. Staff members present included Director of Development Services Tanner Newman, City Planner Jenny Savely, and Zoning Administrator Russ Wilson. Chair Hadley asked Lindsey Leake to open with a prayer and Patti Thompson to lead the pledge. Chair Hadley then presented an opening statement of the committee purpose and reviewed how the committee would conduct its business. The Staff and Committee were then asked to introduce themselves and did so.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Scott Davis made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2022 Planning Committee Meeting. Seconded by Mark Williams and passed unanimously. Hadley then opened the regular session section of the meeting.

REPORT ON COUNCIL ACTIONS

City Planner Jenny Savely reported that the City Council had accepted last month's minutes, but TA22-02 remains in legal review. Additionally the Rezoning RZ22-03 and Text Amendments TA22-03 for the Mixed Use Downtown Zoning District and the Downtown Overlay will be voted on at tomorrow (10/4) night's City Council meeting.

Old Business - None

NEW BUSINESS

COMP22-12 Compatible Use Appeal Hearing – RV Park Campground in Southern Heights Neighborhood that had been postponed from the September 12th meeting until the October 3, 2022 Planning Committee Meeting at the request of the applicant and his legal counsel.

City Planner Savely gave the staff analysis for this proposal. An RV Park Campground is a Use by Compatibility in the MDR Zoning District and was denied at an August 18th, 2022 compatibility hearing due to not being in compliance with the criteria required in Section 12.2.2 of the Development Code. This denial has been appealed to the Planning Committee with an action requested to either uphold the decision to deny, or to approve the applicant's appeal to allow the proposed project to go forward. Hadley asked the applicant to come forward to explain their proposed activity.

Jeremie Richardson, 932 Williams Street, came forward and passed out some materials. He said they were proposing an RV park with 32 slips for an "RV Resort". There is only one other RV Park in Tupelo, The Campgrounds at Barnes Crossing (CBC) which was established in 2004. It is north of town and used for comparison. CBS is located adjacent to The Pines apartments which has over 200 units put in in 2009. There are 136 units at Trace Ridge put in in 1995, so having an RV Park near residents, when asking them, they haven't had any violence, no issues from the RV goers to the apartment residents. We'd like to do a presentation video now showing the way of life living how it has changed in 50 years. There are people who

have RVs, that's their way of life, they like to vacation, they travel, they carry their kids, they home school, between the internet and technology, it's allowed for parents to have more time with their children, this is just a different way of life, and I'd just like to ask that if you haven't looked up an RV Resort on line, this is going to give you a little bit of an idea of what those consist of. There's also some pictures outside on the table of some of the images you may see here, plus some files of some people that live in an RV, they travel and they tell their story. These are the same type of residents we would have at this RV Resort, which would have a two-week maximum stay. I believe there has been some confusion on the parcel that was proposed. Part of that parcel is where we are proposing to do eight family homes on a two acre parcel there by Parish Street. It was shown up on the map that was sent out, there was some confusion that there's going to be an RV Park in someone's front yard, and that's quite the contrary, this would adjoin my property, this would be in my backyard, adjoins Theron Nichols Park, the City Tree Farm on the North Side. There's about 18-20 homes that adjoin our property, possibly impacted by the RV Park. On the south side there's a hill almost as large as a telephone pole, so no one driving by would see any of the RVs. So if we can start the presentation please.

(Video Presentation Plays)

(Richardson continued his presentation after completion of the video) One of the things not mentioned is the fact we'll have check in reservations online, cameras and 24-hour security on premises. That's one thing that the other RV Park had mentioned to me was that they actually have a police officer that stays there which possibly helps cut down on crime, but anyway in five years, they haven't had any crimes. Thank you for your time and I'll be happy to answer any questions.

Hadley then opened the floor for public comments, giving speakers a three minute time limit.

Speakers Included:

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| Victoria Ashby, 1011 Evelyn Drive | Against the location of an RV Park in her Southern Heights neighborhood citing a lack of demand at nearby RV capable facilities |
| Laverne Agnew, 3289-B S Green Street | Against the location due to concern for her teenage grandchildren |
| Margaret Gann, 925 Parish Street | Against the location. After working at Natchez Trace Parkway headquarters for many years, familiar with RV travelers and thinks that a residential neighborhood is not what they are looking for, too close to a school and the roads can't handle larger vehicles |
| Stephanie Stanfield, 1020 Evelyn Drive | Against the RV Park. Mother of 5, worried about its impact on school traffic, walking path cut-off by the proposed facility, which would not be secure |
| Evan Walton, 1016 Evelyn Drive | Against the project. Statistically, crime can't help but increase. Doesn't want strangers in his backyard. Residential area is not the place for an RV Park |
| Charles Moore, President of SHNA | Against this as not in harmony with the community. Not a good comparison with the Campgrounds at Barnes Crossing with their traffic off the Trace |
| Gwendolyn Ewing, 1017 Terry Road | Votes "NO" for the RV Park |
| Rosie Jones, 1119 Evelyn Drive | Also against this due to proximity to school. Worried about safety of kids in the neighborhood |
| Janie Clanton, 2841 Jim Street | Against the RV Park due to the uncertainty of strangers. |
| Mary Bradley, 2984 Jim Street | I vote "NO" on the RV Park. |
| Kentrell Boyd, 3804 S Green | Business Owner – as a former law enforcement officer, supports the project since there is plenty of security to address the fears of fellow residents, with online registrations, and 24 hour security. |
| Sherry Thompson Gill, Mitchell Road | This proposed project will entirely change this area where children will not be safe and votes "NO" to this project. |
| Randy Little, 2301 Wilemon | After 52 years of truck driving experience, he thinks folks are wrong about RVers. He has no problem at all with the proposed project. |

- Earline Pulliam, 3338 Shonda Circle** Strongly objects to this idea due to it being a residential single family neighborhood, reduced property values, more crime, strangers present, safety of children, the elderly and the unknown of who is there, street capacity and maintenance.
- Andrea Herrington, 1417 Baker Street** For the project. The security features will prevent problems and enhance the safety of the neighborhood, plus the tax revenue will help build the area. Access control will keep it safe and secure.
- Tommy Copeland, 3222 Shonda Circle** 34 year resident of this neighborhood, against this project in a residential neighborhood. There is plenty of land elsewhere more appropriate.
- Zeno Pulliam, 3338 Shonda Circle** Against this RV Park in a quiet residential area. I vote NO
- Gracie Kohlheim, 2866 Jim Street** On behalf of her neighbors and senior citizens, I vote NO

Chair Hadley then asked the applicant to come forward to address these concerns. Mr. Richardson brought his surveyor, Rex Smith with him. Richardson said they had addressed most of the concerns and pointed out there are more in support of the project that are not present. Rex Smith addressed the committee. He said that his remarks does not really answer the committee's concerns, but that the property lends itself very well to the proposed use. Smith said he was an RVer himself and that most of the people coming to this RV Park would be people who are traveling. Things have changed so much since Covid. RV spots are sometimes hard to find, and are needed. So many people work from home and their RV now, and with Tupelo being the Birthplace of Elvis, they'll want to come here for that. We have some nice State Parks here but they are not set up with sewer hookups. This will bring people in to stay for a while. When Smith goes RVing, he leaves his bike, his grill and all his stuff out in the open when he goes hiking and is not worried that it will be there when he returns. Generally its good people, so it should not be a concern. As far as the project, there's not a lot of land disturbance required. The drainage will be easy to handle with no issues. Sewer looks good. Water looks good. The infrastructure is compatible with what's there.

Hadley then closed the public input portion of the hearing, and then opened it up to the committee's questions. Mark Williams said he was an RVer and appreciated what Mr. Richardson was trying to do. However, he has some questions. Williams asked if what he had heard tonight any different from what he has heard previously? Richardson said when he goes out and shows residents a map and explains the homes, he has over 80 signatures on his petition who have no issues with this being in their neighborhood. Williams said he assumed that there was at least an equal number opposed to it also. Richardson said possibly, yes. Williams said he looked over the maps, saw the video and asked what Richardson thought makes this location a destination for travelers. Richardson said the City of Tupelo. Williams asked if Richardson anticipated these travelers having a car or a motorcycle with them. Richardson said that was possible. Williams said his experience had been that people park but don't pull the RV in and out daily, so this location in the City, while the City has a lot of attributes he was not sure this location is conducive to this type of use unless they are bringing cars and motorcycles in that would make the location appealing to these travelers. Williams asked if there was any research on that. Richardson said they limited this site to a capacity of 34, after looking at other location, comparing it to others and thought that was a good size. Everyone would not be arriving or leaving at the same time so it shouldn't add a tremendous amount of traffic. Williams said he thought the size would not be conducive to trailering cars. Richardson said the slips would be 60 feet in depth. Williams also asked for details on the proposed single family housing section of the project. Richardson replied that there are two acres near Parish that can be subdivided into 8 home lots. Williams said he could appreciate the proposal, but asked if there was any real commitment from Richardson as a developer or from any builder that anytime in the near future that could be used for single family. Richardson said that he was prepared within the first week to put in an application to develop the first home on that two acre tract. Williams asked what research shows that putting in a traditional 1-4 family residential development spurs additional 1-4 family housing growth. Richardson said there were two other lots on Wilemon that would also have homes, for a total of 10 home lots around the parcel, which Richardson thinks just having a new business in the area would build up

that area. There's a lot of crime in that area, gunshots over the last week, at the Park. More activities in that area should help that area.

Hadley asked if any other member of the Committee had any questions. Hearing none, Hadley said she did have a question about the minimum two week maximum stay, is that correct because that seems like a lot more in and out traffic, especially with the school being right there. Richardson said he was flexible with how long of a stay is allowed – State law requires a maximum of 30 days for a campground type facility, which is what the Campground at Barnes Crossing allows. He thought people stayed too long at the RV resorts so he said he would be flexible and only allow a two week stay if that made people feel better about it. But with 34 slips, they would not all come and leave at the same time, never a caravan of 30 RVs coming and going every day. Mark Williams said he did have one other question. Williams asked Richardson if he had looked for, prior to tonight, for any alternative locations for this RV Resort. Richardson said yes, and Williams asked for details in case this didn't pass. Richardson said there were other properties along the highway, but they are mostly due to City and County regulations might have more restrictions and if not located in the City, Tupelo would be missing out, this is an option to staying in a hotel when coming for a concert, a little weekend getaway or other type trip. Williams thanked Richardson for trying to bring this into Tupelo, but said that he was one of those that just didn't think this was the right fit for that location.

Leslie Mart asked about the dashed lines on the map of the area and asked for an explanation of those. Zoning Administrator Wilson explained that those were previous lot lines from 60-70 years ago when the property as originally platted as small lots. Today a lot of deeds may have combined 4 or 5 of these smaller lots into larger lots, but basically, they are just older lot lines that are shown in today's technology because they are still there, but not really used except to describe the property. Surveyor Rex Smith said that's exactly what it is, there's an old subdivision plat there which has never been amended.

Hadley then asked if there was any other discussion. Mart asked wouldn't Mr. Richardson have to submit for a subdivision for the 8 lots which look smaller than the adjacent lots in the area. Savely said that would require a subdivision application. Hadley then said she would entertain a motion. Scott Davis made a motion to deny the appeal of the Compatible Use. Leslie Mart seconded the motion. Patti Thompson stated that she would abstain since her property abuts the proposed RV Resort property. Those voting in favor of denying the appeal included, Mark Williams, Bentley Nolan, Pam Hadley, Leslie Mart, Scott Davis and Lindsey Leake, which was unanimous for denial from all members present, with one abstaining being Patti Thompson.

Hadley asked Savely to explain next steps to the applicant. Savely said Mr. Richardson has three days to appeal the Planning Committee's decision with the City Council's Clerk if he chooses to do so. Otherwise the vote of the Committee stands unless it is appealed by the applicant.

Hadley stated that FLEXVAR22-01 had been rescheduled to November 7th per request of the applicant. The next scheduled meeting of the Planning Committee will be 6PM on Monday November 7th, with the Work Session moved up a week to October 24th due to Halloween. Bentley Nolan made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Patti Thompson and the meeting adjourned.