



**APPROVED**

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2015  
CITY OF ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS**

The Rock Island Planning Commission held its regularly scheduled meeting in the City Hall Council Chambers at 1528 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Rock Island, Illinois. The meeting was called to order by Chairman David Levin at 5:28 PM. Present were Commissioners Michael Creger, Andrew Dasso, Bruce Harding, Ted Johnson, David Levin, Jason Lopez, Norm Moline and Berlinda Tyler-Jamison. Commissioner Bruce Peterson arrived at approximately 5:31 PM. Commissioners Kevin Nolan and Lorian Swanson were absent. Also in attendance were Alan Fries, Ben Griffith and City Attorney Dave Morrison.

**AN ORDER APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 3, 2014 MEETING**

The Commission considered the matter of approval of the minutes of the December 3, 2014 meeting. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Lopez made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Creger seconded the motion and the Commissioners unanimously approved said minutes.

**PROCEDURAL EXPLANATION**

Chairman Levin provided a brief explanation of the public hearing procedures for the benefit of the Planning Commissioners and those in attendance. He stated there was one public hearing with one interested party registered with the City Clerk's Office for Public Hearing #2014-10.

**PUBLIC HEARING #2014-10: REQUEST FROM RAJU PENMATCHA FOR A REZONING FROM R-1 (ONE FAMILY RESIDENCE) DISTRICT TO PUD (PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT) DISTRICT FOR A PROPERTY TO BE CONSIDERED FOR ANNEXATION AT APPROXIMATELY 8900 ROCK ISLAND PARKWAY**

Next there came before the Planning Commission Public Hearing #2014-10: a request for a rezoning from R-1 to PUD for a 60-acre parcel to be considered for annexation at approximately 8900 Rock Island Parkway. Chairman Levin asked Mr. Fries to present the request. Mr. Fries stated that Planning staff had received several calls regarding the rezoning request and that there were one interested party registered with the City Clerk's Office. He also reported that a petition of opposition with 19 signatures had been provided to Planning staff just before the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Fries then provided a brief overview of the rezoning request, describing the physical

characteristics of the site, critiquing the conceptual site plan and reviewing the staff report. Mr. Fries explained the difference between B-4 and PUD zoning, and the steps involved with approval of a PUD, including a phased development such as the one proposed by the applicant.

Commissioner Moline asked about a current traffic study for the site, entrances and exits located on a curve and whether or not the materials being excavated would be carried off-site or dumped into the ravines. He stated that the Conservation Neighborhood future land use map designation for the site was intended to conserve and preserve the site in its natural state.

Commissioner Johnson stated that he had missed a couple of meetings when the Comprehensive Plan was under development and could not recall the subject property being specifically discussed. He also noted that there was no residential component of the proposed plan and questioned whether a PUD was a better approach.

Commissioner Lopez noted that there was commercially-zoned property located approximately 300 feet to the north and that Martin Equipment Company was located to the northeast.

Mr. Raju Penmatcha of 9311 Turkey Hollow Road in Taylor Ridge stepped up to the podium. He explained that the property was located in the County and that in order to develop it, he would need to grade and fill portions of the site, noting that one part of the site was fairly level with the Parkway but most of it was very steep, almost 30 feet above the roadway. He said that he had been contacted by several area contractors seeking fill dirt for various projects and that he had already obtained his State permits for the site and that the State had no environmental concerns at the site. Mr. Penmatcha explained in detail how he planned to grade the site and described the surrounding properties contiguous to his site.

Commissioner Moline asked if any buildings were proposed to be located on areas of fill and what was proposed for the excavated fill. Mr. Penmatcha answered that buildings would have the proper footings and that several area contractors had contacted him about purchasing fill dirt, but he had waited until he had the proper permits from the state and had not yet sold any.

Hearing no other questions, Chairman Levin asked Mr. Bonsall, the only interested party registered with the City Clerk, to step forward.

Mr. Duane Bonsall of 8809 Highland Court stepped up to the podium. He stated that most of his concerns were stated at the previous meeting and listed in the meeting minutes the Planning Commissioners had just approved. He stated that the applicant's stormwater would end up in his association's retention pond and others would be speaking about it. He said he had moved to the area to have open space and the site looked over-developed on the plan, whether it's B-4 or PUD.

Chairman Levin reminded Mr. Bonsall that he was registered as an interested party and could cross examine the applicant.

Commissioner Tyler-Jamison confirmed that Mr. Bonsall's primary concerns were noise, traffic and drainage and that he and the neighbors did not want to look across the Parkway and see a big box store.

Commissioner Creger pointed out that Mr. Bonsall's street also accessed the Parkway in a curve and asked him if he had any issues or concerns getting in and out. Mr. Bonsall answered that yes, he was very cautious when he drove, but he knew that when he moved there.

Hearing no further questions from Mr. Bonsall or the Planning Commissioners, Chairman Levin asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak in favor of the rezoning request. Hearing none, he asked those in opposition to step forward, reminding them to please state their name and address for the record and to try and not be repetitive.

Pete Doyle of 9008 Highland Drive referenced the City's Comprehensive Plan and the inadequacies of the proposed site plan, citing the same concerns as Mr. Bonsall and others had at the previous meeting.

Christopher Disch of 3926 - 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue expressed concerns with runoff from the ravines, light pollution, blocking of views and concerns about safety and security, asking the Planning Commission to recommend denial to the City Council.

Jim Hass of 26 Chippiannock Place with HMV Developers, developers of Highland Court and Highland Drive, stated that he didn't think the proposed development would be complimentary to other development in the area or with the City's Comprehensive Plan. He stated that they still had lots to sell in their development and were concerned they might not be able to sell them if the rezoning was approved.

Commissioner Peterson asked Mr. Hass how the proposed development would affect property values and whether it would devalue other residential properties. Mr. Hass said he was not an appraiser but felt that it would devalue residential properties in the area. Commissioner Peterson asked Mr. Hass what he would like to see there. Mr. Hass answered that he would be comfortable with residential development at the site. Commissioner Peterson asked if approval of the rezoning would be a danger to future development in the area and Mr. Hass answered "yes, definitely."

Commissioner Lopez asked Mr. Hass if he was given assurances by anyone at the City at the time he developed Highland Court that there would be no commercial development in the area and Mr. Hass answered that he had not.

Dennis Harden of 9001 Highland Court stated they built 6 years ago for retirement to a quiet, safe, comfortable area close to the city with no farm animals, adding that if they had wanted lights, traffic, noise, etc, they could have paid much less for a lower of quality of life, and that if the rezoning is allowed, their investment will be decreased.

Jodie White of 4118 - 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue West stated she had no problems with the gun club to the southwest, adding that she wouldn't have any issue if the site was developed as residential and didn't think any of the neighbors across the Parkway would have any issues either.

Gerald Young of 4106 – 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue West expressed concerns about the condition of the site, that it was great for picking mushrooms and had lots of wildlife, adding that it didn't make any sense to put anything on the site other than upscale businesses and nice homes.

Rhonda Disch of 3926 - 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue West, expressed concerns regarding the effects on well water and possibly diminished structural integrity of the homes located on 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue West.

Hearing no other citizen comments, Chairman Levin asked Mr. Penmatcha if he wanted to respond to the comments. Mr. Penmatcha stepped up to the podium and stated that the drainage problem Mr. Bonsall discussed should not be a concern to the people living on Highland Court because of the way the highway drainage was designed and built and that his drainage calculations were within the requirements of the City's stormwater regulations. He also discussed the grading and drainage plan for the site, traffic engineering requirements for the roadway, development plans for building out the site and referenced other developments in the area, most of which have not been completely built out.

Chairman Levin asked Mr. Bonsall if he wished to cross-examine the applicant. Mr. Bonsall stated he was concerned about noise and traffic in the area and did not want to see a big box store when he looked out his door. Mr. Penmatcha answered that there was already noise and traffic due to the Parkway being located there and that it could be mitigated in the same way as it was in the Highland Court development, with a berm and dense landscaping.

Commissioner Moline stated that he wasn't against development but that it should be in the correct location and asked Mr. Penmatcha if he had attended any of the Comprehensive Plan public hearings or open houses. Mr. Penmatcha answered that he had and that the site had been identified as an office campus in an earlier plan.

Hearing no further questions from the Planning Commissioners or members of the public, Chairman Levin closed the public hearing. Mr. Fries discussed the petition of opposition and where the signatories lived.

Chairman Levin stated that as a commercial realtor working with brokers and developers to bring development to the community, he would have to vote "no" on the rezoning and that although Mr. Penmatcha has lofty goals, his plan doesn't follow the Comprehensive Plan, and was concerned that there were no retailers in place to go into the development.

Commissioner Tyler-Jamison stated that she agreed with Chairman Levin; that although there is a strong desire to locate retail within the City of Rock Island, this proposal was inconsistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan. She stated she heard the concerns of the community members about locating a large, commercial development with big boxes so close to the residents.

Commissioner Lopez stated the Comprehensive Plan is a dream and that it doesn't look at every individual lot, likening the neighbors' complaints to those of his own about a school in his neighborhood that was there before he bought his house.

Commissioner Dasso asked if the applicant would be required to provide detailed engineered drawings every time he went before the Planning Commission with each phase of development. Mr. Fries answered that he would.

Commissioner Moline stated that he was going to vote against it, adding that if any of the Commissioners walked the site, none of them would be in favor of the proposed development. Commissioner Moline made a motion to deny the rezoning request and Commissioner Creger seconded the motion. The Commissioners voted 7—2 (Dasso and Lopez) to recommend denial of the rezoning request.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Lopez reminded everyone that with the cold weather, the local schools would be sending out calls to collect coats, hats, gloves and scarves for local area children and urged everyone to donate.

Mr. Griffith stated that the Planning Office had received no public hearing requests for the February 4<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting and that the deadline for non-advertised items wasn't until the following week. Mr. Griffith stated that he had placed copies of the 2015 meeting schedule and also copies of Bi-State's APA Audio Conferences for the upcoming year. He stated that most Commissioners should be receiving e-mail notices from Bi-State and to be sure and RSVP with either Bi-State or Planning staff for any upcoming events. Mr. Griffith concluded by asking the Commissioners to be mindful of any *ex parte* communications and to contact the Planning Office with any questions regarding any items on upcoming agendas.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no other business, Chairman Levin asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Harding made a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:05 PM, which was duly seconded by Commissioner Johnson. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission is Wednesday, February 4, 2015 at 5:30 PM in the City Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Griffith". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ben Griffith, AICP, Secretary