

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
Austin, Texas

Special Meeting -- April 19, 1960

The meeting of the Commission was called to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Room, Municipal Building.

Present

S. P. Kinser, Vice-Chairman
Marvin B. Braswell
Howard E. Brunson
W. Sale Lewis
Emil Spillmann

Absent

D. B. Barrow, Chairman
Carl A. Johnson
H. F. Kuehne
Doak Rainey

Also Present

Hoyle M. Osborne, Director of Planning
E. N. Stevens, Chief, Plan Administration

ZONING

C14-60-10 Original Zoning: 1960

Area 6: Allandale Terrace, Section 1
Area 7: Allandale Park, Sections 3 and 4
Area 8: Northtowne, Section 1
Area 9: Wooten Park, Sections 3, 4 and 5
Area 10: Pt. St. Anthony Oaks, Sections 1 and 2
Area 11: 1.38 acres south of E. Powell La., N. of Lola Dr.
Area 12: 3.39 acres N. of Oertli La., E. of Georgian Dr.
Area 13: Highland Hills, Section 5, Phase 3
Area 14: 3.58 acres on Mt. Barker Drive
Area 15: 5.00 acres N. of Bolm Rd., W. of Gardner Rd.
Area 16: 8.78 acres E. of South Lamar, S. of Westrock Dr.

The Commission first considered Areas 6 through 14 which the staff recommended for "A" Residence and First Height and Area because they were either residential subdivisions, some partially developed, and undeveloped land. The Commission therefore unanimously

VOTED: To recommend that "A" Residence and First Height and Area be established as Original Zoning for the following areas:

Area 6: Allandale Terrace, Section 1
Area 7: Allandale Park, Sections 3 and 4
Area 8: Northtowne, Section 1
Area 9: Wooten Park, Sections 3, 4 and 5
Area 10: Pt. St. Anthony Oaks, Sections 1 and 2
Area 11: 1.38 acres S. of E. Powell La., N. of Lola Dr.
Area 12: 3.39 acres N. of Oertli La., E. of Georgian Dr.
Area 13: Highland Hills, Section 5, Phase 3
Area 14: 3.58 acres on Mt. Barker Drive

C14-60-10 Original Zoning: 1960--contd.

Area 15 was then considered and the following information was presented by the staff:

1. This is a 5-acre tract with a frontage of about 268 feet on Bolm Road. The Texas Industrial Laundry had an option on the property and first discussed with the City Council about the middle of March the question of annexation and zoning. A request for annexation was filed and the Council for that reason referred this matter to the Commission for a recommendation so that the annexation and zoning could be considered at the same time. The Council had suggested that the property be given a "C" Commercial classification as Original Zoning and Mr. Sam West (realtor) filed an application on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Norman T. Childers for this type of zoning which would permit the laundry as proposed.
2. Bolm Road is in the process of being widened and it will be necessary to acquire about 7 feet from the front of this tract. Gardner Road is also proposed for widening and it may be necessary to acquire a part of this tract at the southeast corner where it abuts Gardner Road. Right-of-way necessary for the widening of both streets would consist of approximately 4500 square feet of property.

Mr. Lewis said he had been informed that this proposed laundry business would employ about 100 people. The Commission noted that the Austin Development Plan recommends that this entire area be zoned industrial and concluded that, if the necessary right-of-way is made available for the widening of Bolm Road and Gardner Road, the "C" Commercial zoning would be a suitable zoning. It was therefore unanimously

VOTED: To recommend that "C" Commercial and First Height and Area be established as Original Zoning for Area 15, being 5.00 acres north of Bolm Road and west of Gardner Road, with the understanding that the applicants will file a letter indicating their willingness to make available the necessary land for widening Bolm Road and Gardner Road when the City deems it necessary.

The Commission then discussed the proper zoning for Area 16. The staff reported that zoning and annexation of this area will also be considered at the same time by the City Council. It was explained that this property is adjoining and extends back of the Erlich Lumber Company, with a frontage of about 217 feet on South Lamar Boulevard and that, while the letter filed on the designation requested, previous discussions were regarding "GR" General Retail. It is proposed to establish a modern mobile home park on the property. The staff further reported that this property is across the street from but does not adjoin property within the city limits to the west, but does tie to the city limits at the southeast corner of this tract. The staff explained that property along South Lamar in this area is now zoned Sixth Height and Area.

C14-60-10 Original Zoning: 1960--contd.

The Commission felt that "GR" General Retail would be the proper zoning in relation to surrounding zoning and development but thought that the property between this and the city limits should also be annexed. The staff explained that it could not be done at the same time but would require further legal notice. The Commission then unanimously

VOTED: To recommend that "GR" General Retail and Sixth Height and Area be established as Original Zoning for this property.

It was further unanimously

VOTED: To recommend to the City Council that the property surrounding this tract and located between this and the city limits be annexed to the city.

OTHER BUSINESS

C10-60-1(f) STREET ABANDONMENT
Bridle Path E. of Scenic Dr.

The Director reported that since previous consideration by the Commission of a request to close a portion of Bridle Path east of Scenic Drive, the matter of a possible cul-de-sac at the end of the alley had been presented. He said this had been discussed with the Director of Public Works who had informed him that this would be quite expensive. He explained that it will be necessary to obtain some right-of-way across the front portion of this property and probably to remove some of the existing retaining wall to improve visibility at this intersection, whether or not Bridle Path is closed. He said the cul-de-sac would be perfectly acceptable but he felt the cost to the City would be somewhat higher than the City could afford to spend, and if Bridle Path is left open there will be a rather nominal additional cost to the City. Since Mr. Randle (attorney) could not be present at this meeting, Mr. Osborne had suggested that this matter be postponed to the regular meeting of the Commission.

In response to a question from the Commission regarding consideration of this abandonment request in view of the possible legal problems involved, Mr. Osborne reported that Mr. Fowler is of the opinion that the Commission should consider the request from a planning standpoint as to whether or not it is good planning to leave the street open rather than from a legal standpoint.

The Commission considered the above information but felt that further time is needed to enable members of the Commission to visit the site. It was then

VOTED: To DEFER action on this request until the next regular meeting of the Commission and to instruct the staff to include this on the agenda for the zoning inspection field trip.

C2-53-4 ZONING ORDINANCE: Interim Revisions

The Director reported that a trampoline center has been installed in connection with the development of the shopping center at Briarcliff and Berkman Drive, the use consisting of twelve holes in the ground with trampolines stretched across the holes where the children pay for the use of the trampolines. He said this shopping center is in a "GR" General Retail District and trampolines could be sold but the admission charge for the use here would change the character of the use to an amusement center exclusively limited to the children. This use is not permitted in a General Retail zone but under "C" Commercial there is a general provision covering all types of amusement centers. He explained that this matter came before the Building Inspector and the City Council and has been referred to the Commission for study of an adjustment in the Ordinance. He suggested that the City Council consider a possible amendment to the Ordinance, probably under Item 36(a), to permit trampolines and other play equipment for children.

The Commission discussed this possible amendment and felt that the trampoline center as operated in this shopping center would not be objectionable but that it should be limited to trampolines only since a full-scale amusement center, even one designed for children, would be undesirable. The Commission therefore

VOTED: To request the City Attorney to prepare an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate under uses permitted in "GR" General Retail the use of trampolines with such restrictions as he deems necessary.

R1270 LOCATION OF POST OFFICE-FEDERAL BUILDING

Mr. Kinser reported that he, Mr. Barrow, Mr. Lewis, and Mr. Osborne, had been to Dallas to talk with the General Services Administration and had learned that they plan to close bids on the building April 22, 1960, and will consider other locations in addition to the one on West 12th Street. They will have only a few parking spaces available, probably in the basement, for some of the top officials but could not consider more land than just that needed for the building. The GSA is not interested in incoming mail to the Post Office but only in getting the small trucks from the main office out to the sub-stations. They said 70 per cent of the mail is handled by truck and 30 per cent by rail. They are not interested in any location in the Capital area and do not want to locate on the Interregional Highway.

Mr. Kinser also reported that he had met with the Real Estate Board this afternoon and they had three locations to recommend in the downtown area.

Mr. H. M. Simmons (Coleman, Placek, Engelman, Architects) presented a plan for locating a "Federal Center" between Lavaca and Colorado, 15th and 17th Streets, which is a two-block area, with the possibility of a master plan that would include the other two blocks to the east. This plan also included a Capitol Parkway as an extension of University Avenue to create an ideal

RL270 Location of Post Office-Federal Building--contd.

north-south traffic flow into this area, with a traffic circle at the proposed building site as a point of interest between the University and the Capitol and probably including a memorial to the old trail drivers. Also, this is an ideal location with respect to east-west traffic flow. 15th Street already connects with the Expressway and is wide enough for a six-lane thru-way. The proposal would be to connect 15th Street with Enfield Road by an overpass over Lamar Boulevard and connecting with Enfield Road at Windsor Road. Lamar Boulevard and Shoal Creek Boulevard are close enough together to make an economical bridge and Shoal Creek Boulevard rises in such a manner that it would provide ideal access to the Parkway, then it would continue out Enfield Road to the Missouri-Pacific Boulevard.

Mr. Simmons said he discussed this plan with the State Building Committee who could shift the location of their future building to provide the necessary right-of-way for the Parkway. He felt that the State would provide the necessary right-of-way. But the main feature is the possibility of traffic flow in both directions. This area is becoming a semi-blighted area with buildings which were built at the turn of the century and it would be possible to use some of these blocks for parking for some of the 1500 employees. It would be possible to have drive-in windows here and it would even be possible to get your mail out of boxes from the drive-in window area.

The Commission discussed the possible locations and Mr. Braswell suggested that the location be confined to the area between Lavaca and San Jacinto Boulevard, and 1st and 3rd Streets, to add incentive to other development in an area which is not now showing a great deal of progress. No action was taken on the matter.

C9-60-1 RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

The Director reported that Mr. Tom Perkins and Mr. Ed St. John of the Chamber of Commerce had contacted him and would like to present some recommendations from the Highland Lakes Committee. Mrs. Fagan Dickson, member of the Parks and Recreation Board, was also present.

Mr. St. John (Director of the Chamber of Commerce): Recommendations that the Chamber of Commerce have to make are not the Chamber of Commerce recommendations but a coordination of ideas that has been brought about by some 2½ years of study, meeting with the various interested people, together with the members of our Chamber of Commerce. I think we have met with practically every interested organization except the Navigation Board. We could never arrange a meeting convenient to both groups there. The thing that we were primarily concerned with was cashing in on the economic value of this lake by virtue of the fact that it is in practically the downtown area, particularly having the Interregional bridge crossing which carries an average of 15,000 cars per day. We have talked to Mr. Marion Toole of the Game and Fish Commission and he tells us that the lake will be, and they will see to it that it will be, one of the finest fishing areas in this part of Texas. It

C9-60-1 Riverfront Development--contd.

is astounding to hear a statement like that where everybody can go fish -- walking and riding bicycles or otherwise -- but the thing that the Recreation and Tourist Department of the Chamber of Commerce is concerned with is stopping some of that 15,000 people that cross there, not just for Austin but to get them to go and look at the entire lake chain.

We hope we can set up a tourist information center there and we solicited the cooperation of the Highway Department and asked that they consider an in-state tourist information center. They did not say they would or would not but at least we got an encouraging reception. The Chamber of Commerce Highland Lakes Committee has set up a tourist center for this summer where we can direct people up to the lakes. That means they will spend a little time and money in this area. The Chamber of Commerce is interested in industry and I think we all know that the State of Florida started out to attract and advertise for tourists, and before they realized it they were becoming an industrial state, because they attracted the industrialists and they located plants there. But actually Florida has realized more through its efforts on behalf of industry than it has on behalf of tourists. Maybe without realizing it, if we approach the tourist angle we might attract industry. I think the Commission has a list of the recommendations that the Chamber of Commerce Highland Lakes Committee has suggested. This was not strictly recommendations of members of this committee but it was established after consultation and conferences with many organizations and City boards as well.

Mr. Perkins (President, National Skiers Association): We have had meetings with the Austin Boat Club, Austin Ski Club, and the Austin Marines Club. We have met with a number of groups who would be primarily interested in the use of the lake. Starting out with the Austin Ski Club with a membership of approximately 60, we discussed this. It was decided by that particular group, taking in the recommendations of the Committee, that the lake should definitely be limited with reference to horsepower, speed, and type of boats, but they felt that a definite area should be set aside for special events. We have been holding some of these events in the upper end of Lake Austin and they are very popular spectator sports, but that means that people must travel 30 miles or more to participate or see it. Any area in the middle of town would provide easy access for the spectators. This would eliminate general skiing on the lake. There are fishermen in this club and they think the lake should be primarily for that.

In the Highland Lakes Boat Club, this same feeling was expressed by most of them; you have people interested in general boating and skiing and some in boat racing. They felt that a definite control should be placed on the lake, and speed and horsepower limited, and that it should be primarily a fishing lake.

In meeting with the Central Marine Trades Association, made up of Austin marines, about two weeks ago Mr. St. John and I thoroughly discussed this problem with them. Their recommendation in the form of a motion was to

C9-60-1 Riverfront Development--contd.

adopt a recommendation by the Chamber of Commerce and they went along to say specifically the horsepower they would want to see on the lake, and that would be 18 horsepower limit. We asked them why they would use this figure. To some people it might seem large, but in recent years the trend in the purchase of fishing motors has changed considerably. The average fishing motor now will range from around 15 to 18 horsepower whereas a few years ago it might have been 5 or $7\frac{1}{2}$ but they have made the motors very light weight and also people are going to larger boats for safety. Where they used to use a 10-foot or 12-foot boat they use a 14-foot to 16-foot boat for fishing. In getting out into some of these larger lakes, they need this horsepower to carry their boats. They felt that if you imposed a horsepower limitation of 3 to 5 horsepower you would actually be eliminating a major portion of the people who would use the lake primarily for fishing, and I am sure you will have public hearings on that. That group will appear before you and offer their valid reasons. They also felt that the size of the boats and type should be limited and with the setting of 18 horsepower, speed limits be set, or provisions be made for prudent speed and enforcement of that horsepower.

Taking into consideration the recommendations of the boating trades associations, if the lake is going to be limited primarily to the use of fishermen, I think that within that group they would respect the rights of others and control the speed of their boats so that there would not be a hazard to canoes or small sail boats. My personal feeling is that it should be made available to as many people as possible and if we limit it to a smaller horsepower it would mean that a majority of the people who wanted to use it would have to go out and purchase additional motors. I think the 18 horsepower is sensible. If it is used with prudent speed, probably a limitation of 8 to 10 miles per hour, it would be compatible with the canoes and sail boats. The probable usable area would be from Lamar Bridge down to the dam and with that speed they could travel any part of the lake.

Mrs. Dickson: I would like to talk with you about the vision we have of the lake. We have given several years of thought and planning to our recommendations. We had a small board to work out our specific recommendations to you but I would like to explain first that the lake, from the Low Water Dam to Tom Miller Dam, is probably not more than six miles long. I understand that the mouth of Barton Creek is where the water levels out; so actually the new lake will only exist between Barton Creek to the new dam which will limit it to about four miles. At the City auditorium, it will be raised only six feet, so we are not dealing with a large body of water.

There are 5000 registered motor boats in the city of Austin. It would be very difficult to see which could take his motor boat to the lake and which could not. An 18-horsepower motor boat could certainly give a canoe a fit and an 18-horsepower motor on a 10-foot boat would be quite more than it would be on a 16-foot one, or with a different number of passengers. We think very strongly that the hazards of motor boating on the lake would be

C9-60-1 Riverfront Development--contd.

an extreme responsibility to the City and we have made a unanimous recommendation that we save this lake for the many people who have been cut off from the use of Lake Austin for the reasons of motor boats. The citizens in Austin will have approximately 2 miles to go to either lake from the average heart of the City. Why not give them a dual lake? Why not have one lake where we can have row boats, paddle boats, or canoes for fishing, or sail boats.

The small lake is going to be crossed the day it is opened by five bridges--the two dams and three bridges. There are one or two other bridges in the planning stage. We will have no backyard area to hide the unsightly parts. It is our feeling that this could be one of the most beautiful lakes in the United States if it is properly planned and zoned and kept for recreational type of use that the other lakes have denied the City of Austin. We still maintain that most people do not own boats but there are lots of people who would like to fish with cane poles and take a nice canoe ride. There is no speedometer on a motor boat and the operator cannot tell how fast he is going. It is hard for a policeman to tell. We think all of these headaches and hazards can be prevented if you can share with us our vision of a beautiful lake that can be maintained in a natural and beautiful state and serve equally as many people or perhaps more in a variety of recreational facilities as would be denied them with hazards of over-population of boats on this small lake area as is now at City Park. Most of these boats have trailers now to go up to the larger lakes. I think it would be a serious mistake to encourage them to go to a smaller lake.

Mr. Braswell: Mrs. Dickson, was your group opposed to powered public carriers such as excursion boats or water taxi?

Mrs. Dickson: Of course we have commended the Chamber of Commerce on their general recommendations on the lake. We disagree with them on this one particular decision. We think the decision you make on this will determine the development. The whole nature of the lake will be determined on this one decision, whether you will have gasoline service or oil reserves on the side of the lake to maintain and service motor boats or whether you are going to have small dock facilities for a few canoes or concessions for these little paddle boats. I think the decision should be made on whether or not there should be horsepower, not on the amount. 18 horsepower is a pretty fast boat.

On the excursion business, I think that might be one of the exceptions which we see might be needed. We are in favor of exceptional events and we think an area should be set aside for those cases. Special occasions could be set aside for that. An excursion boat could not go very far because the lake will be pretty shallow from the Barton Creek opening on to Tom Miller Dam.

Mr. Osborne: On the matter of rental, Mr. St. John, do you foresee enough usage for rentals that would be a possible operation for canoes or small boats?

C9-60-1 Riverfront Development--contd.

Mr. St. John: I think that is a difficult thing to prevent. We have not projected our thinking into that area. There is going to be some trial and error and I think that will be true and that will apply to motor boats. If they are not practical there I think they should be eliminated. But if you start out with a restriction that there will be no power boats of any size, how would you ever know if it would be practical or not? I think it will take a lot of thought and a lot of study. We feel this thing should be given a lot of thought and a lot of study. We feel this thing should be given a lot of thought before a public hearing is held on it and a decision is made.

Mr. Osborne: Do you think the lake offers a potential for rental service?

Mr. St. John: For the benefit of fishermen, yes. The point is that a concession stand is definitely going to have to be provided and I think if you could work it out and help maintain the concession which would in turn include boats, canoes, etc., you are going to have to consider that and I think the Committee felt that any revenue the City could derive to help maintain the concession stand and tourist information quarters should be considered.

Mr. Osborne: There will be a group feeling that there should be some motor boats based in part on the fact that there are so many boats larger than $2\frac{1}{2}$ horsepower. However, there are many people who do not have any boats and the question comes up that perhaps rental service may be the question.

Mr. St. John: We did not approach it from that standpoint.

Mr. Perkins: Such a proposal has one drawback. It is really expensive to maintain a rental boat and motor operation. You will find that most of your fishing camps and resorts have quite a few boats for rent but not motors. There is quite a maintenance problem on them and to make it economically feasible for them to rent would be almost prohibitive if you limited it to that.

Mrs. Dickson: One of the things that seemed to appeal to our group that we would think more about and offer it as an interesting point is that we would have anchors in the lake at various points and rafts, possibly for fishing. We thought it would be nice to have a raft where a family could go in the afternoon, to be anchored somewhere in the lake. There could be larger and smaller ones. I think a lot of the facilities to be used and enjoyed on this lake would depend on its being a quiet lake.

(Mr. Kinser thanked the people for their recommendations on this and left the meeting at 9:10 p.m. Mr. Braswell took the chair.)

C9-60-1 Riverfront Development--contd.

Mr. Osborne: Reviewed the request of the Commission that the ordinance amendment be prepared regarding setbacks and zoning.

Mr. Braswell: When we get into the zoning I think we should consider the minimum restrictions in controlling that lake. I don't think we should carry dictation too far since the City has control of about 80 per cent and we have only about 20 per cent of privately-owned property. I visualize as a possibility that there will be motels, apartments, perhaps overlooking the lake, restaurant facilities with open air dining areas, and I concur with Mrs. Dickson about the relaxation. It happens that this particular body of water has at least 10,000 people between 1st Street and the River and within one-half mile distance, that do not own boats and cannot afford boats but if facilities can be worked out for either public docks or privately-owned concessions where they could have an opportunity to go there and drop a pole and hook in the water, and in addition to that the strip parks along there, we consider it as a beautification practice.

Mr. Bascom Giles: We have a reasonably valuable piece of property and we would hate to be excluded from the lake by 100 feet. We are 20 feet above the water and if we had to get back 100 feet we would be unable to develop.

Mr. Braswell: We discussed this primarily for the flood plain. I think in your case where your level is already sufficiently above what will be the new level, that will be taken into consideration in the final recommendation. That would be taken care of by the flexibility of any ordinance which we would recommend. I believe I can summarize that what each member of the Commission has in mind is to assure the property owner the highest and best use of his land. The ordinance will be framed in such a manner that it will not create a financial hardship.

Mr. St. John: The Scottish Rite has recently purchased 18 acres east of the Interregional and the City has asked for an overflow easement on this property. I was wondering if it was a general practice.

Mr. Osborne: We are requiring these easements for what would be normally flooded but not for flooding conditions. That will not be the responsibility of the City.

C10-60-1 EASEMENT ABANDONMENT

Windsor Park III, Sec. 3 and 4

It was reported by the Director that the Marvin Turner Engineers are requesting the vacation of an easement which was created for a street because of the complications which arose in financing a large drainage system and creek crossing. The Commission reviewed the problems presented but felt that this request should be presented at the regular meeting of the Commission. It was therefore


VOTED: To DEFER action on this request to the next regular meeting of the Commission.

Planning Commission -- Austin, Texas

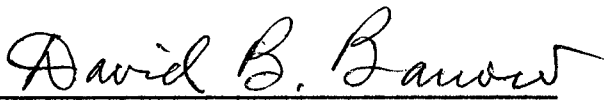
Spec. Mtg. 4-19-60

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.


Hoyle M. Osborne
Executive Secretary

APPROVED:


Chairman