

1 City of Pass Christian
2 Municipal Complex Auditorium
3 105 Hiern Avenue

4
5 **Planning Commission**
6 **Meeting Minutes**
7 **Tuesday, January 29, 2019, 6pm**
8
9

10 **CALL TO ORDER**

11 Chairman Tom Phares called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. In attendance were Commissioners Lisa
12 Smith, Adam Pace, Steve Hunter, Ken Austin, Lisea Johnson and Margaret Jean Kalif. Commissioners
13 Michael Lizana and Rebecca O’Dwyer were not in attendance.

14
15 Also in attendance was the City Planner, Danit Simon.

16
17 **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

18 The first order of business was the adoption of the minutes from the monthly Planning Commission
19 meeting held on December 11, 2018. A *Motion* by Commissioner Austin, seconded by Commissioner
20 Johnson, was made to adopt the minutes. Commissioner Kalif abstained, as she was not at that
21 Meeting, and the remaining Commissioners approved and passed the adoption of the minutes.

22
23 **NEW BUSINESS**

- 24 ○ *Application PD-4-2019, City of Pass Christian, 125 Church Avenue, 0313G-05-010.000, Warrant*
25 *Application for a Dog Park on a section of the parcel fronting St Louis Street (west of Trinity Episcopal*
26 *Church), in the T5C Mixed Use Zone with a Civic Buildings Overlay.*

27
28 Chairman Phares introduced the application.

29
30 The City Planner, Danit Simon, briefed the Planning Commission on the application: Before I begin, the
31 applicant withdrew the last application on tonight’s agenda at 503 Church Avenue. If anyone is here for
32 that application, it will not be reviewed tonight, and it will be re-advertised for if and when it is placed
33 on a future meeting agenda.

34
35 The City proposes using a section of 125 Church Avenue, which fronts St. Louis Street, for a dog park,
36 please see the site plan included in your packets. A group of citizens are developing the park and the
37 City will be signing a Lease Agreement with the Trinity Episcopal Church for the continued maintenance
38 of the park. They propose installing ten parking spaces and a handicap space off of St Louis, a water
39 station for the dogs, and fencing around the perimeter of the site. Dog parks fall under Table 13, Civic
40 Spaces, in the SmartCode, which describes various types of public spaces and parks, and a dog park most
41 closely aligns with the Pocket Park definition. The proposed fencing meets the SmartCode’s
42 Architectural Standards, with wrought iron along the street and chain link at the sides and rear. The
43 applicant’s site plan indicates separate areas for large and small dogs, a main entrance, and two service
44 gates.

45
46 The SmartCode does not provide parking standards for Civic Spaces or parks and the T5C Zone requires
47 for parking to be located to the rear of the Principal Building. In this care there will not be a building,
48 and it is not possible to create a parking area at the rear of the lot due to the existing protected trees.
49 The Special Tree Provisions allows for parking standards to be adjusted by the Warrant process to
50 protect existing trees. The multiple trees on the property provide ideal shade and visual interest for the
51 park.

52 The applicant proposes pull in parking spaces along St Louis Street, including ten graveled spaces and a
53 paved handicap space. They will be located on a combination of the City easement and the property.
54 The existing sidewalk will be removed to accommodate the parking spaces, but this sidewalk has no
55 connectivity to the west, while there is a sidewalk on the north side of the proposed dog park that does
56 continue further west along Saint Louis.

57
58 Surrounding the property are complementary uses including the Church, school, cemetery, veterinary
59 office and dog grooming business. The area is zoned Mixed-Use, with a combination of T4 and T5 Zones,
60 and the majority of the land on St. Louis between Church and Henderson is under the Civic Overlay. The
61 proposed dog park meets the Standards for Planning Commission approval and will be in harmony with
62 the character of the neighborhood. This concludes my report, Wendy Allard, a member of the
63 committee, is here to answer any additional questions you may have.

64
65 Chairman Phares stated that while Warrant Applications can be handled by email, due its nature we
66 wanted to give the Commission an opportunity to flush out the details at a meeting. This is the first
67 application of its kind and the SmartCode does not have any specific standards for dog parks. This
68 seems to be an ideal location for the dog park, as the existing uses are complimentary and the
69 neighborhood zoning is Mixed-Use at the highly commercial end of T4+ and T5C.

70
71 Commissioner Austin asked Wendy Allard who would be responsible for the park's maintenance,
72 including treating the park for fleas? Has the maintenance been reviewed with the Public Work's
73 Department? And, are there any specific park rules that will adopted and have you looked at how other
74 cities manage dog parks?

75
76 Allard replied that the City would be responsible for all future maintenance. The committee has spoken
77 to Kirk Ladner, the Director of the Beautification Department, and he is aware of the flea treatments and
78 other elements of the park's maintenance moving forward, including waste stations. There will be park
79 rules, to ensure that people pick up after their dogs, and lights will NOT be installed, so this will be a
80 sunup to sundown park, only open during daylight hours.

81
82 Commissioner Kalif asked if any precautions could be made to keep sick dogs from getting other dogs
83 sick?

84
85 Allard answered that there isn't really a way to ensure that, but the posted rules will ask for sick dogs
86 and vicious dogs not to be brought to the park. Issues are bound to come up and we will have to have a
87 procedure to address them included in the park rules.

88
89 Commissioner Paces asked how people will be prevented from entering the park after daylight hours?

90
91 Allard responded that the police would monitor this park like other City parks, and they can ask people
92 to leave that are there afterhours. And, not having any lighting will detract people from entering after
93 sundown. Separatly, she added that the City will be leasing the land from the Trinity Episcopal Church
94 for a nominal fee, about a dollar a year, but the lease hasn't been signed yet.

95
96 Simon added that since the lease hasn't been signed, if the application is recommended for approval,
97 please do so with the condition that the lease agreement is executed.

98

99 Commissioner Pace asked if the dog park could be installed into any existing parks? My concern is with
100 the additional improvements and maintenance responsibilities on a department that is already
101 stretched thin.

102
103 Allard responded that they have looked into possible locations at existing City parks and land. It cannot
104 be done at the new park at Henderson Avenue, as the conditions of the funding prohibit fencing, which
105 is needed for a dog park. Another park at Menge Avenue, the wildflower garden, and a few other
106 locations that the City owns, are wetlands with development prohibitions. We looked at other City land
107 that either was cost prohibitive to clear or the parcels were not the right size. This location fell into our
108 lap and is the best option of all the locations we have reviewed. She added that the Aldermen have
109 previously approved the concept and location for a dog park.

110
111 A *Motion* by Commissioner Kalif seconded by Commissioner Austin, was made to approve the Dog Park
112 Use with the conditions that (1) the Lease Agreement is executed between the City of Pass Christian and
113 Trinity Episcopal Church and (2) the rules governing the park are approved by the Mayor and Board of
114 Aldermen. The motion passed unanimously.

115
116 ○ *Open Public Hearing*
117 A *Motion* by Commissioner Pace, seconded by Commissioner Kalif, was made to open the public
118 hearing. The motion passed unanimously.

119
120 ○ *Application PD-1-2019, Harold H Jr & Linda Dawley & Yelwad Revocable Trust, 0 Henderson Avenue*
121 *& 0 Clarence Avenue, #0313C-02-004.000 & 0313C-02-021.000, Planning Commission Approval for*
122 *Boat & RV Storage Use, in the T4L Limited Mixed-Use Zone.*

123
124 Commissioner Austin recused himself from the application.

125
126 Chairman Phares introduced the application.

127
128 The City Planner, Danit Simon, briefed the Planning Commission on the application: The applicants
129 propose developing two adjacent parcels off of Henderson Avenue for the Boat and RV Storage Use.
130 They propose uncovered parking only, fencing along the perimeter and vehicular access through
131 Henderson Avenue only. Please see the maps included in your packets. Since the Boat & RV Storage is
132 not listed on the Use Table, it required Planning Commission Approval.

133
134 The applicant proposes for the parcels to only be accessed from Henderson Avenue so as not to disturb
135 the residential homes along Beechwood Drive. They also propose installing an aluminum fence along
136 Henderson and leaving a five foot depth of existing vegetation to limit the visibility of the business from
137 Henderson. And a chain link fence around the sides and rear of the property, leaving a 30-foot depth of
138 existing vegetation along the southern property line to provide a buffer to the backyards of the
139 neighboring houses along Beechwood Drive. They also propose three floodlights that will be directed
140 towards the property, please see the photo in your packets. I recommend that they install light fixtures
141 with shields on the top and sides to better direct the light and protect the residential houses, with a 12-
142 foot height maximum for the poles.

143
144 The parcel is located in the T4L Limited Mixed-Use Zone, which prohibits commercial uses in mid-block
145 parcels like this one. The immediate area is either undeveloped or single-family residential, and there is
146 commercial development at the intersection of Henderson Avenue and North Street. Because the
147 majority of the land north of Beechwood Drive is undeveloped, this business may set the tone for the

148 future development of the neighborhood, either deterring or encouraging continued residential
149 development.

150

151 On the zoning map there is a nearby central area of T4+ and T5C Mixed Use Zones that allow for
152 commercial development. But due to the flood map requirements, it is unlikely that any commercial
153 activity will develop there. Which leaves a variety of single and multi-family housing options in this area.
154 The applicant has proposed a few elements to buffer the business from the existing residential houses,
155 but you, the Commission, must consider the future growth of the area, and how a boat & RV storage
156 business will impact future development. Please also consider how traffic along Henderson Avenue, a
157 major City thoroughfare, may be impacted with large boats and Rv's slowing down to make wide turns.
158 There are two objection letters and one letter of support included in your packets, and the applicant is
159 here to answer any questions you may have.

160

161 Commissioner Pace asked about the submitted letters, where do the people that wrote the letters live?

162

163 Simon was not sure where Huong Dang lived, who wrote the letter of support. She then pointed out on
164 the site plan where the Richard Cody Finley and Michelle Johnson, who wrote the objection letters, have
165 houses near the proposed project. (Please note that after further review, Hougng Dang owns an
166 undeveloped, adjacent, northern lot on Henderson Avenue.)

167

168 Chairman Phares asked if another boat yard is needed in the City, due to the number of storage yards
169 that exist on North Street.

170

171 Commissioner Kalif added that from a School District perspective, there are a significant number of
172 students and teachers that congest the traffic along Henderson Avenue. Its already a potentially
173 dangerous street with the current high volume traffic, I'm hesitant to look favorably at adding additional
174 large boats and RV's to the street that will be adding to the traffic and needing to slow down to turn into
175 the site.

176

177 Commissioner Smith asked the applicant for an update on the additional storage on Clarence Avenue
178 connected to the main facility on North Street?

179

180 A representative of the applicant, Mike Dawley, 411 Winter Avenue, responded that they are still
181 working on developing that location, but have not done that. Regarding traffic, for a yard that size we
182 anticipate one or two customers coming to the site per day. Our large complex that has 350 to 400
183 storage units, we probably only have ten customers coming to the site per day. The traffic at this
184 location will therefore be very light. We will also have a pull in location in front of the gate to give
185 vehicles a safe location to pull off the road before entering the facility. There is more demand for
186 storage, especially for covered storage. We are currently full, and in the future will be adding more
187 covered storage at our primary location along North Street and shift the open storage to remote yards
188 like this one. The demand is there, so we are trying to come up with best way to handle it for the
189 business and the community. Boating and RV's bring a lot of people and business to the area, they
190 come over the weekend for fishing and they do other business in the City while they are here

191

192 Chairman Kalif stated that his points are well taken, but is it possible to find another location? There is a
193 lot of undeveloped land along North Street.

194

195 Dawley responded that they are trying to make use of the land that they already own. We are always
196 looking for business locations and opportunities, but right now we would like to find uses for the land

197 we own. We originally explored developing this land for housing, but that doesn't seem to make sense
198 considering the market demand and the cost. We own over 20-acres in that area and would love to
199 build houses, but right now that doesn't seem to be an option.

200
201 Chairman Phares asked for clarification on the 20-acres they own, is it immediately adjoining the parcels
202 under review tonight?

203
204 Dawley responded no, it is throughout the Bayview Addition.

205
206 Chairman Phares noted that the City has approved several lots for Boat & RV Storage for AALCO Storage.
207

208 Commissioner Smith asked if there are any traffic problems along North Street?
209

210 Dawley responded that it is surprisingly little traffic once people store their belongings.
211

212 Commissioner Kalif added that there is a lot of traffic along North Street, but it's not specifically due to
213 Boat & RV Storage.

214
215 Commission Pace stated that the focus of the Commission is to determine if the use of the property
216 works alongside the existing uses and zoning.

217
218 Commissioner Kalif pointed out that the project location is in a residential zone, and the traffic and
219 lighting will impact the existing homes.

220
221 Dawley responded that it is residential, which is why the lighting will be directed downward and away
222 from the existing homes. Care would be taken so as not to light up neighboring properties.

223
224 Commissioner Kalif stated that even if the light isn't shining directly at the neighboring properties, the
225 potential glow from the lights will still impact the homes.

226
227 Dawley added that the 30-foot barrier of existing foliage will help to buffer the neighboring homes from
228 any indirect lighting.

229
230 Commissioner Kalif stated that if she were building a home there, if she were going to live in that
231 residential neighborhood, she'd be disturbed by commercial development in the neighborhood.

232
233 Dawley responded that while the use is commercial, it's people's boats & RV's that they use for
234 recreation, and this is a recreational town that people specifically come to for those recreational uses.

235
236 Commissioner Kalif agreed with Dawley's statement, but still has an issue with a commercial business
237 expanding into an existing residential neighborhood.

238
239 Dawley said that they want to see continued residential growth in the area, but so much of that land is
240 undeveloped, and they are unable to financially justify building housing there. Which is why the
241 proposal includes tasteful landscaping, fencing and an entrance gate. I don't believe that this will
242 negatively impact the future residential development, and we'd like to be a part of the development on
243 the west side of town.

244
245

246 Ricky Bonomo, the owner of 415 Beechwood Avenue, stated that he opposes the project and has two
247 neighbors on either side of him that also oppose the project. And another neighbor that recently
248 purchased a nearby house on Clarence Avenue, Richard Cody Finley, who also opposes the project. We
249 oppose this use because of the lighting and possible increase in burglar and crime to the area. No
250 matter how much fencing you put up, people will try to break in to steal things out of the boats.

251
252 Commissioner Pace asked the applicant if they would consider using some of the additional acres for the
253 business?

254
255 Dawley responded that they wouldn't because additional land that they own is undeveloped without
256 access streets.

257
258 Commissioner Kalif stated that she has never voted against a business but she can't support a business
259 at this location.

260
261 Commisioner Pace agreed with Kalif and stated that while the City needs more business, he cannot tell
262 homeowners and residents that the City is approving a use that isn't inline with the residential zoning of
263 the neighborhood. This location backs up to five existing houses, that have a shared property line to the
264 proposed business, a few of which submitted Objection Letters and are here tonight to object. While
265 you tried to buffer the existing residential homes from the proposed commercial business, I cannot go
266 against the owners that have made financial investments in their homes, and the existing residential
267 zoning.

268
269 A *Motion* by Commissioner Pace seconded by Commissioner Kalif, was made to *deny* the Boat & RV
270 Storage Use due to the Use's incompatibility with the zoning and the existing neighboring single-family
271 houses.

272
273 **Vote:** Motion Carried

274 Aye: Pace, Kalif, Smith

275 Nay: Hunter, Johnson

276 Recuse: Austin

277
278 ○ *Application PD-2-2019, David Adams as agent of Charles A Cox Jr, 531 Espy Avenue, #0412H-02-*
279 *001.002, Re-Subdivision Application to divide one lot into two, and Planning Commission Approval*
280 *for Mechanical Shop Use, in the G3 Intended Growth Sector.*

281
282 Chairman Phares introduced the application. We had a preliminary review of this application at our
283 November 2018 Meeting, along with discussions of the possible future zoning for the area that is in the
284 G3 Sector. As G3 is basically a holding pattern until there is a clear direction of development for the
285 area to determine the appropriate zoning.

286
287 The City Planner, Danit Simon, briefed the Planning Commission on the application: At the November
288 2018 Meeting, you came to the conclusion that we aren't ready to assign zoning to the area. In lou of
289 assigning zoning to the area, you are reviewing the Re-Subdivision Application to divide the lot into two
290 parcels, and Planning Commission Application for the Mechanical Shop Use, primarily for boat and
291 motor repair. The applicant proposes Lot A to be slightly larger than one-acre with a residential house
292 and a 25-foot wide strip fronting Espy Avenue, and Lot B will ne slightly more than two-acres with a
293 shop, a small shed behind it, and a 25-foot wide strip fronting Espy Avenue.

294

295 Because the parcel is in the G3 Sector there are no standards, such as the lot size, width, use, setbacks,
296 which instead are reviewed through the application process. Along Demourelle Road the lots are
297 extremely large, but there are no platted streets providing access to the lots further away from the
298 street. Instead there is a combination of flag lots, easements and shared driveways to maximize the
299 land and provide access to the landlocked parcels. In addition to residential housing, the neighborhood
300 is also comprised of the Police Station and the City's Shooting Range. The west side of Espy Avenue is
301 comprised of a significant portion of wooded undeveloped land.

302
303 Like the other lots in the area, 531 Espy Avenue is large, located over 240-feet from Espy Avenue and
304 the lot itself is another 400-feet in depth. Because the parcel is so large, finding a good use for the land
305 without any streets providing access is challenging. The parcel does have 50-feet of frontage at Espy
306 Avenue, which when split, keeps the proposed parcels from becoming land locked, which the applicant
307 has agreed to. The setbacks are addressed in detail in the packet for the house and shed, please let me
308 know if you have any questions on that. The proposed setbacks significantly exceed the T3R Zone's 5-
309 foot side and rear setback standards in all directions.

310
311 The Use must also be approved, as G3 is not on the Use Table. The business will have minimal visibility
312 on Espy Avenue since it is set back over 240-feet from the street, and the dense woods surrounding the
313 property provides a buffer to the neighboring residential houses. A swell, the neighboring Police
314 Station and shooting range are complimentary uses, as this neighborhood is not strictly a single-family
315 residential area.

316
317 The shop and shed provide storage and work space for the business, but I recommend that all
318 mechanical parts and other equipment are strictly kept in the building, open storage on the lawn should
319 be prohibited, and that a maximum of ten cars, boats, trailers, RV's be allowed to be parked on the
320 property and in the third layer only, after the first 20-feet of the shop. That is a total and maximum of
321 ten vehicles at any given time. The aerial map in the packet shows about ten vehicles and boats spread
322 out on the parcel and due to the large size of the land it doesn't overpower the parcel and is in keeping
323 with the neighborhood. The request meets the Standards of Planning Commission Approval, the
324 Subdivision Ordinance and will be in harmony with the scale and character of the neighborhood, as the
325 neighboring lots have similar configurations due to the lack of City Streets. Please note the four
326 recommended conditions listed in your packets. This concludes my report and the applicant is here to
327 answer any questions you may have.

328
329 A *Motion* by Commissioner Pace seconded by Commissioner Kalif, was made to approve the Re-
330 Subdivision Application to divide one lot into two, and Planning Commission Approval for Mechanical
331 Shop Use, in the G3 Intended Growth Sector with the following conditions: (1) Each lot must have 25-
332 feet of the access route from Espy Avenue; (2) A City Privilege License must be obtained; (3) Outdoor
333 storage of any kind is prohibited; (4) A maximum of ten vehicles, boats and trailers may be parked on
334 the property, in the Third Layer only (after the first 20-ft of the shop). The motion passed unanimously.

335
336 ○ *Close Public Hearing*

337 A *Motion* by Commissioner Austin seconded by Commissioner Pace, was made to close the public
338 hearing. The motion passed unanimously.

339
340 ○ *Planning Commission Chairman and Vice Chairman Vote*

341 A *Motion* by Commissioner Pace, Seconded by Commissioner Kalif, was made to elect Tom Phares for
342 Chairman and Ken Austin for Vice Chairman. The motion passed unanimously.

343

344 **OLD BUSINESS**

345 ○ *Review 2018 Commissioner attendance records*

346 Chairman Phares commended Commissioner Smith for her perfect attendance and requested that
347 Commissioners Lizana and Johnson work on their attendance in the New Year. The reason we are
348 reviewing this is because sometimes we are struggling to ensure that we have a quorum, we never quite
349 now if we will have one until the last minute. We all can do a better job of attendance and giving
350 advance notice when you cannot attend.

351

352 ○ *Update on a Possible City Street & Commercial Corridor east of Espy Avenue along the Railroad*

353 Commissioner Austin asked for an update on the possible commercial corridor from Espy Avenue to
354 Beatline Road. Chairman Phares answered that he had an initial conversation with the Mayor and will
355 set up another meeting to discuss the possible development in depth.

356

357 **OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENT**

358 N/A

359

360 **ADJOURN**

361 *A Motion* by Commissioner Kalif, seconded by Commissioner Pace, was made to adjourn the meeting at
362 6:40 P.M. The motion passed unanimously.