

MINUTES OF A BUILDING DESIGN COMMITTEE MEETING  
CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS  
Wednesday, August 3, 2016  
5:30 P.M.

PRESENT: BDC Chairman Brian Plunkett, BDC Members Robert Meisel and Eric Erickson

ABSENT: None

1. Call to Order. Chairman Brian Plunkett.

**Chairman Plunkett calls the meeting to Order at 5:30 p.m.**

2. Land Use: Request for a Plat Vacation of Pledger Addition with a variance at 1007 Madrone Road. (Section 36.01.004(f) of the West Lake Hills Code.) Applicant Jim Pledger.

- a. Staff Briefing.

None.

- b. Presentation by applicant.

**Jim Pledger has lived at 1007 Madrone since 1988. We bought the house in 1988 as two lots one which was non-conforming. We wanted to remodel and built a little structure on the other lot and we believed there was a benefit putting them together for taxes and for the septic system. We put them together. A few years ago we said we needed to downsize and so we started looking at it. They City said the simplest way is to vacate the plat. We institute the new pate and there was nothing that drove it other than it made sense and didn't know why we would separate in the future. The issue is pretty straight forward. The problem is one of the lots was a non-conforming .93 acres. Because the lot is less than a whole acre we were asked to submit a variance application. In this situation it is hard to say there is a solid hardship and I know from sitting in your chair I developed a diversion to hardships, but nevertheless, the only hardship is I can't fix it. I'm landlocked and no opportunity to pull from one lot and make two because the combo is less than 2 acres. I believe that the result of the lot down the hill doesn't have a full house on it; it is a flat lot. There aren't any issues and has a nice view of the UT tower. We're very interested in the idea of downsizing and building a smaller house on this lot and selling the house we've lived in for a long time. That's pretty much the story. There is a possibility of approaching this without a variance. We would have submitted all things that are associated with that. The one possibility would be to go to neighbors to sell me a half-acre and from my needs is not necessary. The thing I don't like about that would be creating a new lot and creating a subdivision. The real answer is that this is the most straight-forward of going about it. It's not going to change anything, the house, setbacks, and distance from the road. From a density aspect it is very low; we're not building a mega house there. This will be a modest house and living there for a very long time. That is what we are facing. If you have guidance on it we'd appreciate it.**

- c. Public Hearing: All persons wishing to speak for or against shall be heard.

**Chairman Plunkett closes the Public Hearing and reconvenes the meeting.**

d. Deliberation and action.

**Chairman Plunkett: You're putting it back the way it was?**

**Jim: It will be the same lot created in 1955. Most of the lots in my neighborhood are all small lots.**

**Chairman Plunkett: The resulting.**

**Jim: 0.93 and 1.04.**

**City Planner Grundman: If you move that lot line it would require a new plat. 1.944 acres.**

**Jim: We have filed a variance application.**

**Chairman Plunkett: What are talking about here? Is a plat vacation a variance process?**

**City Planner Grundman: The plat vacation with a variance which would create a lot less than an acre.**

**BDC Member Erickson: Is this showing both lots?**

**Jim: No, just one.**

**City Planner Grundman: There is another copy that shows the addition.**

**Jim: Would it be more helpful to have bigger pictures.**

**BDC Member Erickson: Something similar to this; an old plat of what it looked like before.**

**Jim: This minimum acreage is the only issue. Setbacks are not a problem. I'll work hard to not have a variance.**

**City Planner Grundman: Access to the other lot is something to keep in mind. I looks like a huge cliff at the front of that property.**

**Jim: The access would be from the dog leg where the house is now. There is an area at the top.**

**BDC Member Erickson: Expand on that and address all these issues.**

**Jim: We've talked quite a bit along the way.**

**BDC Member Erickson: She the proposed build site and septic field.**

**Jim:** There is a good septic field on the property right now. There is plenty of room for that. We won't have to put in a new system if we were to build down there.

**Chairman Plunkett:** The more information on how it will look down the road would be good.

**BDC MOVES TO RECOMMEND MOVING FORWARD TO ZAPCO.**

3. Land Use: Proposed Rezoning from Multi-Family R-2 to One-Family R-1 with a variance at 308 Reveille Road. (Sections 38.03.033 and 38.03.032 of the West Lake Hills Code.) Applicant Steven Johnson.

- a. Staff Briefing.

**City Planner Grundman:** This is currently a duplex and rezone to R-1 and demo and build a single family house.

- b. Presentation by applicant.

**Steven Johnson is the property owner.** We are looking forward to demo the house. My wife and I are looking for building a single family house. In the design phase we were as cautious as we could. We have one Oak and a Hackberry. We are requesting a variance for a hammerhead 20' from the property line and the property line is 30' from the street.

**BDC Member Erickson:** What is the square footage?

**Steven:** 1580. New is 5,000.

**BDC Member Erickson:** Is this the drawing for the proposed? The plans are side by side from 310. That includes the driveway, pool and impervious cover.

**Chairman Plunkett:** The house is 4,200.

**BDC Member Erickson:** Hardships need to be shown. It can't be a design created variance. There is a lot more focus on new construction. I don't have a problem with the hammerhead.

**Steven:** The home is pushed forward because the most trees are in the back. We're talking an 8' variance for the hammerhead and still 40' from the street.

**BDC Member Erickson:** It's always good to bring photos to the meeting.

**Steven:** If any of you want to walk the property we'd be happy to show you. The oak is next to the foundation.

**BDC Member Erickson:** What is the current condition of the Hackberry?

**Steven:** Overgrown. It's towards the front of the building line. If we had the survey here and site plan, I don't know if it reflects the trees. We were able to maintain several of the others.

**Chairman Plunkett:** You show replacement on the back and the picture show them in a row. Typically council is in favor of more natural planting.

**Steven:** We're trying to get screening.

**Chairman Plunkett:** Screening is good with natural trees that are on the list.

**Steven:** You're recommend is heeded for certain. The house behind us they are really close to the building line.

**Chairman Plunkett:** That's a hot button.

**BDC Member Erickson:** Get together with Christy and Ashby on the replacement.

**Chairman Plunkett:** The more information the better.

**City Planner Grundman:** Stagger them out a little more to make it look more natural.

**BDC Member Erickson:** Show where the foundations are now and what is being replaced to justify moving the tree. We have a design created variance happen all the time.

**Steven:** A good example would be to save a huge elm.

**BDC Member Erickson:** You'll get some push in that area. Show replacements and the conditions of the trees.

**Chairman Plunkett:** Other information is where the footprint is going to be and not hurt the trees you're going to replace. Get a statement from Christy Shull.

**Steven:** We have checked the fire flow.

**BDC Member Erickson:** Bring that to ZAPCO.

**City Planner Grundman:** Fire flow is based on the hydrant. 50% reduction if sprinkled.

- c. Public Hearing: All persons wishing to speak for or against shall be heard.

**Laurie Maccini** lives at 202 Reveille Road and wants to see no tree variances granted. Definitely not setbacks, impervious cover, or design based. The look of Reveille is changing and we're wanting to replace smaller homes with larger homes. But is certainly a lot larger than my house. Any recommendations we look at the nature of the street in which they are being built and variances are not necessary. The design can be done to conform. I just hate for it to change. We already have flooding issues on the street.

**City Planner Grundman:** The hammerhead is required by Code.

**Chairman Plunkett** closes the Public Hearing and reconvenes the meeting.

d. Deliberation and action.

**BDC Member Erickson: Are they on wastewater?**

**City Planner Grundman: Yes. All new homes are required to have a drainage study to show they are not impacting any of the neighbors.**

**Chairman Plunkett: ZAPCO and Council will look really hard at the increase in impervious cover.**

**City Planner Grundman: They are under the limit of impervious cover.**

4. Land Use: Proposed Rezoning from Multi-Family R-2 to One-Family R-1 with a variance at 310 Reveille Road. (Sections 38.03.033 and 38.03.032 of the West Lake Hills Code.) Applicant Brian May.

a. Staff Briefing.

**City Planner Grundman: This is the exact same thing rezoning R-2 to R-1 to demo and built a single family residence.**

b. Presentation by applicant.

**Brian May is the property owner and lives at 2716 Barton Creek Blvd. The request is to take down a duplex the more duplexes they can get rid of the better and get a variance for the hammerhead at least 20' from the setback line. The dotted line is where I'm trying to push it closer and it will make it more usable. The asphalt to the property line is 19'. It's a 50' long driveway. The only variance is to move that hammerhead to make it functional. Pretty designed to not affect trees. We are using the same builder. The houses complement each other. There is a large open space for greenery.**

c. Public Hearing: All persons wishing to speak for or against shall be heard.

**Chairman Plunkett closes the Public Hearing and reconvenes the meeting.**

d. Deliberation and action.

**BDC Member Erickson: What is the valid argument of the adjustment of that hammerhead?**

**City Planner Grundman: Getting it out of the driveway setback? In looking at the layout, trying to back out of your garage. The turning ratio wouldn't work.**

**Chairman Plunkett: You may run into that is a design driven hardship. If it was further away 6' it wouldn't be a variance.**

**Steve: We're trying to save the trees in the back of the property.**

**BDC Member Erickson: You're at 28% impervious cover?**

**Steve: Just under.**

**BDC Member Erickson: Show a drainage study. Showing what the existing and what it is going to. It sounds like there might be runoff and trees at ZAPCO. Reveille does become a mote. You can check with Ashby, too.**

**Chairman Plunkett: You need to show that it won't be worse.**

**City Planner Grundman: You're not impacting the surrounding properties with the proposed development.**

5. Land Use: Proposed Rezoning of 4301 Bee Cave Road from Office (O) to Planned Development District (PDD) with a base zoning of B-1 in order to allow for an independent living facility (Skye West Lake) to be developed on the property. (Chapter 38 of the West Lake Hills Code.) Applicant Colby Denison.

- a. Staff Briefing.

**City Planner Grundman: This is the proposed PDD #6 in the city. It is currently vacant. It's a step before Belmont. They are proposing 142 units and you can see on their site plan how it is laid out. There are a number of code deviations to height, cut and fill but this would be all in the PDD which includes all that information. The proposal, they are asking for the removal of 4,200 inches of trees. They have a replacement of 200 includes. 4,000 short on replacement which would be required to be paid into the tree fund.**

- b. Presentation by applicant.

**Andrea Fryberger is with Spring Architects and lives at 2712 Kenny Oaks Court. A slide show is shown. We are proposing a living facility with 140 units max. On this site. The design process is explained. We made a shift to engage nature to create courtyards and green spaces and then to try to break up the massing by walkways, some would be interior and some subgrade between buildings. It is important to have everything connected so they are not exposed to extreme heat or cold. This is one of the earlier site plan. This is the site going down the hill. There are four buildings with green spaces. We looked at this in different ways. Looking at emergency access with turnaround for fire access and then added a 10' side path around all the buildings at the request of Michael Lacey. This would be parking for the residences. Most parking would be under the building and visitors parking would be on the ground level. Trails would be around the buildings in heavily wood areas. This would be the view from Bee Cave Road. Trying to fit this on the site is fitting in the character to BCR, it was important to not have this huge presence. We've held this building down but as you step down the hill it will be 3 stories. AT one point when the parking points poke outside the ground. One struggle is stepping down the hill is the accessibility. AT certain points it might appear to be taller, drop down and it has to be at full story to maintain pathways. That is where we are coming from design wise. We are asking for a number of variations.**

**Brad Rowe: The feel community and the Skye Community. Brochures are being passed out. You mentioned that we are different than Belmont. There are no licensed medical piece of this. They have skilled nursing but are not licensed. There is a current demand and family members for a higher unit**

count. We're are trying to get 140 units on these lots. Secondly, we will employ 35 to 40 people. In order to supply and employ that many people, we need to have 140 units.

- c. Public Hearing: All persons wishing to speak for or against shall be heard.

**Laurie Maccini has lived for 21 years at Reveille Road, I appreciate the need for this. That exit is not going to be safe. It is only going to get worse, especially if elderly will be using it. I think you are looking at serious traffic issues. The other thing is 10 visitors for 140 units? The tree removal and a garden setting? My biggest concern is Bee Cave Road and the turn lane won't make it safer. Senior population may be leaving these and I'm concerned for their safety.**

**Chairman Plunkett closes the Public Hearing and reconvenes the meeting.**

- d. Deliberation and action.

**Robert Meisel arrives at 6:25.**

**BDC Member Erickson: I'd like to see a list of the variances. The buildings are creating hardships all over the place, right off the bat. There is sewer which is a benefit to that tract. A drainage draw will be created. You're putting underground ponds but it is amazing what can occur. The first thing I see is the footprint and the impact it has on that land and everybody downhill. The traffic is an issue. You're going to get a lot of pushback because of the size of the tract and impact of the building. There are so many unknowns. It's a huge impact and on the creek below. That's just an initial comment right off the bat. I understand there is a need. You're going to have to think about downsizing it and/or you need a drainage plan keyed into everything that is occurring in West Lake Hills which is not completed and the winding will impact the drainage. It goes onto that property you're purchasing. There is a constant fine line all the way to HEB at 360 and St. John and this whole watershed is being impacted. We already have issues on Bee Cave Road. That much building, that many trees, let nature run its course. I don't know if that can be done.**

**Chairman Plunkett: You will need to come prepared for ZAPCO. The large impervious cover and cutting the number of trees is a big concern. The 10 visitor spots is surprising as well.**

**Andrea: Ten are ground level but more underground.**

**Chairman Plunkett: Bee Cave Road will be an issue. I don't want to discourage you but it will be tough project to get through. Traffic, drainage.**

**BDC Member Meisel: I did look at this before I came in. It's an apartment house. We don't allow that in West Lake Hills. We can't move off this. We've had some experience with senior communities on Bee Cave Road there is no bus service on Bee Cave Road. If any part of your staff that a certain percentage of your workers won't need parking is wrong. I want to listen carefully. I promise I will be on time to ZAPCO. After looking at the application it's a non-started. It goes against everything in the Master Plan.**

**BDC Member Erickson:** When you speak of nature, this would be huge. Trying to fit the requirements on that site it is not going to work. Not here. Height restrictions the same thing. That's it.

**Andrea:** Is ZAPCO when we can address these questions?

**BDC Member Meisel:** I don't vote.

**BDC Member Erickson:** IF you're getting this kind of feedback here, just from the impression I'm getting here we've just passed new ordinances that it won't move forward past ZAPCO. It is an apartment complex; I don't know how to get around that.

**BDC Member Meisel:** PDD can blow up the code but so far overall the city administration have not shown an inclination to do that. PDD is usually a much more modest thing. It still pays respect to our other ordinances. It is going to require a lot of selling and a lot of thought.

**Brad:** Is Belmont different?

**BDC Member Meisel:** It is an assisted living facility. They are asking for more parking. That was another problem. Belmont walked in here hand in hand with their neighbors. We have a package from all the neighbors will their consent. They had a project that was unique to West Lake Hills but was presented as a facility providing a service and not a place to live.

**BDC Member Erickson:** One of the requirements they had to get sewer. They were all over this concerning drainage, engineers, and when they came back recently they minimized the footprint. Drainage is huge.

**Chairman Plunkett:** When we were talking about the parking, they are assisted and their residents do not drive.

**Brad:** There will be a lot of services like Belmont, independent living does provide housekeeping, meals, and there will be less seniors on the roads. There won't be direct medical care. We are offering a lot of services for seniors beyond just shelter. They have a choice of being in a non-licensed community.

**BDC Member Erickson:** None of the previous applicants had this amount of impact. I don't know what you can do to change that.

**BDC Member Meisel:** That density requires more land to be in line with WLH ordinances. You need a lengthy neighborhood walk.

**Andrea:** We appreciate the comments.

**BDC Member Erickson:** They move forward to ZAPCO to get feedback.

**Chairman Plunkett:** You can go ZAPCO in two weeks then you can request mid-stream to postpone during the meeting. If you get turned down you have to wait a year with the identical project. This will be tough to get through. The re-zoning notion with that many units is really high. I understand that economic viability.

**BDC Member Meisel:** Don't show things like this in West Lake Hills (referring to the handout). A five-story unit won't be built here.

**Brad:** I did say at the beginning of the meeting they didn't represent what was going to be built in West Lake Hills.

**Chairman Plunkett:** There needs to be a lot less density on that property. That's going to be a really hard sell.

**BDC Member Erickson:** Why this particular tract?

**Andrea:** The demographics and need. There is another Skye in the area; we wanted to be in Westlake. We do have engineers. Would it be appropriate to have them present the drainage study?

**BDC Member Erickson:** That drainage study only applies to that footprint.

**Chairman Plunkett:** What I like to see at council, showing where in relation to the neighbors and what the impact is on them.

**Andrea:** The property is zoned O and we were asking for B-1, I hear you're bigger concerns. We are going to need a PDD regardless because of the use?

**City Planner Grundman:** I don't know that it factors that much. I originally suggested to do O from a development. It would impact impervious cover and things like that. It may increase the amount they are asking for. I don't know if it has a huge impact.

**Chairman Plunkett:** Would the O zoning allow living units?

**BDC Member Meisel:** No; PDD is its own ordinance.

**City Planner Grundman:** Anything not in the PDD defaults to B-1. O is more strict than B-1.

**Chairman Plunkett:** That makes it less strict.

**BDC Member Erickson:** This is the same thing that we've had before. It's been marketed for eons. Everybody wants to overbuild on that tract.

6. Land Use: Commercial Wall Hanging Sign for Quillinan Estate Jewelry at 3736 Bee Cave Road, Suite 3. (Section 32.03.008 of the West Lake Hills Code.) Applicant John Quillinan.

- a. Staff Briefing.

**City Planner Grundman:** They are asking for a wall hanging sign that meets code. It's just going through the process. But, the glass door stuff, you can't have the wall hanging and the door. You can choose between door signs but not in addition to. The other businesses were grandfathered.

- b. Presentation by applicant.

**John: Can we have a logo?**

- c. Public Hearing: All persons wishing to speak for or against shall be heard.

**Chairman Plunkett closes the Public Hearing and reconvenes the meeting.**

- d. Deliberation and action.

**BDC Member Meisel: Logos are generally taken as signs. On your door you can have the address and hours of operations. Once you press pass that, it gets into uncertain territory. He's telling you what the ordinance says.**

**City Planner Grundman: The door signs could be a variance and your hardship will be other tenants have them.**

**BDC Member Meisel: That as well as health and safety. That is a good reason to put the name on the business on the door. I don't want to pour too much cold water on it. We do need to try and enforce the ordinance. Ask for the variance for the second sign and explain it as a door thing. Mention the health and safety thing. The worse thing is if we say no and having to pay \$250 variance fee.**

**City Planner Grundman: Signs do not have to have a hardship.**

- 7. Adjournment. Chairman Brian Plunkett.

**Meeting is adjourned at 7:05 p.m.**