

CITY OF SAFFORD
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2008 – 5:30 P.M.
PHELPS DODGE ROOM - LIBRARY
800 S. 7th AVENUE, SAFFORD, ARIZONA

“The mission of the City of Safford is to make Safford a great place to live, work, and visit”

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Tuttle called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Ray Tuttle, Chairman; Gene Fowler, Vice-Chairman; Commission Members: Patricia Cervantez, Gherald Hoopes, Dalton Overstreet; and Jim Moser (5:43 p.m.).

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner E.C. “Buff” Cunningham

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Pete Stasiak, Community Development Director; Dustin Welker, Planner/Downtown Coordinator and Sandra Findley, Administrative Assistant.

VISITORS: Jim McClatchy, Ruth Vining, Mark Vining and Susan Duros.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA:**

Chairman Tuttle announced that there is one request to speak on item 6.1 - Case Z-19-08: Mark Vining Funeral Home Conditional Use Permit and it will be heard when that item on the agenda is discussed.

4. **MINUTES:**

Review and approval of minutes of the November 13, 2008 Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting. It was moved by Commissioner Cervantez, seconded by Commissioner Hoopes and carried unanimously (6-1 absent) to approve the minutes of November 13, 2008.

MOTION APPROVED

5. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE MINUTES:

There were no comments to the minutes of the December 8, 2008 Development Review Committee Meeting

6. PLANNING AND ZONING CASES:

6.1 Case Z-19-08: Mark Vining Funeral Home Conditional Use Permit:

Applicant is requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit for the construction of a funeral home on property located at 1940 S. 20th Ave Graham County Parcel number 104-35-051c. The current zoning for the parcel is AR.

Mr. Welker stated that a Conditional Use Permit was issued for this property in 2005 and again in 2007 lapsing both times as the Permit expires after one year if the project does not move forward. He stated that the property was zoned A-R (Agricultural Residential) which does not allow a funeral home, therefore a Conditional Use Permit is required. He said that plans have been approved for the funeral home and it will be beneficial to the City of Safford. He stated that retention and parking requirements are sufficient. He explained that there are two ditches on the property on the east and south sides. Mr. Vining plans to replace the ditch on the east side with 24" pipe and the small dirt ditch on the south side will be left as it is allowing those that utilize the ditch now to continue to do so. He stated that a block wall will be constructed around the property on the west and north sides. He said that the request tonight is to reinstate the Conditional Use Permit.

Chairman Tuttle inquired if the architectural rendering is accurate (yes). He also inquired if the project will be in compliance with the long term plan to widen 20th Avenue. Mr. Welker stated that the City Engineer has reviewed the site plan and there will be adequate right of way available for future plans on 20th Avenue.

Chairman Tuttle asked Jim McClatchy to address the Commission. Mr. McClatchy stated that he is not opposed to the funeral home which will be adjacent to property that he owns, but his concern is with the dirt ditch that runs in back of Mr. Vining's property. He stated that he and other neighbors receive water from the ditch and that brush, trees and debris are currently obstructing access to the ditch and causing a fire hazard and that Mr. Vining should be required to maintain the ditch. He explained that he is also concerned that there will not be adequate parking at times and the overflow will be up and down 20th Avenue.

Commissioner Hoopes asked Mr. Welker if the parking for the building is within the municipal code requirements (yes).

Mr. Welker explained that if the request is approved tonight staff recommends stipulations that a block wall will be constructed around the north and west sides of the property and that the dirt ditch will be maintained by Mr. Vining.

Commissioner Hoopes asked who maintains the dirt ditch presently. Mr. Vining stated that he cannot maintain the actual ditch according to the Canal Board, but only maintain the areas around the ditch that are on his property. He explained that he is currently taking care of trees and brush around the ditch and plans to clear the entire area.

Mr. McClatchy stated that the Canal Company takes care of the canal ditch but it is up to property owners to maintain the smaller dirt ditch.

Commissioner Overstreet stated that through past experience on his own property and dirt ditch, those that are serviced by the ditch should come together for decisions on maintenance and that it should not be something that the Planning and Zoning Commission should stipulate. Chairman Tuttle clarified that Commissioner Overstreet's statement was that those who benefit from the water from the ditch are responsible for the maintenance however the property owner must allow them access. Commissioner Overstreet stated that was correct and it should not be a decision for the Commission. The Commissioners were in agreement.

Chairman Tuttle asked Mr. Welker if water retention met the City code requirements (yes).

It was moved by Commissioner Overstreet, seconded by Commissioner Hoopes and carried unanimously (6-1 absent) to approve the request of a Conditional Use Permit for the construction of a funeral home on property located at 1940 S. 20th Avenue with the stipulation of a block wall around the north and west sides of the property.

MOTION APPROVED

- 6.2 Case Z-20-08 Mount Graham Hospital Parking Request:** Application for a request for parking approval. Mount Graham Hospital owns parcel number 104-37-001b located at 2003 W. Relation Street on the southwest corner of Relation Street and 20th Avenue. Due to the need of future improvements on this intersection, the City of Safford has requested the purchase of right of way for an intersection

light. Due to this additional right of way, the parcel will be limited as to the number of parking spaces that a possible facility by the hospital could use. The hospital owns parking spaces within 300' to the southwest of the proposed parcel. To satisfy future parking requirements for this parcel it is proposed in accordance with Safford Municipal Code 17.12.230N that the existing parking to the southwest be applied in the future calculation of parking area requirements on the parcel.

Mr. Welker explained that the Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center owns property on the southwest corner of 20th Avenue and Relation Street. He said that the City has a future plan to widen 20th Avenue and to have a signal light installed at this intersection. He added that City Staff has been active in obtaining easements around this property and right of way will be needed from the Medical Center for the future project. He explained that the plan for 20th Avenue is that the five lanes that are in place on the north side of Relation Street continue south to Golf Course Road which will require 80' of right of way. He stated that the Medical Center has expressed concern that if that much of their property is taken for the right of way they will not have adequate parking for a planned facility. He explained that the City parking requirements state that if you cannot obtain the required property on site you can use additional parking that is within 400' of the property if it is approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council. The Medical Center is asking approval to use the parking lot to ensure adequate parking for future development.

Mr. Welker said that the Development Review Committee suggested that the hospital should put in a designated walking area for safety purposes.

Commissioner Overstreet asked what size the future facility would be and if parking requirements could be met. Mr. Welker said the plan was for an 8500 sq ft facility and it would depend on the configuration of the building if the parking requirements could be met.

Commissioner Overstreet asked if the building would be against the fence of the residential property to the west. Mr. Welker explained that per City code, when a commercial building abuts a residential property it must meet the same setbacks.

Vice Chair Fowler asked if stipulations were required for the future facility when it was rezoned so that it might be more aesthetically appealing to the surrounding properties. Mr. Welker stated there were several stipulations on the property when it was rezoned to C-3 (Light Commercial) for a medical or office facility and that they are still in place.

Commissioner Hoopes stated that the lot to the south and west of the property that is planned for overflow parking is often full already. Chairman Tuttle explained that employees that park in that area could be required to park elsewhere as a part of the solution.

Mr. Stasiak said that the 8500 sq ft facility is conceptual at this time and that many configurations of the building will meet the 34 on-site parking spaces that are required. He added that the City Building Official feels there is adequate room for the spaces. He explained that the Medical Center wants assurance before the right of way is purchased by the City that they will have approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council to utilize the lot to the south and to the west for minor overflow parking.

Commissioner Moser stated that the overflow would not happen often and should not cause a problem.

It was moved by Commissioner Moser, seconded by Commissioner Cervantez and carried unanimously (6-1 absent) to approve the application for a request for parking approval. Mount Graham Hospital owns parcel number 104-37-001b located at 2003 W. Relation Street on the southwest corner of Relation Street and 20th Avenue. Due to the need of future improvements on this intersection, the City of Safford has requested the purchase of right of way for an intersection light. Due to this additional right of way, the parcel will be limited as to the number of parking spaces that a possible facility by the hospital could use. The hospital owns parking spaces within 300' to the southwest of the proposed parcel. To satisfy future parking requirements for this parcel it is proposed in accordance with Safford Municipal Code 17.12.230N that the existing parking to the southwest be applied in the future calculation of parking area requirements on the parcel.

MOTION APPROVED

6.2 Project Updates:

Mr. Welker stated there were no updates at this time but he would answer any questions that the Commission may have.

Commissioner Hoopes asked for information regarding the Main Street bump-out project. Mr. Welker explained that part of the Charrette study that was previously conducted had recommended improvements to the intersections on Main Street such as bump-outs on the corners with decorative pavers, landscaping and defined crosswalks. He stated that in June a grant was written to the USDA and was

awarded to the City for \$200,000 and the City has approved an additional \$115,000 for improvements on the intersections. He added that the City Engineer and Staff are reviewing the design and after approval by the Downtown Association and USDA, construction should begin in the spring/summer. Mr. Stasiak said copies of the information will be made available to the Commission at the next meeting. He added that Mr. Welker did a great job of writing and being awarded the grant for the improvements.

Commissioner Overstreet asked if the restaurant east of town (Copper Steer) was still progressing. Mr. Stasiak stated they were scheduled to open the business by the end of January.

7. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC:** None
8. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** No meeting on December 25, 2008 due to holiday
9. **NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:** January 8, 2008
10. **ADJOURN:** The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

APPROVED:

Ray Tuttle, Chairman
Planning and Zoning Commission

ATTEST:

Sandy Findley, Administrative Assistant