

MINUTES
AUSTIN CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2014
5:30 P.M.
AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Hirst, Steve Kime, Jim Mino, Troy Nelson, Lonnie Skalicky, Lynn Spainhower and Holly Wallace

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rick Bremner and Laura Helle

OTHERS PRESENT: Craig Byram, Craig Hoiu, Craig Jones from The Hormel Institute, Brian Johnson from Jones, Haugh & Smith Inc., and citizens

Commission Mino called the Planning Meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Commissioner Wallace made a motion to approve the minutes as written and Commissioner Kime seconded the motion; the motion was carried.

Open Public Hearing: To consider a request from The Hormel Foundation, Leaning Tree LLC and the Austin Port Authority for an amendment to an existing conditional land-use for the construction of an addition to the Hormel Institute located at 801 16th Ave NE. Said action is pursuant to City Code Section 11.56.

Parking Appeal: To consider a request from The Hormel Foundation, Leaning Tree LLC and the Austin Port Authority for an appeal to the off-street parking design standards pursuant to Austin City Code Section 11.70, Subd.1, H and Subd.5

Tree Preservation: To consider a request from The Hormel Foundation, Leaning Tree LLC and the Austin Port Authority for a variance pursuant to Austin City Code Section 11.71, Subd.4(B) relating to tree mitigation efforts.

Mr. Hoiu addressed the commission members regarding the conditional use permit, parking appeal and tree preservation. In presenting these petitions all together in one presentation, he informed the Planning Commission that there would need to be separate actions for each petition. The petitioners for this project are The Hormel Institute, Leaning Tree LLC, and Austin Port Authority. The property is located in an "R-O" Multi-Family Residence Office District, surrounded by land uses that are single family, office and industrial. The existing building's total area is 79,538 gross square feet, the total occupied area is 66,038 gross square feet and the total footprint is 49,076 square feet. With the east and west expansions the total area is 150,995 gross square feet, the total occupied area is 116,340 gross square feet and the total footprint is 82,914 square feet. The expansion to the east of the building will include 20 laboratories and an off street parking lot development. With additional funding for the northwest corner expansion of the building, an addition will include a lecture hall and expanded off street parking. The building heights will be within the 50 to 80 feet limitations and the site area is 5.37 acres. The exterior of the expansion areas will consist of precast panels and glass. The drainage plan will be put in place with the existing retention pond located in the northeast corner of the site still utilized. An additional retention pond shall be constructed in the new southeast parking lot.

This parking lot will be located to the east of 8th Street NE and one residence will remain adjacent to this new lot. There will be burms provided in accordance to City Code Section 11.70 placed to protect the home located at 1004 16th Avenue NE. Lighting for this new lot will be LED that illuminates

downward. Off street parking studies have shown that most staff does not drive to work. At the most extreme use periods, parking stall utilized were at 77.6%.

The planting schedule shows the vegetation that will need replacement. A tree count was taken of all the trees located in the area where southeast parking will be placed. With the original submittal there was 103 trees; 88% of those are proposed to be removed and 15 trees will remain which are mostly oak trees. The City of Austin does have a tree preservation ordinance indicating that if planting cannot be done, money is paid to the City to replace the trees elsewhere. Ten trees located northwest of the existing building will be removed and six of them will be relocated to the north.

Brian Johnson from Jones, Haugh & Smith Inc. indicated the location of the crosswalks and the road will be narrowed for traffic on 8th Street NE. Price for flashing lights that may be located at the intersections have been requested. Jon Erichson from the Austin Port Authority added there will be a pond located northwest corner of the southeast parking lot pushing people away from crossing on the north side of the lot.

Javier Soto of 1107 15th Avenue NE asked if the traffic in the area would be stopped during the construction and it was stated that the traffic would not be stopped. He has small children and was concerned about the depth of the pond, which will be 3 feet deep. At this time there will be no fence added to the out area of the pond.

The parking lot should be finished in May and the expansion of the building will start at that time. A completion date of August 1, 2015 is anticipated.

Commissioner Spainhower made a motion to approve the amendment of the existing conditional land use request pursuant to 11.56 subdivision 5. She believes looking at Section 11.56, Subdivision 5, listed below have been met sufficiently and would therefore request approval. Commissioner Wallace seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

- Geographical area involved (In compliance to comprehensive plan & permitted land-use for zoning classification)
- Whether such use will depreciate the surrounding area (Proposed initial development phases have cleared portions of substandard neighborhood)
- Character of surrounding area (Combination of existing)
- Demonstrated need for such use (Expanded research area needed)

Commissioner Kime motioned approved to the off street parking as presented and Commission Hirst second. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Wallace made a motion to recommend to the city council to allow the variance for the tree mitigation and that if a fee is required in the event that the variance is necessary that that fee would then be taken care of to replace whatever trees are necessary according to the ordinance. Commissioner Skalicky seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Other Business: Downtown Master Plan Update

Mr. Hoium notified the commissioners of the update to the downtown master plan and he will keep them informed as things proceed.

Commissioner Nelson made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Hirst seconded the motion. The motion was carried and the meeting was adjourned at 6:21 pm.