

CITY OF CONVERSE
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES
DECEMBER 20, 2010

The Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Converse met in a regular meeting at the City Conference Hall, 405 S. Seguin Street on Monday December 20, 2010 at 7:00 PM to discuss various items on the agenda.

The Following Commission Members were Present:

Mr. Tito Escobedo, Chairman
Mr. Donnie West, Vice Chair
Mr. Michael White, Member
Mr. Marcelo Buckley, Member
Mr. Richard Fink Sr., Member
Mr. Joe Guastella, Member

Mr. Robert J. Browning, Member
Mr. Jeff Tondre, City Engineer
Mrs. Renee Paschall, Councilwoman as Liasion
Mr. John Quintanilla, Interim City Manger
Mrs. Odie Martinez, Recording Secretary

1. Call Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting to Order.

At approximately 7:02 pm, Chairman Escobedo called the meeting to order.

2. Roll Call and Recognition of Visitors.

Chairman Escobedo announced roll call and stated all members are present with the exception of Member Turner's excused absence.

Visitors:

Katherine Richel, Delinah Glass, Cynthia Parks, Doug Steiner, Chris Vierling, Chris Snocker, Kathleen Snocker, Veronica Vierling, Deborah James, Tricia Gonzalez, Karen Day, Terry Bourland, Mike Blue, Greg Bright, Kate Marquis, Jim Keiemburg, Jim Evans, John Woolery, Linsay Hernandez, Nic Hernandez, Harold Sargeant, Doris Sargeant, George Richel, Martha Hamilton, Blaine Boseman, Stefan Volka, John Rose, Marie Wilhoite, Alene Bray, Burce Cannon, Mike Wilhoite, Councilman Steve Brown.

3. Action to Approve Planning & Zoning Commission Minutes of November 15, 2010.

Member Buckley made first motion. Member Gueatella seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

4. Public Hearing on the Request to Rezone a Portion of a Parcel of Land Located at 9204 FM 78 (CB 5053 P-102C & 102-D, ABS 745, (Property ID 307013), for a Total of Approximately 1.2780 Acres of Land from B-3, Commercial District to B-4, Special Commercial District. (Ms. Nell Hamilton, Owner)

At approximately 7:05pm Chairman Escobedo announced Public Hearing is open.

Jim Evans of 9933 Flatland Trail, a resident since June of 1988. Mr. Evans stated he served in the military for 20 years. He also served in several committees for the City of Converse such as City Council and Building & Standards. He volunteered in Little League and many other organizations for the community. Mr. Evans spoke of how disappointed he is to hear how anyone can project a business without even seeing it happen.

Katherine Richel of 122 Meadow Hill a resident and owner of Sportsman's Bar since 2006 gave a brief description of how much Sportsman's Bar supports and donates to many of the communities organizations such as Blue Santa, NIOC, Judson High School, American Legion and many local businesses. Mrs. Richel requested the communities support to rezone Sportsman's Bar to 9204 FM 78.

Deborah James of 8310 Copperside a supporter, spoke of rezoning the bar.

Karen Day of 10127 Windburn Trail a supporter, spoke of rezoning the bar.

Tricia Gonzalez whom is a resident of the metro area visits the Sportsman's bar every Friday night and speaks of how everyone there makes her feel welcomed. She supports the request to rezone the bar.

Kate Marquis of 9260 FM 78 stated she is a patron of the Sportsman's bar and plays cards there every Friday night. She stated the bar is well established. She also stated her and her partner tried running a similar establishment but were denied. She comments they are happy having them as colleges and not as competitors. She supports the request to rezone the bar.

Nic Hernandez of 812 Meadow Scape a resident for 4 years speaks of how supportive Sportsman's Bar is when an organization or an individual needs help raising funds. Mr. Hernandez supports the rezoning.

Martha Hamilton of 9306 Schaefer, Introduced herself as Mrs. Nell Hamilton's daughter. She briefly explained Mrs. Nell Hamilton (owner of the property) was not present due to just getting out of the hospital and claims she is there to speak on behalf of Mrs. Hamilton. Very briefly she stated her Mom Mrs. Nell Hamilton enjoys doing business with George and Kathy Richel they have never been late with their rent and have never had any problems. Mrs. Hamilton is very particular whom she chooses as a tenant and does not understand why the bar cannot be rezoned. She would like to help him get promoted within the community. Martha Hamilton and Mrs. Nell Hamilton both support the rezoning.

Doug Steiner of 8730 Serene Ridge, A non-resident and a Judson School teacher for 13 years visits the bar every Friday night to play cards. This is the location where he meets family and friends. He speaks highly of the bar and supports to rezone.

Chris Vierling of 7500 Paradise Rd. San Antonio, TX 78217, a resident near Converse and a coach for Little League/Small Football. Mr. Vierling speaks very highly of the Richel's. He gives a brief description of what a great establishment the bar has been since the Richel's took over. He also speaks of how everyone there is like a family and helps one another. He is there as a designated driver as well. He supports the request to rezone.

Greg Bright of 7302 Copper Cove, a resident since 2005 moved from Indiana, a federal employee for 20 years. Mr. Bright stated he has two teenage sons that attend Judson School and has no fear about inviting them to Sportsman's BBQ events. He feels the bar is family oriented and it is well established.

John Woolery of 10064 Spruce Ridge pointed out the aspects of the heavy traffic down FM 78. He does not support the request to rezone.

Linsay Hernandez of 812 Meadow Scape spoke highly of George and Kathy Richel. She supports the request to rezone.

George Richel of 122 Meadow Hill a resident and owner of Sportsman's Bar stated he and his wife Kathy have been owners of the bar since 5 years. The business has been at the same location for over 25 years and would like to relocate to a much bigger location for better business, higher dreams and of course this would mean more taxes to the city. Mr. Richel goes over the aspects of the heavy traffic between the two streets S. Seguin and FM 78 and how much closer the bar is to Judson School and the church. He comment, he has never had any problems at the bar. He is asking for the communities support to relocate to a much bigger location.

Terry Bourland of 512 Wright, Schertz, Texas a non-resident, spent 21 years of his life in Converse. Mr. Bourland supports George and Kathy Richel's request to relocate the bar.

Chairman Escobedo started going down the list from the sign in sheet and calling out names one by one to see if anyone would like to speak out.

Cynthia Parks of 8510 Torchwood Dr. a resident for the past 5 years and a retired Air Force. She was in the force for 20 years. She stated she always has a great time when she visits the bar. She supports the request to relocate the Bar.

Chris Snocker of 4435 Stradford Pl., San Antonio, TX 78217 a non-resident states he and his wife visit the bar and hopes the Richel's get a chance to expand the bar. He supports the request to relocate the bar.

Jim Keimburg of 9260 FM 78 speaks out to support the request to rezone the bar.

Blaine Boseman of 208 Ave B stated Nell Hamilton is his mother-in-law. He acts as the person running some of her businesses. Mr. Boseman stated he has visited Sportsman's Bar and believes it is well established. Mr. Boseman stated he has spoken to Mrs. Hamilton regarding the rezoning of the bar and believes the Richel's deserve a second chance and as far as the traffic there, there are other alternatives to traffic going in and out of the location and he is willing to make any changes to the property to make it more appealing. Mr. Boseman votes the request to rezone the bar.

Stefan Volkman of 4842 Binz-Engleman, Kirby, Texas stated he worked 2 years at the bar before the Richel's took over and comment that they have done a great job since. He also stated the owners brought in a woman's pool team and won state champion 2 years ago. He addressed that the owners are very accurate at who they hire as a bar tender. They pay much attention when someone has had too much to drink. Mr. Volkman spoke very highly of the bar owners. He votes the request to the rezone the bar.

John Rose of 5838 Burgoyne, a non-resident spoke very highly of the bar owners and how everyone there is a team player. He stated it has been a great establishment. Mr. Rose supports the request to rezone the bar.

Alene Bray of 9706 Covered Wagon, stated having a bar in Converse is not the kind of image she would like to see in the city. Ms Bray disapproves the rezone.

Bruce Cannon of 10839 Laurel Creek stated Converse has always presented the city as family orientated and would like to see it stay that way. He comment that by approving the request to rezone the bar it would give the city a negative image. He compared Converse to Schertz and Selma. Mr. Cannon disapproves the rezone.

Mike Wilhoite of 2831 Olive Avenue, Schertz, Texas a non-resident and a church member of Converse. stated the church spends a lot of time and money in the City of Converse. He comment, based on the rezoning request it is not to the best interest of City of Converse. Mr. Wilhoite opposes to the rezoning request.

George Richel (business owner) comment the business will always be there regardless of the location. He stated it has been a great establishment. As he mentioned before they have never had any problems. Mr. Richel stated they are only trying to get the business to grow just as everyone else does.

At approximately 7:47 pm Chairman Escobedo announced the Public Hearing is closed.

5. Discussion and Appropriate Action on the Request to Rezone a Parcel of Land Located at 9204 FM 78 (CB 5053 P-102C & 102-D, ABS 745, (Property ID 307013), for a Total of Approximately 1.2780 Acres of Land from B-3, Commercial District to B-4, Special Commercial District. (Ms. Nell Hamilton, Owner)

Member Buckley stated he solicits the members to vote yes to the request for rezoning. He gave a brief description of history when the property was at one point called, Billy's Irish Pub and at the time it was a B4 zone and 6 months thereafter the business closed and it was then changed to a B3 or rezoned. Very briefly Mr. Quintanilla comment that when they rezoned the city it was a non-conforming use and 6 months after a business closes they reverted back to a B3. Member Buckley stated he and his wife have been visiting the bar for the past 20 years and pointed out the great aspects of Sportsman's bar. He also addressed, "the city is not a dry County". Member Buckley votes yes to relocate.

Member Browning stated he is having a hard time distinguishing the differences between tonight's request verses the previous meeting request for a bar (Kate Marquis and Jim Keiemburg's request). Member Browning asked if the local current bar was a B3. A member of the audience replied, "they have been grandfathered and beliefs it is a B3". Ms. Marquis, a member of the audience briefly stated, according to the map she was handed by Mr. Quintanilla, it is zoned as light industrial and therefore it is grandfathered and that is why it has been able to stay as a bar. Member Browning addressed, as long as we are relocating a responsible bar and not bringing in another bar. Member Browning is okay with the request of the rezone.

Member Guastella addressed the comment the property owner stated regarding he would do anything he can in his power to enhance the area with the proposed bar moving. He stated he knows the area very well and he use to visit Billy's Irish Pub. He addressed there is a back exit that takes you out to a light which leads you to FM 78 and it would not be a danger. Member Guastella votes to approve the request of the rezone.

Member White stated he is relatively new to the City of Converse, he stated, the impression someone gets when entering the City of Converse is depressing and gives negative looks to the city. He stated it is time to improve the area. He votes to relocate the bar.

Member Fink stated, if we approve tonight's request then why didn't we approve the previous request for Pokey's location. He also asked, "Can Pokey's request be reapplied". Mr. Quintanilla replied, "Yes they can but, they would have to wait six months before reapplying.

The committee members discussed and evaluated the request for the rezoned location.

Vice Chair West stated he is not for alcohol but they have every right in the world and fairness to expand their business.

Member Browning asked, if the P&Z board members approve the request, then what is the City Council intent for approval? Mr. Quintanilla replied, "The City Council makes the final decision regardless of what P&Z approves. When P&Z makes an approval the city council uses this as just a recommendation.

Mr. Quintanilla announced, the Staff members denied the recommendation of the rezone due to several reasons, which are **1.** The Mayor announced its time to re-update the City of Converse Master Plan. The last update was back in 2004. **2.** FM 78 is the main gateway to the city and we have only one chance of fully developing and maximizing the land use. Mr. Quintanilla suggested that P&Z Board Members should set aside a time and date to get together and discuss where B3 and B4 should be placed in the map. Mr. Quintanilla, Board Members and various audiences discussed the zonings and clarifications of B3 & B4.

Chairman Escobedo announced, P&Z must take action to motion the request.

Member Buckley made the first motion to approve the request. Member White seconded the motion. Passed 5 to 2 votes with the exception of Member Turner's excused absence.

Member Buckley, Guastella, Browning, White, Chairman Escobedo voted to rezone. Member Fink & Vice-Chair West opposed the request.

6. Report by the City Council Liaison.

Mrs. Paschall Councilwoman Liaison announced her report to the Planning & Zoning board members

- * Christmas Tree Lighting was a beautiful event.
- * Christmas Party was a nice social event.
- * Council disapproved the request to rezone the land at 9260 FM 78.
- * Council approved the Special Use Permit to place an Ice Machine at 9190 FM 78.
- * Council approved ordinance 714.
- * Meetings are on going to prepare the 50th Anniversary for the city.
- * Council approved ordinance 620.
- * Auditing Firm will be discussed at tomorrow's meeting December 21.
- * The search is still on for City Manager & EDC Director.
- * A search is still on for compensation for the city and city employees.

7. Report by Interim City Manager.

Mr. Quintanilla announced he has 2 Plat's to introduce for the next commission meeting.

8. Next Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting will be Monday, January 24, 2011.

Chairman Escobedo addressed to the board members if anyone will not attend the next meeting please notify him by email or phone call.

Mr. Quintanilla announced February's meeting will be held on the 28th due to the 21st being Presidents Day and the offices will be closed that day.

9. Adjournment.

Meeting Adjourned at approximately 8:17 pm.