

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 19, 2020  
DOTHAN, ALABAMA**

The Dothan Planning Commission met on Wednesday, February 19, 2020, at 9:00 a.m., in the City Commission Chambers, 126 North St. Andrews Street, Room 203, of the Roy L. Driggers Municipal Building (Civic Center).

Chair Coleman brought the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

***Opening Comments:***

Chair Coleman explained that the Planning Commission does not rezone properties but rather recommends rezoning to the City Commission for approval. The Planning Commission approves development plans for commercial property and subdivision plats for both residential and commercial properties. He suggested any group present designate a spokesperson to address any questions or concerns, state their name and address when addressing the Commission, and if addressing the Commission, to sign in. Chair Coleman requested all cellular devices be muted or turned off and stated that all meetings were recorded for public record.

1. ***Members Present:*** Chairman, Jerry Coleman, Vice-Chair Mickey Davis, David Cornelius, David Brewer, Milt Wood, Neil Holloway, Bob Whiddon, Gantt Pierce, Aline Roberts (SUP) sitting, and Darrin Swan (SUP) sitting.

***Members absent:*** Gayla White

***Others Present:*** Commissioner, David Crutchfield; Lori Wilcoxon (SUP); Todd McDonald, AICP, Planning and Development Director; Frank Breaux, AICP, Senior Planner; Bob Wilkerson, Planner II; Kevan Kelly, Assistant Attorney; Bart Barefoot, Assistant Public Works Director; Jonathan Lucas and Josh Chapman, Engineering Services; Craig Walden, Building Official; Stacey Livingston, Business Services Manager; Tommy Wright, Traffic Engineering; and, Theresa Eddy, Secretary.

2. ***Approval of Agenda***

Chair Coleman asked Mr. Breaux if there were any changes to the agenda, and Mr. Breaux stated that there was none. Chair Coleman asked for a motion. ***Mr. Wood motioned to approve the agenda, Mr. Whiddon seconded, and the motion carried.***

3. ***Approval of January 15, 2020, Meeting Minutes***

***Ms. Roberts motioned to approve the meeting minutes, Mr. Cornelius seconded, and the motion carried.***

4. ***Disclosure of ex parte contact – (1) Chair Coleman on DP-20-0014***

**Old Business**

***None.***

**New Business**

5. **DP-20-0013: Development Plan request for a New Building Addition – Project Located at 511 South Lena Street – R-4 District – St. James Baptist Church – represented by Praestare Engineering.** Mr. Breaux presented staff findings per the submitted staff report. Chair Coleman asked if anyone had questions for Mr. Breaux, with no response. Chair Coleman asked who was present regarding this case and Mr. Jody Solomon, Praestare Engineering, addressed the commission. Chair Coleman asked Mr. Solomon if he had read the six staff recommendations and if he had any questions regarding them, to which Mr. Solomon affirmed with no questions. Chair Coleman asked Mr. Solomon if he would be submitting a

landscaping plan, to which Mr. Solomon affirmed. Chair Coleman asked if there was anyone in the audience regarding this case, and one person raised their hand but did not want to address the commission. Chair Coleman asked if anyone had further questions or comments with no response. Chair Coleman then asked for a motion. **Mr. Wood motioned for approval of DP-20-0013 with the six staff recommendations, Mr. Pierce seconded, and the motion carried.**

1. A landscaping plan must be submitted which demonstrates compliance with all requirements of Article 13 of the zoning regulations;
2. A photometric plan must be submitted showing a luminance of not more than .4 foot-candles extending 50 feet into the residentially zoned properties to the west, south, and east;
3. The comments of all city departments are incorporated into the final construction plans before a building permit is issued by the Building Official's Office;
4. Resubmit the development plan incorporating all design changes;
5. All future correspondence or building permit plan submittal must make reference to Case DP-20-0013 and,
6. The Development Plan approval will lapse and re-approval by the Planning Commission will be necessary if a building permit is not obtained within one year of the approval date.

Note: Mr. Cornelius recused himself and Mr. Swan stepped up to the dais in his place.

6. **DP-20-0014: Development Plan for a hotel – Property located at 3394 Ross Clark Circle – 39,571 square foot building on 2.05 Acres- B-2 District – Shankheshwar Swami, LLC represented by Northstar Engineering Services.** Mr. Breaux presented staff findings per the submitted staff report and explained that the hotel would have a 30-foot buffer with trees and shrubs between the site and the existing single-family residences to the south. He recommended that the plant materials within the buffer be evergreen and of a variety that would form an effective year round buffer. He pointed out deficiencies with the landscaping plan and asked Mr. Tommy Wright, Traffic Engineer, to explain the new site access per ALDOT's ongoing work. Mr. Wright gave a full overview of the new roadway configuration and access changes, and Chair Coleman asked if anyone had questions for Mr. Wright, with no response. Chair Coleman asked Mr. Breaux the applicant has met all requirements for the B-2 District, to which Mr. Breaux affirmed. Mr. Breaux stated that Mr. Bob Wilkerson was also available to comment on the proposed plant materials within the buffer. Chair Coleman asked who was representing the applicant and Mr. Steve Ethridge, Attorney for Mr. Shaw and Mr. Lee Brown from Northstar Engineering addressed the commission. Chair Coleman asked Mr. Brown if he read the staff recommendation and if he had any questions, to which Mr. Brown stated he had read them with no questions. Chair Coleman asked if Mr. Brown considered a privacy fence for the top of the retaining wall for the length of the property, to which Mr. Brown responded that Mr. Shaw was agreeable to the fence. Chair Coleman asked if the privacy fence could be paneled on both sides, to which Mr. Brown stated that it wasn't discussed in detail. Chair Coleman asked if the commission had questions for Mr. Brown with no response. Chair Coleman asked who in the audience was present regarding this case, to which four people raised their hands.

Mr. Mark Poland, 117 Rosetta Circle, stated that he had been a resident for approximately 15 years and had concerns regarding the landscaping, fencing, and lights. Mr. Poland stated that it took almost 10 years to grow the buffer for TGI Fridays, which has not been taken care of properly, and that the parking lot creates pollution. Mr. Poland pointed out where he lived and then stated that he was not in support.

Ms. Cheri Knowles, 104 Camillia Drive, stated that she was not directly impacted by this property but was supporting her neighbors in the Garden District.

Mr. Jonas Forrester, 705 Rosemont Drive, stated his concern regarding the proper maintenance of the buffer materials and the time necessary to establish it. Mr. Forrester stated that he would like to see a business there rather than a vacant lot but was looking for more guarantees. Mr. Forrester would like to see the Pine Trees remain. Chair Coleman asked Mr. Forrester to point to his lot, to which Mr. Forrester did. Mr. Forrester's back yard is adjacent to the south side of the development area.

Mr. Ronald Gause, 506 Rosemont Drive, was representing John Gause at 702 Rosemont Drive and his daughter at 123 Rosetta Circle. Mr. Gause stated that most of his concerns had been answered but was still concerned with the height of the fence and the buffer. Mr. Gause did not feel that the 6 ft. height was adequate.

Chair Coleman asked Mr. Brown to return to the podium to address these issues. Chair Coleman asked Mr. Brown to explain the lighting, to which Mr. Brown stated that there would be lighting on the east side and small wall packs on the south side that would meet the requirements of the city. Mr. Breaux stated that a photometric plan was required to which Mr. Brown stated that they would meet the photometric requirements.

Chair Coleman asked about the buffer and Mr. Breaux stated that there were tree or shrubbery species identified on the plans, just the heights. Mr. Wood asked if the fence could be 8 feet high and made out of a low maintenance material, to which Mr. Brown responded that Mr. Shaw was agreeable to the 8-foot fence.

Chair Coleman asked Mr. Bob Wilkerson to take the podium for questions. Mr. Wilkerson stated that a landscape architect should have been consulted during the project design phase as many of the issues being discussed could have already been addressed. He stated that this was a great opportunity to terrace the landscaping between the residents and the hotel so that the initial vegetation could be 10 feet higher than what was shown at the parking lot level. Mr. Wilkerson stated that there are a lot of dense evergreens that grow rapidly and the Green Giants are a good selection. Mr. Wilkerson also suggested Hollies for variety. Mr. Wilkerson stated that creating a green wall, built out of a screen and then covered in vines as an architectural feature, could be utilized as well. Mr. Coleman asked what trees Mr. Wilkerson would suggest covering the area, to which Mr. Wilkerson stated that the Green Giants and Italian Cypress would be the best for visual coverage. Mr. Wood asked about American Holly and Mr. Wilkerson stated that it was a good choice as well as there are numerous varieties of Holly that would work here. Mr. Breaux recommended allowing Mr. Wilkerson to review any landscaping submissions for this project, to which Chair Coleman affirmed. Chair Coleman asked if anyone had questions for Mr. Wilkerson, with no response.

Chair Coleman asked if the commission members had questions and Mr. Swan asked about the hotel being tailored to a certain clientele, to which Mr. Brown stated that he was not aware of the hotel focusing on a certain type of clientele but that the hotel was more modern and trendier. Ms. Roberts asked if the five employee parking spaces were going to be adequate, to which Mr. Brown stated that there were fifteen employees on three shifts. Mr. Wood asked if there was going to be a restaurant in the hotel, to which Mr. Brown responded that there would only be a breakfast bar. Mr. Brewer asked about the construction schedule, to which Mr. Brown stated about a month after the drawings were submitted and then 9-12 months for construction.

Mr. Brooks Devane, 706 Rosemont Drive, wanted to know about the franchise rights, to which Chair Coleman stated that such issues were not germane to the case. Chair Coleman stated that if approved, the construction had to start within 12 months and if not, the developer had to file for a 6-month extension with a viable reason.

Ms. Jamie Poland, 117 Rosetta Circle, was concerned about the guests in the hotel looking into her backyard and house windows and asked if the hotel would consider using frosted glass on the south side of the building.

Chair Coleman asked if anyone else had questions or comments, and Mr. Wood made a motion for approval with an additional condition of requiring Mr. Wilkerson's review of the amended landscaping plan, and another condition requiring an eight-foot tall privacy fence along the south property line atop the retaining wall. Mr. Swan made a comment regarding his appreciation for the residents coming out and voicing their concerns. Chair Coleman then asked for a motion. **Mr. Wood motion for approval of DP-20-0014 with the seven staff recommendations and adding that the landscaping scope and design be coordinated with the city staff and that an 8-foot privacy fence be built on the south side of the property, Mr. Brewer seconded, and the motion passed with a vote of 8-1 (Mr. Swan opposed).**

1. The landscaping plan must be corrected to meet all requirements of Sec 114-238 of the zoning regulations;
2. Demonstrate conformity with the architectural requirements of Sec 114-83;
3. The comments of all city departments are incorporated into the final construction plans before a building permit is issued by the Building Official's Office;
4. A photometric plan is submitted prior to the issuance of the building permit illustrating a luminance of not more than .4 Foot Candles measured to a distance 50 feet within the residential property to the south;
5. An eight-foot privacy fence shall be constructed along the south property line;
6. A revised landscaping plan shall be submitted to staff for approval;
7. Resubmit the development plan incorporating all design changes;
8. All future correspondence or building permit plan submittal must make reference to Case DP-20-0014 and,
9. The Development Plan approval will lapse and re-approval by the Planning Commission will be necessary if a building permit is not obtained within one year of the approval date.

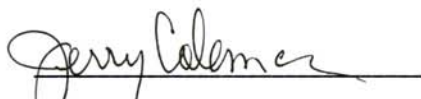
7. **TXT-20-0026 – Special Principal Use Standards.** Mr. Breaux presented to the commission recommending that 'day-care' be removed from section B(2)(c). **Mr. Swan recommended approval to the City Commission with the change, Mr. Holloway seconded, and the motion carried.**

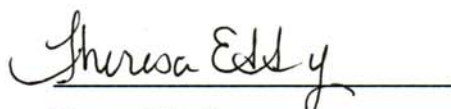
8. **Consent Items: Minor Development Plans & Subdivision Plats: (2)**

9. **Discussion**

10. **Adjourn.**

**Mr. Holloway made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Swan seconded, and the motion carried.  
The meeting ended at 10:00 a.m. The next meeting is on March 18, 2020.**

  
Jerry Coleman, Chairman

  
Theresa Eddy, Secretary