



CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA
SEPTEMBER 17, 2020
TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE MINUTES
SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE ACTION

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Montes De Oca called the regular meeting of the Technical Review Committee for the City of Okeechobee to order on Thursday, September 17, 2020, at 10:00 A.M. in the City Council Chambers, located at 55 Southeast 3rd Avenue, Room 200, Okeechobee, Florida. Pursuant to Executive Order No. 20-69 issued by Governor DeSantis on March 20, 2020, and further extended by Executive Order No. 20-193, effective August 7, 2020, the meeting was conducted utilizing communications media technology as provided by Florida Statutes 120.54(5)(b)2, by means of Zoom.com Meeting ID 2459713294. The Host computer was operated by Executive Assistant Brock. The video, audio, and digital comments are recorded and retained as a permanent record.

A. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Montes De Oca.

II. ATTENDANCE

Technical Review Committee Secretary Patty Burnette called the roll. City Administrator Marcos Montes De Oca, Public Works Director David Allen, Building Official Jeffery Newell, and Fire Chief Herb Smith were present. Police Chief Bob Peterson was absent, and Major Donald Hagan was present in his place.

CITY STAFF

City Planning Consultant Ben Smith, General Services Secretary Yesica Montoya, Executive Assistant Robin Brock and Okeechobee County Environmental Health Director Victor Faconti were present in the Chambers. The School Board Representative and Okeechobee Utility Authority (OUA) Executive Director John Hayford were absent with consent.

III. AGENDA

- A. Chairperson Montes De Oca asked whether there were any agenda items to be added, deferred or withdrawn. There were none.
- B. A motion was made by Building Official Newell to approve the agenda as published; seconded by Public Works Director Allen.

Chairperson Montes De Oca, Public Works Director Allen, Building Official Newell, Major Hagan, and Fire Chief Smith voted: Aye. Nays: none. Motion Carried.

IV. MINUTES

- A. A motion was made by Building Official Newell to dispense with the reading and approve the June 18, 2020 regular meeting minutes; seconded by Major Hagan.

Chairperson Montes De Oca, Public Works Director Allen, Building Official Newell, Major Hagan, and Fire Chief Smith voted: Aye. Nays: none. Motion Carried.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. City Planning Consultant Ben Smith of LaRue Planning and Management Services briefly reviewed the Planning Staff Report for Abandonment of Right-of-Way Petition No. 20-002-SC, which requests to vacate the portion of Southwest 4th Street (formerly known per plat as Fifth Avenue), 100 feet in width, lying North of Lot 1, of Block 190, and the portion of Southwest 5th Street (formerly known per plat as Fourth Street), 70 feet in width, lying North of, Block 191, both being CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, Plat Book 5, Page 5, Public Records of Okeechobee County. The surrounding property which is owned by the Applicant was recently approved for a Future Land Use Map (FLUM) Amendment and a Rezoning to Industrial. If this request is approved, the Applicant has stated their intention is to expand their industrial manufacturing operation that has been in existence on the property to the North. With the recent FLUM and Zoning approvals and given that all surrounding properties on the West side of Southwest 7th Avenue are designated Industrial, it seems appropriate to place an Industrial designation on the vacated property. Planning Staff's responses to the required findings are: the alleyways are not the sole means of access to any property; the Applicant owns all the surrounding property on the West side of Southwest 7th Avenue; the proposed rights-of-way areas to be vacated have not been improved to facilitate vehicular travel; turning over maintenance responsibilities to the Applicant and adding property to the City's tax rolls will be a benefit to the City; and finally, the Applicant has received authorization from all necessary utility entities. Florida Power & Light (FPL) is requiring a 10-foot easement be provided on the East end of Southwest 4th and 5th Street rights-of-way West of 7th Avenue. Century Link has requested a condition that the Applicant will bear the cost of relocation and repair any facilities that are found and/or damaged in the vacated areas. Planning Staff is recommending **approval** based on these findings.

1. Building Official Newell confirmed with the Applicant's representative, Mr. Steve Dobbs, that his client agreed with all the Utility Companies comments. Mr. Dobbs confirmed this.

Fire Chief Smith: No issues were received.

Major Hagan: No issues were received.

Public Works Director Allen: No issues were received.

County Environmental Health Dept: No issues were received.

OUA: Director Hayford was not in attendance although forwarded an email to the Committee Secretary stating he had no issues with this application.

2. Mr. Steven Dobbs, Engineering Project Manager, representing the Property Owner, Loumax Development Inc, was present and available for questions. There were none.

3. Chairperson Montes De Oca asked whether there were any comments or questions from those in attendance from the Public. There were none.
4. Chairperson Montes De Oca disclosed he had spoken with Mr. Dobbs regarding the application. There were no other disclosures.
5. A motion was offered by Building Official Newell to recommend approval to the Planning Board for Abandonment of Right-of-Way Petition No. 20-002-SC, which requests to vacate the portion of Southwest 4th Street (formerly known per plat as Fifth Avenue) and the portion of Southwest 5th Street (formerly known as Fourth Street) with the following conditions: FPL is requiring a 10-foot easement be provided on the East end of Southwest 4th Street and 5th Street rights-of-way West of 7th Avenue; and Century Link has requested a condition that the Applicant will bear the cost of relocation and repair any facilities that are found and/or damaged in the vacated areas; seconded by Public Works Director Allen.
 - a) The Committee offered no further discussion.
 - b) **Chairperson Montes De Oca, Public Works Director Allen, Building Official Newell, Major Hagan, and Fire Chief Smith voted: Aye. Nays: none. Motion Carried.**

- B. City Planning Consultant Smith briefly reviewed the Planning Staff Report for Site Plan Review Application No. 20-005-TRC, which pertains to the construction of a proposed Church sanctuary and fellowship hall, on 10.24 vacant acres with parking and drainage facilities located at 807 Southwest 2nd Street. The Applicant proposes to build in phases. The church sanctuary and fellowship hall are proposed in the first phase and the site plan depicts for future development a gym, a conference hall and the reservation of 0.5 acres in the Southeast corner of the parcel for a parsonage. The sanctuary, fellowship hall, gym, and conference hall are all proposed with building footprints of 70-feet by 150-feet and to be 10,500 square feet each. A 20-foot by 25-foot porte-cochere is also proposed for the main sanctuary building. The proposed vacant site is located between Southwest 8th Avenue to the North and Southwest 6th Street to the South. Vacant land, which is the site of an approved, yet unbuilt, 190 dwelling unit apartment complex, lies to the West. To the East lie commercial uses as well as an active industrial manufacturing facility (Ecotec Manufacturing Inc.) that is currently proposed for expansion.

The Applicant is proposing the use of a well for potable water and a septic system for sewage disposal. Regarding solid waste disposal, service will be provided by Waste Management, which has stated service is available and adequate capacity exists in the County's solid waste facility to serve the proposed development. A drainage report has been submitted, and a dry retention area is depicted on the site plan. Regarding traffic generation, the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) trip generation rate for churches is 9.11 weekday trips per 1,000 square feet. At 21,000 square feet, the ITE trip generation rates provide an estimate of 191 daily weekday trips for phase one of the project. Phase two of the project would add another 21,000 square feet, as well as a single-family residence. Upon

completion of all proposed structures, it is estimated that 393 daily weekday trips will be generated by this project.

Combined with the additional vehicle trips that will be generated by the approved yet unbuilt apartment complex on the adjacent property to the West, the level of traffic in this neighborhood has the potential to increase substantially. A more in-depth traffic study may need to be conducted at such time as the phase 2 Two structures are proposed for construction, especially depending on the use of those structures, as gyms, daycares and study areas are often used throughout the week, not just on Sundays. If at that time it is determined that there will be capacity issues, it may be appropriate to require that the access from Southwest 6th Street be converted from an emergency entrance with stabilized grass to a paved secondary entrance. The main ingress/egress for this facility will be from Southwest 8th Avenue. An additional emergency entrance is also proposed from Southwest 6th Street.

The entrance on Southwest 8th Avenue is 24 feet wide, as well as all of the drive aisles with adjacent parking spaces. However, the drive aisle beneath the porte-cochere is only 17-feet wide and one of the drive aisles at the end of a parking row is only 20-feet wide. The dumpster pad is located at the end of a parking row and should be accessible for any truck. The loading zone is located adjacent to the sanctuary building and large trucks will likely need to pass beneath the porte-cochere to access it. Section 90-512(4) requires that places of worship be provided with one parking space per three persons in main auditorium. The plans state that the maximum seating of the auditorium is 450 persons, which requires 150 parking spaces. Section 90-484 of the City's Land Development Regulations (LDR's) Code allows for applicants to request approval for a reduction in the number of required paved parking spaces. The application submittal package did not mention any such request, though the applicant's engineer has indicated in emails that this request will be made. This section further allows for the City Council to approve such a request upon submittal of a parking study which demonstrates that the proposed use normally would have a demand for the total required parking spaces only on one or two days a week; and allows for up to 75 percent of the parking spaces to be reduced. Plans depict a new sidewalk along Southwest 2nd Street and a photometric lighting plan is provided which demonstrates adequate illumination of the parking area.

The dimensional standards review appears to meet the requirements except for paved parking spaces; unclear as to whether the walkway adjacent to the fellowship hall extends to the entrance; no landscaping is shown in the two-foot wide space reserved around the perimeter of the sanctuary building and along the fellowship hall; 39 shrubs are required in the buffer areas on the East property line and only 22 shrubs are shown; and many of the proposed trees in the parking area are palms which do not provide as much shade as other types for the pedestrian walks and parking spaces.

Planning Staff is recommending **approval** based on the above analysis with the following conditions to be met prior to issuance of building permits: City Council approval of a 75 percent reduction in the number of paved parking spaces; should the Fire Chief agree, the stabilized grass driveway that is proposed from Southwest 6th Street is acceptable as long as a security gate is maintained, and use is restricted to emergency situations only; plans should clearly demonstrate that a paved walkway extends to the entrance of the fellowship hall and the Applicant should also consider rerouting that walkway away from the dumpster pad; two-foot wide landscaped buffers should be provided between buildings and vehicular areas; 17 additional shrubs should be provided along the East property line; and the Applicant should consider substituting shade trees for palms in the parking areas and around the walking paths.

1. Building Official Newell suggested maybe having the Applicant come back to another meeting since there are many needed revisions. He reviewed the Planner's conditions on page 10 of the Staff Report with Mr. Dobbs to make sure they were in agreement with them.

Fire Chief Smith commented the plans indicate the building is not sprinkled. Per the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the building shall be required to install an automatic fire sprinkler system based on the occupancy load. Underground piping supplying the fire sprinkler system and all associated components is required. In addition, there is nothing indicated on the proposed plans regarding the size of water mains supplying water to the complex or the fire sprinkler system. The fire flow will need to be determined after the water mains are identified and their sizes. The project requires at least one fire hydrant now that will need to be connected with OUA service as a well will not be sufficient. Additional hydrants may be required when the future development stage takes place. Chief Smith inquired as to the rated weight of the access road as he was concerned with the fire trucks sinking when the grassy material was wet. He inquired as to whether the entrance on Southwest 8th Street would be gated and whether the Fire Department would have access. Last item Chief Smith inquired about was in reference to some type of paved Y-shaped turnaround that could be installed again for stability for the fire trucks.

Major Hagan: No issues were received.

Public Works Director Allen pointed out Section 90-511(e)(1) of the City's Land Development Regulations states **except for** single-family dwellings and places of public assembly or worship, each parking and loading space shall be paved. Planner Smith confirmed this to be accurate therefore, no request for a reduction in paved parking spaces is required.

Chairperson Montes De Oca voiced a concern regarding the stabilized access and parking area. Need more detail on the drainage so that areas are not muddy and there is no sinking when people park. Suggested installing a six-inch layer of shell rock underneath the geogrid, which is a geosynthetic made from polymeric materials and used for reinforcement applications in various types of construction projects. He thanked the Applicant for proposing a sidewalk along the frontage on Southwest 2nd Avenue. Lastly, he commented given the parsonage is part of the parcel, access should be internal to the property and there should be no access from Southwest 7th Avenue to the site. All access needs to come through the facility.

County Environmental Health Dept Faconti: No issues where received.

In the absence of OUA Director Hayford, Chairperson Montes De Oca read into the record an email he sent stating the following: since both TRC agenda items for the September 17, 2020 meeting do not require OUA water or sewer, the OUA will not be participating. I will point out the second agenda item does at one point state that OUA water will be required, but, the plans do not show water mains or well location and the City Staff Report states the Applicant will be utilizing a well and septic tank for water and sewer needs. Please confirm as to how potable water and wastewater will be provided.

2. Mr. Steven Dobbs, Engineering Project Manager, on behalf of the Property Owner, Haven of Rest Inc., as well as Mr. Tom Velie, were present for questions. Mr. Dobbs responded to a question from Fire Chief Smith regarding the rated weight of the access road. The road will be highway rated for access and then the grass will grow over it. Regarding water and wastewater, they will provide plans and coordinate with OUA. In the spirit of trying to keep construction costs low, Mr. Velie stated they will drop the seating capacity to try and stay under the NFPA requirement for a fire sprinkler system. Discussion ensued regarding fire walls and establishing fire zones that would be reviewed by both the Building Official and Fire Chief for approval according to all building and fire codes. There is a lockbox installed at the Southwest 6th Street gate for fire department access. Mr. Dobbs commented there would be a stabilized area for the fire trucks to turn around in. Finally, he inquired about a groundbreaking for the Church. This is fine to have although both the Fire Chief and the Building Official stated they can not approve any reviews of the buildings until the infrastructure was in place for the water supply. The hydrant needs to be installed and working before construction starts.
3. Chairperson Montes De Oca asked whether there any comments or questions from those in attendance from the Public. There were none.
4. Chairperson Montes de Oca asked for Disclose of Ex parte Communications by the Committee. There were none.

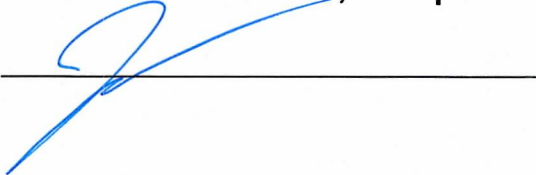
5. A motion was offered by Building Official Newell to approve Site Plan Review Application No. 20-005-TRC, which pertains to the construction of a proposed Church sanctuary and fellowship hall, on 10.24 vacant acres with parking and drainage facilities located at 807 Southwest 2nd Street with the following contingencies: should the Fire Chief agree, the stabilized grass driveway that is proposed from Southwest 6th Street is acceptable as long as a security gate is maintained, and use is restricted to emergency situations only; plans should clearly demonstrate that a paved walkway extends to the entrance of the fellowship hall and the Applicant should also consider rerouting that walkway away from the dumpster pad; two-foot wide landscaped buffers should be provided between buildings and vehicular areas; 17 additional shrubs should be provided along the East property line; the Applicant should consider substituting shade trees for palms in the parking areas and around the walking paths; add fire zones to the buildings; phase two will require a paved secondary entrance; add stabilized lime rock to grass emergency access; add fire hydrant for fire protection from OUA connection; and no access off of Southwest 7th Street for the parsonage; seconded by Fire Chief Smith.

- a) The Committee offered no further discussion.
- b) **Chairperson Montes De Oca, Public Works Director Allen, Building Official Newell, Major Hagan, and Fire Chief Smith voted: Aye. Nays: none. Motion Carried.**

- VI. There being no further items on the agenda, Chairperson Montes De Oca adjourned the meeting at 10:52 A.M.

Please take note and be advised that any person desiring to appeal any decision made by the Technical Review Committee with respect to any matter considered at this proceeding, such interested person will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose may need to ensure a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. General Service's media are for the sole purpose of backup for official records of the Department.

Marcos Montes De Oca, Chairperson



ATTEST:

Patty M. Burnette, Secretary

