



**CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA**  
**OCTOBER 15, 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, October 15, 2020, at 10:01 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. 20-246, effective September 30, 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. Okeechobee Utility Authority (OUA) Executive Director John Hayford entered the Chambers at 10:06 A.M. City Attorney John Fumero and the School Board Representative 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- A. Chairperson Montes De Oca asked whether there were any agenda items to be added, deferred or withdrawn.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 Public Works Director Allen to dispense with the reading and approve the September 17, 2020 regular meeting minutes; seconded by Fire Chief Smith.

**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.** Chairperson Montes De Oca yielded the floor to City Planning Consultant Ben Smith of LaRue Planning and Management Services. He briefly reviewed the Planning Staff Report for Site Plan Review Application No. 20-006-TRC which pertains to the construction of a proposed 8,100 square foot RaceTrac Convenience Store with fueling positions and drive-through requests on 18.86 ± unplatted acres located at 975 Northeast Park Street. This is a revision from a previous Site Plan that was approved on May 21, 2020. Two special exception requests have been submitted concurrently: one for approval of drive-through service and the other for a convenience store with fuel pumps. The drive-through service is a new feature that has been added to this revised site plan. A special exception request Petition No. 20-002-SE, for the convenience store with fuel pumps was previously approved on May 21, 2020 by the City's Board of Adjustment, though that approval included a condition that trucks would not be permitted to park overnight. Since that previous special exception approval, the Applicant has revised the site plan substantially and is now requesting another special exception approval which does not include the condition of no overnight truck parking. The subject site is a vacant parcel located on the North side of Park Street/State Road 70 (SR70) just East of Northeast 8th Avenue and across from Southeast 10th Avenue. The subject property, shown as parcel 1 on the survey, is 18.86 acres but only the Southwest 7.11 acres of the parcel will be used for the proposed development. The Applicant has not offered any plans to develop the remaining 11.75 acres at this time. Major features of the proposed project are: 8,100 square foot convenience store with drive through service; outdoor patio seating area; 8,800 square foot canopy to the South side of the store covering 16 vehicle fueling stations; 3,900 square foot canopy to the North side covering six large truck fueling stations; 30 standard size and three ADA parking spaces; 24 large truck parking spaces at the rear (North side) of the development; a truck scale; water retention area at the rear (North side) of the development; two access driveways from Park Street/SR70 and an eight-foot tall privacy wall on the portion of the West property line adjacent to residences of the river Run Resort Mobile Home Park.

The Applicant has stated that a 12-inch potable water main and an eight-inch gravity sewer main exist along Park Street/SR70, both of which can be tapped into for this project. Applying the City's Level of Service standard for nonresidential use of 0.15 gallons of water per day per square foot to the 8,100 square feet of building floor area indicates a demand of about 1,215 gallons of potable water and wastewater treatment each per day. 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. Thomas Engineering Group has prepared a site drainage report addressing drainage, water quality, and water quantity, which are being handled through the permitting requirements of the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD).

NEW BUSINESS ITEM A CONTINUED: The traffic impact analysis performed by MacKenzie Engineering & Planning, Inc., estimates this proposed development will generate 5,923 total daily external vehicle trips, 298 daily external vehicle trips during the AM and 526 during the PM Peak hour, 13,292 total daily driveway vehicle trips and 881 daily driveway vehicle trips during the AM and 1,153 during the PM peak hour. The Florida Department of Transportation's most recent (2019) annual average daily traffic (AADT) count for this segment of Park Street/SR 70 is 26,000 vehicle trips. Adding another 5,923 daily vehicle trips represents a 22.8 percent increase without accounting for any changes in the AADT. The Applicant's traffic engineer is recommending roadway improvements and changes to traffic signalization at the intersection of Park Street/SR70 and Southeast 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Two new access driveways are proposed on Park Street/SR70. The proposed driveway at the intersection of Park Street/SR70 and Southeast 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue will allow for ingress and egress to and from both directions of Park Street/SR70 and for vehicles Northbound on Southeast 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The other driveway will allow ingress and egress only for vehicles traveling Westbound on SR70. Interior circulation appears to be adequate with all drive aisles exceeding the minimum code requirements. However, a drive through has been added to this revised site plan and very little analysis has been provided by the Applicant regarding the expected ability of the drive through to function without causing internal circulation issues or queuing that could extend into the public right-of-way. The Applicant has furnished a truck circulation plan, which illustrates the path of the truck entering and exiting the site for refueling of the fuel storage tanks or accessing the loading space. The truck route plan adequately illustrates the turn movements required to access the fuel tank fill locations. The proposed loading zone meets all minimum dimensional requirements and is located adjacent to the dumpster enclosure in order to facilitate solid waste removal. The dumpster enclosure meets all required setbacks and is adequately located to accommodate employee trash take out and solid waste truck access.

The dimensional standards review appears to meet the requirements except for the plan shows 24 uninterrupted semi-truck parking spaces at the rear of the property. A landscape island should be added to break up these spaces. There is no depiction of monument sign area or height. While the notes on the plans indicate a monument sign will be installed, the Applicant recently applied for a variance for a pole sign. Variance Petition No. 20-001-V was denied by the Board of Adjustment at the August 20, 2020 meeting. No sign details are provided on the revised plans. There is also no maximum total sign area depicted. In conclusion, Planning Staff is recommending based on the foregoing analyses, the following conditions be met prior to issuance of building permits: a landscape island should be provided in the middle of the rear truck parking area so that no more than 12 spaces are in a row, uninterrupted by a landscape island; provide sign plans which depict the building signs and pole/monument sign meeting the requirements of the City signage codes; demonstrate that drive through vehicle stacking will not create internal circulation issues or extend into the public right-of-way; and approval of Special Exception for drive-through service.

1. Building Official Newell supports the proposed project although he voiced concerns with the noise impact to the residential area to the West and asked whether RaceTrac would consider putting up a wall to the North as well. Inquired as to whether the Land Development Regulations (LDR's) addressed a decibel code for overnight parking as semi-trucks do not shut down especially refrigerated trucks.

Fire Chief Smith inquired about the location of the fire hydrants. One is shown as being provided near the rear semi-truck parking area and another in close proximity to Park Street/SR70. RaceTrac is actually installing a full water main extension in case in the future a business comes to the North or East of them they can take that 12-inch line and extend it.

Major Hagan supports the project but inquired as to whether the Applicant would consider a wall on the North side as well as on the West side to ensure a sound barrier for the residential area. In addition, he believes RaceTrac should maintain this wall on both sides.

Public Works Director Allen commented currently there are existing drainage problems on the East side of the River Run Resort Mobile Home Park and to just be cognizant of that when building so as to not add to more issues. Chairperson Montes De Oca commented there is a platted ten-foot drainage easement and a 15-foot utility easement on the West side of this property so this should make a difference.

County Environmental Health Dept: No issues were received.

Chairperson Montes De Oca discussed a potential issue with the turning radius of the drive-through. May need to modify curbing to the North with some transition to the grassy area to accommodate trucks with trailers and/or boats. Discussed maintenance to the wall that will be constructed on the West side of the property. Commented he had no issues with overnight parking as we need to adhere to what our LDR's address and one should not need to go beyond that. He suggested changing the HDPE type of pipe material to another type due to the heavy loads that may travel over it. Lastly, he commented that he understands the concern for the residential neighborhood, but things do not stay the same and growth is expected. This is the appropriate area along the commercial corridor for this use. They again have gone above and beyond with buffering and it is 24-hour seven days a week facility and our LDR's do not provide a definition for overnight parking.

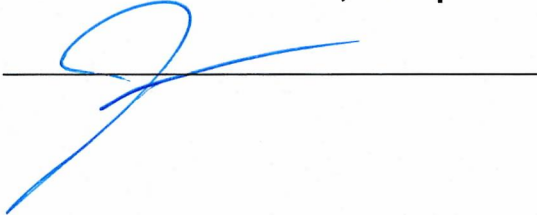
OUA Executive Director Hayford discussed some clarifications on the project and additional plumbing plans that were needed.

2. Mr. Kevin Betancourt, Thomas Engineering, representing the Property Owner, RaceTrac Petroleum Inc., was present and available for questions. Mr. Betancourt explained the wall would run along the West side of the property to the retention area along with buffering. Then there will be a buffer area behind the semi-truck parking and before the retention area to the North as well as buffering to the East. The shrub buffering can grow to a pretty tall height. The drive-through is one way where you enter, order and then exit. There is a bypass lane as well in case someone gets in there by accident. Building plans are ready for submittal. Regarding the needed landscape island at the rear of the property where the semi-trucks park, would they be able to not provide this because they are worried that the semis would just destroy it should they drive over it or back into it. Chairperson Montes De Oca commented the type of curbing could be modified as it really is needed to break up the continuous row of parking spaces. Consensus of the Committee was they all agreed. He also stated they are working with SFWMD on showing a clearer berm that will hold in everything on their side. They are resubmitting to FDOT a more complete set of plans showing signalization and turn lanes.
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 the RaceTrac people regarding the application. There were no other disclosures.
5. A motion was offered by Fire Chief Smith to approve Site Plan Review Application No. 20-006-TRC, which pertains to the construction of a proposed 8,100 sq. ft RaceTrac Convenience Store with fueling positions and drive-through requests on 18.86 ± unplatted acres located at 975 NE Park Street with the following conditions: coordinate with FDOT on traffic issues; provide a landscape island in the middle of the rear truck parking area so that no more than 12 spaces are in a row uninterrupted; provide sign plans which depict the building signs and pole/monument sign meeting the requirements of the City signage codes; demonstrate that the auto turn in the drive through will work with small trucks and modify curbing; provide additional plans to the OUA; provide additional buffering analysis with a written statement that gives optimum design height of the landscaping to be provided along the Western boundary; and approval of Special Exception for drive-through service; 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.**

**VI.** There being no further items on the agenda, Chairperson Montes De Oca adjourned the meeting at 10:45 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**

