

## PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES - CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

Tuesday, May 17, 2016 – 7:00 p.m.  
City Hall Chambers - 8150 Barbara Avenue

Chair Maggi Gooch called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Elizabeth Niemioja  
Bill Klein  
Pat Simon  
Tony Scales  
Harold Gooch  
Armando Lissarrague  
Annette Maggi  
Joan Robertson

Commissioners Absent: Dennis Wippermann (excused)

Others Present: Allan Hunting, City Planner  
Heather Botten, Associate Planner

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The April 19, 2016 and May 3, 2016 Planning Commission minutes were approved as submitted.

### **RUSS GOHL – CASE NO. 16-15V**

#### **Reading of Notice**

Commissioner Simon read the public hearing notice to consider the request for a variance to allow a garage 22 feet from the front property line whereas 30 feet is required, for the property located at 5935 Babcock Trail. 6 notices were mailed.

#### **Presentation of Request**

Heather Botten, Associate Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. The existing home was built in 1956, prior to adoption of the zoning code, and does not have an attached garage. Additionally, the property does not have direct road frontage and is a wooded lot with topographical changes. The applicant would like to construct a two-car attached garage on the property 22 feet from the front property line whereas 30 feet is required. The property had a detached structure located 10 feet off the front property line; the applicant has since moved this structure and will also be removing two other existing detached structures. Staff recommends approval of the request with the two conditions listed in the report. Staff heard from the neighboring property owner who would be most affected; they are in support of the request.

Commissioner Simon questioned why the eastern property line would not be considered the side yard given the orientation of the house.

Ms. Botten replied that the front yard determination was based on how the property lines were set up and where the access point would be rather than house orientation.

#### **Opening of Public Hearing**

Russ Gohl, 5935 Babcock Trail, advised he was available to answer any questions.

Chair Maggi asked the applicant if he read and understood the report.

Mr. Gohl replied in the affirmative. He clarified that he was proposing to construct an attached garage rather than a detached garage.

Chair Maggi closed the public hearing.

**Planning Commission Recommendation**

Motion by Commissioner Klein, second by Commissioner Scales, to approve the request for a variance to allow a garage 22 feet from the front property line whereas 30 feet is required, for the property located at 5935 Babcock Trail, with the two conditions and practical difficulty as listed in the report.

Motion carried (8/0). This item goes to the City Council on May 23, 2016.

**FRIEMANN COMPANIES – CASE NO. 16-16Z**

**Reading of Notice**

Commissioner Simon read the public hearing notice to consider the request for a rezoning of the property from R-3A, multiple-family residential to R-2, two-family residential, and a variance from the minimum lot size requirements, for the property located at 7535 Cloman Way. 41 notices were mailed.

**Presentation of Request**

Heather Botten, Associate Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. She advised that the property is .18 acres in size. It was formerly the Little Green store but has been vacant for a number of years. The applicant is requesting to renovate the existing building on the property, add two attached garages, and turn it into a duplex. The property is currently zoned R-3A which allows for a 3-4 unit building. The property is not large enough to accommodate a 3-4 unit building; therefore, the applicant is requesting to rezone the property to R-2 to allow a two-family residential building. The applicant is also requesting a variance from the minimum lot size requirements to allow a duplex to be located on a lot 7,986 square feet in size whereas 15,000 square feet is required, and 72.5 feet wide whereas 100 feet is required. The existing building on the site was built in 1961. The lot size and width do not meet current code requirements and it is considered a legal non-conforming lot. Any type of redevelopment would require variance approval. The applicant would be removing some of the hard surface on the property to provide green space for the tenants, the building would have vinyl lap horizontal siding, and access to the property would remain the same. The proposed two-family residential building fits with the neighborhood as there are other multiple-family houses to the north and east of the subject parcel. Allowing the smaller lot size and width for residential properties can provide a different type of housing opportunity in that it may be more affordable for the tenants on the property. Staff recommends approval of the rezoning and variance request with the three conditions listed in the report. Staff has not heard from any of the surrounding property owners.

Chair Maggi asked when the property was zoned R-3A, noting that a storefront would not be allowed in that district.

Ms. Botten replied it had been zoned multiple-family for many years. She added that the property lost its rights as a commercial building use a long time ago and could no longer be used as a commercial property.

**Opening of Public Hearing**

Brian Friemann, 7535 Cloman Way, advised he was available to answer any questions.

Chair Maggi asked the applicant if he read and understood the report.

Mr. Friemann replied in the affirmative. He advised that he owns the property next door and purchased this property because it was in disrepair, had been vandalized many times, and he wanted to improve it. He stated the building is very structurally sound, has a full basement, and he would like to retrofit it to a duplex.

Commissioner Niemioja stated the proposed renovation would improve the property.

Commissioner Klein asked the applicant if he planned to utilize the existing basement for both units.

Mr. Friemann replied that each unit would have two bedrooms in the existing basement.

Commissioner Robertson asked if the basement would meet all building code requirements, such as egress windows.

Mr. Friemann replied in the affirmative.

Chair Maggi closed the public hearing.

#### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Motion by Commissioner Scales, second by Commissioner Simon, to approve the request for a rezoning of the property from R-3A, multiple-family residential to R-2, two-family residential, and a variance from the minimum lot size requirements, for the property located at 7535 Cloman Way, with the conditions listed in the report.

Motion carried (8/0). This item will go to the City Council on June 13, 2016.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Chair Maggi thanked Commissioner Gooch for eleven years of service on the Planning Commission. She also thanked Commissioner Klein for his many years of service to the City in multiple roles. She advised that officer elections will take place at the next meeting at which there will be two new Commission members.

Commissioner Gooch stated he enjoyed serving on the commission, meeting residents, and seeing projects move forward.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Fox  
Recording Secretary