

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 6th DAY OF MARCH, 2023

The Caddo Parish Long Range Planning Committee met in legal session on the above date, at 12:41 p.m., in the Government Plaza First Floor Conference Room, with Mr. Chavez, presiding, and the following members in attendance, constituting a quorum: Commissioners Chavez, Hopkins, Johnson and Young (4). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Gage-Watts, and Jackson (3).

NEW BUSINESS

- *Visit from Laura Neubert With Parish Planning and Zoning Commission; Discuss Parish Zoning and Rural Master Planning*

The Chair started the meeting with a discussion from Mrs. Laura Neubert, President of the Parish Planning and Zoning Commission (PPZC) regarding the PPZC's discussion about the master plan, and the existence of zoning and future planning in the unincorporated area of the Parish. Mrs. Laura said that the PPZC was provided a budget on the cost for the Parish to do a Master Plan for the entire Parish including the five-mile zone. Mrs. Neubert requested that Attorney Bernstein provide legal advice on how the PPZC should proceed. Mrs. Neubert explained that the PPZC came to a unanimous vote to move forward to undertake a master plan for the unincorporated areas of Caddo Parish. Mrs. Neubert said that her reason to attend the Long Range Planning Committee meeting was to inform the Committee that the PPZC is ready to start on the master plan. Answering Mr. Chavez, Mrs. Neubert explained that the budget for the PPZC within the five-mile zone was \$450,000 to \$600,000, and the parish-wide budget was over a million dollars. The budget includes work that would have to be done to bring in the non-zoned area, incorporate plots of lands, neighborhoods and communities that are not included in the UDC. Answering Mr. Young, Mrs. Neubert explained that the million dollar master plan is to have uniform and simple zoning in the unincorporated areas although there has not been a request that people wanted it. Mrs. Neubert further explained that the 12-member Long Range Planning Citizen Advisory Committee recommended that the Parish does not have any zoning, which is the status of zoning in the unincorporated areas now. Mrs. Neubert responded to Mr. Young's enquiry regarding spending a million dollars for a master plan that people do not want. She explained that the PPZC serves the Commission and that the Commission, as elected officials that represent a district, needs to make that decision based on what the people in their jurisdictions want. Mrs. Neubert requested Attorney Bernstein clarify the PPZC's compliance with State law.

Mr. Young and Attorney Bernstein discussed alternative options for the Parish to be compliant with State law without zoning. Attorney Bernstein explained that the PPZC is mandated by law to adopt a master plan for the unincorporated area of the Parish and that the master plan would explain the use of areas of the Parish. Answering Mr. Young, Attorney Bernstein explained that the state statute does not dictate how intensive or extensive the master plan should be. Answering Mr. Chavez, Attorney Bernstein explained that if the Parish does not create a master plan then the Parish would not be complying, but there is no master plan law enforcement. Attorney Bernstein discussed that the five-mile zone has a master plan in effect and that the Commission could change that master plan.

Mr. Johnson suggested a referendum or adding a vote on the October-November ballot asking citizens in the unincorporated area if they want zoning. He also discussed the reduction of the five-mile zone to a two-mile zone. Mr. Johnson addressed the need to envision Caddo Parish as a progressive metropolitan area instead of a small town area.

The Chair acknowledged the arrival of Mrs. Constance Green, Board Member of the Parish Planning and Zoning Commission.

Due to Mr. Hopkins' arrival, the Committee reached a quorum.

Mr. Epperson discussed the non-progressive mindset to keep the Caddo Parish area the same.

Attorney Bernstein addressed Mrs. Neubert's enquiry about whether it is legal for the PPZC to enforce zoning in the five-mile area instead of the full Parish. Attorney Bernstein explained that enforcement in the five-mile zone is legal until somebody challenges the enforcement of zoning in a court. Mrs. Neubert recalled her experience with zoning change on her private property and how it affected her personally.

The Committee discussed the process to amend the master plan, and planning in the unincorporated areas and the five-mile-zone. Attorney Bernstein explained that a zoning change must originate from the PPZC.

Mr. Epperson and Attorney Bernstein discussed protection from different zoning between subdivisions.

It was **moved by Mr. Chavez**, seconded by Mr. Young, *to direct the Administration to prepare a language to advance a Parish-wide Master Plan Update for review in 4-5 weeks by this Committee. Motion carried*, as shown by the following roll call votes: YAY: Commissioners Chavez, Hopkins, Johnson and Young (4). NAY: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Burrell, Gage-Watts, and Jackson (3). ABSTAIN: None (0).

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

/s/ Linda J. Montgomery
Linda J. Montgomery
Administrative Specialist I