

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 5th DAY OF DECEMBER 2022

The Caddo Parish Long Range Planning Committee met in legal session on the above date, at 2:39 p.m., in the Government Plaza 1st Floor Conference Room, with Mr. Hopkins, Chairman, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Atkins, Chavez, Gage-Watts, Hopkins, Jackson, Johnson and Young (7). ABSENT: None (0).

Mr. Chavez gave the invocation, and Mr. Young led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Clerk announced that an electronic comment from Mr. Jimmy Covian was received and that he would distribute the electronic comment to the Committee members.

NEW BUSINESS

- The Chair then moved to the first New Business item, *Discuss Updates to the 2030 Master Plan, Code Text Amendments and Other Planning Related Discussion*

Mr. Hopkins wanted to know whether the Commission is updating or creating a new master plan. Attorney Bernstein responded that the Commission could do either of those actions and that the Commission has legal authority to engage in planning and zoning independently of the statutes in place. Mr. Chavez wanted to know whether House Bill 697 removed the Commission's ability to adopt a new master plan. Attorney Bernstein responded that the House Bill did not remove the Commission's ability to adopt a master plan and that the Commission must have a planning and zoning commission to engage in planning and zoning. Mr. Chavez also wanted to know the process for the Planning And Zoning Commission to present a master plan to the Commission. Attorney Bernstein responded that the planning and zoning commission could present the master plan to the Commission for the Commission's feedback and consideration. However, the planning and zoning commission would adopt the master plan.

Mr. Young wanted to know the number of votes needed to enact an amended master plan or a new master plan. Attorney Bernstein responded that the process is the same whether the Commission amends the current master plan or create a new master plan, but the process could be quicker if the Commission tweaked the edges of the existing Master Plan. Attorney Bernstein said that creating a new master plan to address the many issues the Parish needs to repair would take more time to create and get considered. Attorney Bernstein explained that the master plan is not an ordinance that could be removed, because the master plan says where things will go in parts of the parish and the uses for parts of the parish. Attorney Bernstein cautioned not to remove those conditions from the master plan without something in its place. Mr. Hopkins preferred that the Commission does its own master plan separate from the current master plan in effect. Mr. Hopkins explained that the new master plan would consider the unincorporated areas of the parish and include feedback from the residents of the unincorporated areas.

Mr. Johnson disagreed with creating a new master plan, because the master plan should include both the City of Shreveport and Caddo Parish. Mr. Johnson explained that the City of Shreveport is in Caddo Parish and that the master plan should be a Caddo Parish Master Plan for all areas of the parish instead of just the rural or suburban areas. Mr. Atkins agreed with Mr. Johnson. Mr. Hopkins understood that the City of Shreveport's Master Plan and the Caddo Parish Master Plan have to work together and suggested that the Commission consider a plan that looks at just the unincorporated areas. Mr. Atkins commented that it is important to have a coordinated plan. Mr. Johnson said that the City of Shreveport is going to focus up to its city limits and the Commission must incorporate everything in the Parish. Attorney Bernstein explained that per State law, if a parish has a separate municipal planning commission, then every municipal planning commission must consult with and cooperate with that parish's planning commission. Dr. Wilson expressed that Commissioners of urban areas must have a voice in the master plan that affects their constituents. Dr. Wilson added that the Parish and the City of Shreveport are currently working together on a recreational master plan. Mr. Atkins commented that the rural areas of the Parish were not given enough consideration in the last master plan. Mr. Hopkins said that there are different outlooks between the City of Shreveport's focus on building buildings and stacking in one location, while the unincorporated areas are more interested in being spread out.

Mr. Jackson pointed out that the S&P report mentioned that Caddo Parish did not have a plan to remedy the declining population and future decline. Mr. Jackson said that the trend showed people preferred to live in rural areas and Mr. Jackson hoped that the master plan does not advert the population loss. Mr. Johnson pointed out that a rural area could turn into a suburban area over time. Mr. Johnson said that the Commission should require

developers to have neighborhood covenants, ensure roads that have not been adopted by the Parish or built to Parish standard are labelled correctly as PD, private drive.

Mr. Young commented that a master plan should discourage flight from the middle of the city to the suburbs that surround Shreveport. He explained that flights to the suburbs increased the size of the Parish's footprint and affected its ability to cut the grass, manage all the pipes, water and infrastructure, and ambulance trips. Mr. Young said that the Commission should control flight out of the city by addressing it in a master plan and enforce it on the ground daily.

Mrs. Gage-Watts summarized that the master plan should be inclusive, it should name the Commission's actual goals and address the responsibility of Caddo Parish citizens moving to undeveloped land with private drives. Mrs. Gage-Watts said the Commission must have something in advance and not wait until there is a vote to accept property back into Caddo Parish.

Mr. Alan Clark, MPC Director, commented that he has reached out to Attorney Bernstein about updating the existing master plan to include the unincorporated areas of the Parish. Mr. Clark agreed that the unincorporated areas of the Parish did not receive proper attention on how that area of the parish would develop and grow, and that most of the existing Master Plan was centered towards the City of Shreveport. Mr. Clark said that the City of Shreveport does not want to have jurisdiction or control anything in Caddo Parish, and that a chapter in the master plan could be created to deal with planning in the unincorporated areas. Mr. Clark explained that the MPC and the Parish could find a competent professional planning firm in southern U.S. to incorporate the Parish's needs and work with the planning and zoning commission. Mr. Clark said that the City of Shreveport is updating its part in the current master plan. Dr. Wilson pointed out that the future will come whether the Parish does a plan or not, so the Commission must plan for the rural areas. Dr. Wilson mentioned that Southern Loop is developing at a fast pace. Mr. Hopkins clarified that the Commission could keep the current master plan and update the Parish's part and the City of Shreveport updates its part. Mr. Atkins said that there should be fluidity between the two entities and suggested adhering to Mr. Clark's recommendation. Mr. Hopkins agreed that a planning firm is from Louisiana or the region. Mr. Clark said that a plan would not work if the citizens do not adopt it. Mr. Clark said that the master plan needs citizens to embrace the plan and abide by the plan, then the zoning ordinances are drafted to govern the plan. Mr. Young agreed with Mr. Clark that citizens need to buy in to the master plan. Mr. Young said that there is a reduction in population with an increase in buildings, which is abandonment, not growth. Mr. Young said that if half of the investment that went into Southern Loop went into Highland, Queensborough or Lakeview, then there would be a nice-looking city. Mr. Young explained that the Commission mostly passed rules that are incompatible with the current master plan which created sprawl and he is unsure whether the Commission would pass a rule that is compatible.

Mr. Johnson suggested that the planning firm to help with the Master Plan must have experience in an area where there is growth to give perspective on what the Commission could or should not do. Mr. Johnson pointed out the lack of parking garages downtown and the abundance of parking lots. He also pointed out that existing neighborhoods have a lacking mindset to fix up old homes. Mr. Chavez agreed that the outward sprawl is the issue and posed the question whether builders are incentivized not to build in the Parish or incentivize the public to buy and renovate old houses. Mr. Jackson recommended doing a master study on running parish-wide water due to permits and developer fees to run water to subdivisions. Mr. Jackson gave the example of the City of Austin and the county response to development outside of the City of Austin's. Mr. Jackson explained that the City of Austin stopped running water to developments outside of its urban center. Mr. Young recommended voting down requests for residential rezoning. Mr. Young said that the Commission could require people to live in something abandoned instead of building something new or require builders to spend money in town. Mr. Hopkins requested the MPC work with the Parish Administration on requests for proposals. Mr. Hopkins said that the Parish could sample after growing cities like Lake Charles, Dallas-Fort Worth, or Austin.

Mr. Clark explained that the MPC is contracted with a professional planning consultant firm that planned from Las Vegas to Virginia to North Carolina and specializes in the things being discussed. Mr. Clark was unsure whether the MPC being contracted with that planning consultant firm requires the Parish to go through the RFP process for the planning consultant firm to work for Caddo Parish.

Dr. Wilson wanted to know the Long Range Planning Committee's direction for Administration. Dr. Wilson wanted to know if the firm contracted with MPC would be good enough for Caddo residents as opposed to a firm from outside of Louisiana. Mr. Clark was unsure where the planning consultant firm was headquartered. Mr. Johnson pointed out that the Commission must have a statement to receive ideas for growth from the citizens and a response to educate the public.

Mr. Young pointed out that one of the justifications for increasing the MPC budget was related to activities now being proposed to be contracted. Mr. Young wanted to know if some of the activities could be done

in-house instead of writing a check for new costs to planning consultants. Dr. Wilson responded that he would investigate the cost.

Mr. Young said that the Long Range Planning Committee could revisit the process next year and requested the MPC to gather the code text changes. Mr. Clark responded that the MPC and the Zoning Board of Appeals were removed from the Caddo Parish Unified Development Code.

Mr. Young pointed out that the Clerk has experience with some of the issues discussed and suggested receiving the Clerk's comment. The Clerk responded that he is available for any questions and that he could be a source of reference from his experience with the City of Shreveport.

Mr. Atkins said that there are certain incentives to prevent sprawl and that preventing sprawl may limit a person's return on investment, maximization of land owned 20 years or a person's livelihood.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:01 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "LJ Montgomery", is written over a horizontal line.

Linda J. Montgomery
Office Specialist I