

Planning Commission
“Workshop”
July 19, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Sizemore, Bernard Jones, Gerald Williams, Chris Moore, Brittany Johnson, & Paul Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT: Winfred Pieterse

OTHERS PRESENT: Matt Millwood & Debra Grant

- I. **Call to Order:**
- II. **Public Hearing:**
 - 1. **Ms. McCants**
 - 2. **Ms. Hazel**

(Both citizens chose to hold their comments until the Staff’s presentation)

III. Consideration

- 1. **Review and discuss a possible text amendment on Manufactured Homes in Residential (R5) zoning district.** Mr. Sizemore asked if the Commissioners had an opportunity to review the changes that were contemplated for the re-development of the R-5 district dated 2003, along with the appendix, which was a proposed R-5 zoning; it is what we have in place now except for some wordage. Mr. Sizemore told the Board of a previous meeting of the sub-committee for the Comprehensive Plan review in which Tee Miller/City Economic Developer talked about an Art Place Grant that was applied for by the City for the redevelopment of the West End and was turned down, however it will be reapplied for again by the City. Mr. Sizemore also stated that Council had passed an Ordinance to amend the Comprehensive Plan of 1999 to include the redevelopment plan for the West End, however it was never incorporated. This is an action item on the Land Use Element to incorporate in the new Comprehensive Plan.

Matt/City Staff told the Commissioners that he felt the main reason the West End redevelopment plan was not included in the Comprehensive Plan of the City is because of the change of Staff within the Building & Planning Department, however the City is still working with the area with infrastructure, streetscapes, parks & recreation; now there is a need to work with the housing issues as the petition of the residents states. Matt said as the ordinance is written today, “Existing Manufactured Homes in the R5 Zoning District, (termed as a mobile or manufactured home; if it was built before 1976 it is considered a mobile home, after 1976 it is a manufactured home), can be replaced with a new untitled manufactured home, purchased from a dealer. If someone has a vacant lot they cannot bring in a new or used mobile or manufactured home, they would have to build a stick built home, that is what Council would like the Planning Commission to look into and see if that should be changed or do something to help with affordable housing. The R-5 district includes Merriman Rd. from the railroad tracks to the International Paper Mill. Matt said there is another area that is zoned R-5 near the Marina Drive and whatever is done to this zone will affect all the R-5 districts. **Mr. Sizemore** asked who owned the property near Marina Drive. **Matt** said he believed it had two owners, but was not sure. **Matt** went on to say currently there are approximately 220 vacant lots on the West End that cannot have a

mobile/manufactured home brought in however if the laws change it could potentially have 220 mobile homes to come in, depending on how the laws change. (Matt showed a power point of various mobile homes that are in disrepair as well as some that were being maintained and are up to code). Matt said there are some options, the Planning Commission only makes recommendations to City Council, this Board does not make the laws, City Council does, however all options need to be looked at such as the Ordinances, the best options for the City, and the Comprehensive Plan; to help the City gain value, respect, and to better the communities of the City.

1. **Owner Occupied** which will be difficult to enforce and may not be legal
2. **Recommend to rezone R5 to R3** as the petition signed by some of residents ask for, but Staff recommends against that, this has gone through a long process to develop the R5 district because of the small lots and lesser setbacks that are needed to comply with zoning. However this zone was R3 originally.
3. **Leave the ordinance as is** there has been thousands of dollars put into the West End Redevelopment Plan, many Council meetings, and many public hearings back in 2003-2004, hopefully we as the current Commission and Staff can do a better job of implementing the plan and go with what it says.

IV. **Public Hearing:**

Ms. McCants asked if the meeting was to determine if the options given are liable and if mobile homes should be allowed in the zone. Mr. Sizemore explained that the Planning Commission is only a recommending body and tonight's workshop is for input only no votes will be taken until the regularly scheduled meeting on next Tuesday (July 26). Ms. McCants said she was not in favor of the allowance of possibly 220 mobile homes being allowed to come into the area, she showed photos of mobile homes on one street that are dilapidated and codes are not being enforced (Exhibit A). She said home owners have an invested interest, when mobile homes are brought into the area it depreciates to value of the stick built homes and this will have an effect on not only this generation but future generations. Ms. McCants asked about the R5 area that is located near Marina Drive and asked if it is marsh and is it buildable. Matt/City Staff said it is marsh area and cannot be built on. She asked if the West End and the property near Marina Drive were the only properties zoned R5 and why? Matt said yes they are and the reason they were rezoned to R5 was because of the small lots and the R5 zoning gives smaller setbacks and less square footage that would allow construction. Ms. McCants said that the laws are too relaxed and now there is a request for more mobile homes to come into the area. Ms. McCants says she does not see an additional 220 vacant properties. Matt said some of the 220 lots are non-conforming and nothing can be built on them. Ms. McCants said that the City should help the residents to receive grants and financing to be able to build stick built homes rather than mobile homes, and she does not feel like mobile homes should be just allowed in the West End but should be allowed in all areas.

Ms. Hazel said she agreed with everything that Ms. McCants said, she has been a resident on the West End all her life and she has fought this battle previously and have lost friends because of it. She said she has many mobile homes on her street and have nothing against her neighbors however, she does not want to live in a mobile home park. She said Historic Georgetown is beautiful, but if you come across the railroad tracks it is a different case. Ms. Hazel said the majority of the people that are in favor of the mobile homes do not live in that neighborhood, but are making a profit from the mobile homes.

Mr. Sizemore said the sentiments of the Redevelopment Plan says the same thing as the two women that just spoke. (Mr. Sizemore open the floor to the comments of the Commissioners)

Ms. Brittany Johnson was not in favor of allowing more mobile homes to come into the R5 district. Ms. Johnson said whenever you are trying to give input on a situation and you don't live in that area you would need to revert to those that do live there.

Mr. Bernard Jones said he agrees that there is a need for affordable housing however he was not in favor of allowing the request for more mobile/manufacturing homes, because it would increase the density and ultimately increase the crime rate and decrease property values. There is an issue of safety with the setbacks for those lots. Mr. Jones did suggest modular homes where someone would receive a deed rather than a title.

Mr. Chris Moore was not in favor of allowing more mobile homes to come in, but did express the need for some options and solutions for affordable homes and hopefully the City could help the residents get clear titles for heirs properties.

Mr. Bob Sizemore said the West End Redevelopment Plan will be resurrected and will be included in the Comprehensive Plan when it is presented to Council.

Mr. Paul Smith said he was not in favor of more mobile homes coming into the area. Mr. Smith said he can't believe that the code enforcement is not being done.

Matt Millwood said Staff cannot make a homeowner do repairs to their home, and in some cases with the mobile homes such as skirting requirements it would depend on the zoning that was in place when the home was brought in, because in some cases it may be grandfathered in with the ordinance that was in place at the time of placement.

Mr. Gerald Williams asked about the petition that was signed by the residents on the West End, asking for the mobile and manufactured homes to be allowed. **Mr. Sizemore** read the petition into the record that asked for the R5 zone to be rezoned back to R3 which would allow mobile homes to be brought in.

Mr. Sizemore said he felt that the option to leave the ordinance as it is and implement the action items from the Redevelopment Plan with some time frames on the actions, would be the best option.

Mr. Moore suggested that the housing items of the plan be highlighted to bring it to the fore-front. Mr. Moore read some of the action items that are listed in the West End Redevelopment Plan and said the plan gives step by step information on helping the residents.

Matt said the Staff needs something written up for a recommendation to present to Council. **Mr. Sizemore** said he suggests that the ordinance be left as it is with the Redevelopment Plan incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan, and the thing that should be tattled is the Housing Element and Land Use Element. **Mr. Sizemore** said **Matt** could email the Commissioners for feedback. **Mr. Sizemore** also suggested that when they make their recommendation to City Council that the entire Planning Commission attend the Council meeting.

V. Adjournment: With there being no further business the workshop was adjourned.
Submitted By,

Debra Grant
Board Secretary