

**Planning Commission  
Minutes  
May 24, 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Winfred Pieterse, Chris Moore, Bernard Jones, Paul Smith, Gerald Williams, & Brittany Johnson

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Bob Sizemore

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Rick Martin, Matt Millwood, Janet Grant, & Debra Grant

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Minutes:** The minutes for April 26, 2016; **Mr. Chris Moore made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Paul Smith; the motion carried unanimously.**
- III. **Public Input: None**
- IV. **Consideration:**

**1. Review amendments to the Residential (R5) zoning district in the West End, to allow manufactured homes on vacant lots.**

**Rick Martin/City Staff** told the Board that a request was made for the R5 zoning district to be revisited for the allowance of manufactured homes on vacant lots. Currently the ordinance allows the replacement of mobile/manufactured homes with a new (never being titled) manufactured home within six (6) months. The public has approached City Staff as well as Mayor and Council about revisiting this district and hopefully making some minor changes. Tonight the public would like to express their thoughts, and asking this Board to make a recommendation to Mayor and Council.

**Matt Millwood/City Staff** said the area in question is on the West End of the town, R5 district; approximately 195 acres and there is also about 5 acres located on Marine Drive, noting that any zoning changes made will be applicable to every R5 district. The map that was shown on the power point showed 223 vacant lots, some are narrow lots; the public is coming forth because the current zoning laws does not allow manufactured homes to be placed on vacant lots in the R5 district, if changes are made to this district it could potentially affect many lots. (Matt showed pictures on the power point of mobile/manufactured homes in City limits that were not up to code and some that were up to code). Mr. Pieterse asked Matt to read into the record the zoning ordinance pertaining to the manufactured home (Section 908). Mr. Pieterse asked about the West End Redevelopment Plan that was put together previously noting that no more mobile homes would be allowed to come in. Matt said he was not familiar with the West End Redevelopment Plan. Rick Martin said he thinks that the Redevelopment Plan addressed dilapidated homes and resident needs with that issue. Mr. Pieterse read a section of the redevelopment plan that stated allowing homes other than mobile homes in the district. Mr. Pieterse said that his concern is that lots of used mobile homes will be brought in without skirting and not up kept, and City Staff would not be able to oversee the situation or enforce the codes. He said he knows there is a need for affordable homes but he does not want to make the situation in that district worse. **Mr. Chris Moore** said he supported what Mr. Pieterse said and asked how staff would or could enforce conditions or the up keep of the mobile homes that could possibly come in with the level of staff that City has now. Rick Martin said that currently new homes come in that zone (R5) and used ones in another zone

(R3) and the staff gives handouts that give the requirements needed to set the home up. The Mayor and Council requested that Staff go out and look at any used homes that could possibly come into the City, this is done by Janet Grant and himself. Mr. Pieterse asked if after the home is setup is there anything in place to enforce the up keep after disrepair begins, his concern is the mobile home park in Maryville and fears that this could happen on the West End. Rick Martin said the City does have the nuisance code that is enforced by Janet Grant and the standards that are given for the home to be habitable. Rick said that he cannot go into a home unless he gets a complaint. **Mr. Bernard Jones** asked are there any other alternatives. Rick Martin said there has been individuals in the past 3 to 4 years that bought property with plans of putting apartments in, but probably because of the cost of construction and not being able to borrow money there has been no development. Mr. Pieterse asked if there were any grants to help with the development. Rick said there are no grants that he knows of. **Mr. Chris Moore** asked if stick homes could be built on the lots in question. Rick Martin said yes stick built homes could be constructed but a lot of the properties are heir's property and that makes it hard to get financing through the banks. Mr. Moore asked if there are any groups to assist with the legal part for the family.

**Public Input:**

**John Howard Jr. / Owner Operator of Howard Homes** told the Board that Howard Homes has been in business for over 40 years. Mr. Howard gave the difference between the used and new mobile homes; June 30, 1994 the new wind zone came into effect and anything designed after that date would have vinyl siding, pitched roofs, and shingle roofs. The homes are able to withstand 120 mph winds for our area. There is two types of codes in manufactured homes; Module and Hud, the Hud codes starts at mid \$30,000 and the module start at \$150,000.

**Ms. Carol McCants / Resident of the West End**, said she is one of the 150 signers of the petition that was submitted and has spoken to the residents of the area about what needed to be done and what could be done to make the area better, the residents asked the City Council to consider changes to the zoning district that would give property owners a chance to have affordable homes. She said the difference in mobile homes and manufactured homes is the fact that mobile homes have not been built since 1976. The legislation has since regulated that the manufactured homes be designed. The manufactured homes are modern, affordable, high quality homes that are built equally as well and in some cases superior to some stick built homes. By allowing manufactured homes in the City that are wind zone appropriate, should eliminate some of the safety concerns. The appearance has also been mentioned as a concern, however with the manufactured homes they will have vinyl siding and shingled roofs unlike the older mobile home, and they have more of a home look. It is our hope that the City will enforce the code requirements of a home having vinyl siding, shingle roofs, skirting or some type of underpinning, and properly tied down, when homes are being brought in the area. Manufactured homes are being considered because banks are not lending monies on the West End and developers are not building in that area. In some cases there have been some properties bought through delinquent taxes and owners have brought homes in to renovate and resell them, which some residents cannot afford. The Comprehensive Plan developed by the City was geared to enhance the community, however it had an adverse effect, causing hardship for property owners. The property owners pay City and County taxes however they are severely limited on what they can do with their property. The law as it is written, states that only lots that have existing

mobile/manufactured homes on them can be replaced. I am a resident of the West End and also I own property on the West End and it is my desire to one day be able to place a manufactured home on my property and perhaps use it as supplemental income in my senior years. Several property owners have expressed the desire to tear down homes that are in disrepair and place a manufactured home in its place, however getting an untitled home is not affordable. We are asking that used homes be allowed, as long as they come within the July 1996 state codes for manufactured homes. The current laws does not address what a property owner and tax paying citizens can do with their private lots. It is the feeling of all the petitioners (150 people) that it would help us to better live in our community. We have a movement within the community to empower ourselves for change, we are trying to clean our community up and make it better. A block party will be sponsored on June 4<sup>th</sup> to bring awareness and to address the homes that are dilapidated and hopefully come together to help those residents preform repairs. I have seen a list of 40 homes that are on the City's dilapidated list and if used manufactured homes are allowed this maybe a solution. Our desire is to have a quality of life that is affordable, because our community can thrive again but only if we have input on what happens there, 150 tax payers and voting citizens are interested in watching what happens in this matter. We are just asking that some changes be made to the ordinance that already exist, allowing manufactured homes to be brought in that may not be new but are within the standards of the codes; vinyl siding, shingle roofs, skirting (vinyl or brick masonry). Ms. McCants asked the Board to consider the petition and the economic hardship that will be placed on residents if this is not allowed. **Brittany Johnson** asked if Ms. McCants was a member of the West End Improvement Council or did she have any input from that group. Ms. McCants said she did not know of the West End Improvement Council.

**Ms. Mazzie Graham** a property owner and business owner of the West End. Ms. Graham owns property on "H" Street and bought the property with the intention of placing a used mobile home on it, Ms. Graham said she thought the only requirement was that the mobile home had to have an A-frame. She later found out that she could not place a used mobile home, it would have to be a new mobile home, the problem with that is that on one side of the lot is a dilapidated home, the other side (rear) is an abandoned mobile home, there is another lot with junk in the yard and a house in despair, and then there is the rail road tracks and high powered lines. Ms. Graham said if the ordinance is not changed the City is really shooting itself in the foot, she said she is not going to invest \$100,000 dollars for a new home to go in that area, a used mobile home perhaps, but not a new manufactured home. The banks are not going to finance a new mobile home for that area, and nothing will go on the property. Ms. Graham said her request is that used mobile homes be considered, rather than new or modular. Smaller homes are a suggestion that can be designed for livable conditions. Ms. Graham said she would like to be able to use her property.

**Rev. Susan C. Greene** a lifetime resident of the West End, said she attended the Redevelopment Planning meeting in which there was a lot of community input. Ms. Greene said she thought everyone was skirting around the issue of heir's property over there (West End), which legally nothing can be done with the property unless all heir's consent. There is a need for legal assistant for the owners, because after a structure is dilapidated there is nothing that can be done not even getting a loan. The properties maybe narrow but very deep and one of the redevelopment plan was to get the community involved with the City in bringing in affordable housing such as Hud or maybe Townhouses which could be place on

the narrow lots. Ms. Greene said the allowance of used mobile homes is a temporary fix, but the West End needs a permanent fix. There are lots of young adults over there and they need not only homes but also the financing to maintain the houses, and the City needs to team up with them and help them to become self-sustaining, for a permanent fix.

**Discussion: The Board tabled the issue to be able to review all the information and make a viable recommendation to City Council.**

**V. Adjournment:** With there being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

*Submitted By,*

*Debra Grant  
Board Secretary*