

Karen Rich MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF BELLE MEADE
August 20, 2019

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Larry Wieck, Acting Chair, at 4:01pm.

Board members present

Larry Wieck Jim Hastings Jim Hunt Karen Rich
Chris Tardio Bob Weigel

Staff members present

Lyle Patterson, Building Official Doug Berry, City Attorney
Charlotte Hunter, City Recorder

Agenda Items

1. Minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting held June 25, 2019.

Motion to Approve: Hunt Second: Weigel Vote: All aye

2. The application of Patrick Hitt, 621 Lynwood Blvd. (PC19081), requesting to combine lots 150 and 152 into one lot recognized by the City of Belle Meade.

Presentation:

L. Patterson stated this is a housekeeping procedure to combine two lots recognized by the City into one lot, allowing appellant to make modifications to their property in accordance with the City's zoning laws. The Hitts desire to add a small addition to their home.

Board Questions/Comments:

Q: L. Wieck asked where the property line was on the drawing.

A: Mr. Hitt stated the red line is property line and identified where there is an easement.

Audience Question/Comments: None

Board Discussion/Findings: None

Motion to Approve: Hunt Second: Weigel Vote: All aye

3. Consideration of Ordinance 2019-8 to amend the Zoning Ordinance to authorize the creation of Historic Overlay districts in the City of Belle Meade.

Presentation:

L. Patterson stated he sent a memo to Commission members summarizing the steps needed to establish historic zoning design guidelines and overlay districts in the City. He explained this Ordinance in and of itself does not create any overlays. It only authorizes the Historic Zoning Commission (HZC) to establish overlay districts. J. Hastings asked Lyle to review what brought the City to this point. Lyle explained there is a need to control demolitions and new construction of homes to maintain quality craftsmanship and variety of design characteristics that are unique to Belle Meade. No cookie-cutter homes.

Jane Coleman Cottone of the Tennessee Historical Commission (THC) introduced herself and explained she assists local governments with setting up historic zoning once the HZC members are appointed. The HZC will create design guidelines and make a recommendation on where the overlay district(s) should be, which then must be approved by the Board of Commissioners. THC staff is completing an inventory of all homes in Belle Meade, which will identify which ones are considered historical. For this purpose, historical means homes that are more than 50 years old and minimally altered. The inventory shows that 63% of homes are historical. Ms. Cottone explained the difference between a preservation and conservation district overlay. Preservation is stricter, while a conservation district allows more leeway for owners to make some changes.

Doug Berry explained that this Ordinance must be consistent with state law, but there is no state oversight on Belle Meade's decisions and implementation of design guidelines and overlay districts.

Board Questions/Comments:

- What are some concerns to residents in having to go before another Board for this new review process? Will it delay their plans? Lyle stated that all demos and new construction are required to complete a stormwater plan, which usually takes 2-3 months. During this time, the owner can complete the HZC process.
- Who creates the design guidelines? The HZC does. Ms. Cottone stated she has a template for design guidelines that will help with this process. These guidelines must be very clear and understandable. Boundaries of overlay districts must also be established.
- Will design guidelines be so detailed that it requires many residents to come before the HZC for minor changes to their home? Ms. Cottone stated it is customary for an HZC to enact in their bylaws a procedure for administrative review of minor items by a staff member in advance of the HZC meeting. These will still be reviewed by the HZC on a consent agenda, but there will be no need for a full review by the Commission.
- So, the purpose of all this is to reduce the construction of look-alike homes, but by having design guidelines for all homes in Belle Meade, won't we be creating look-alike homes? Ms. Cottone stated she's never seen this happen in the cities she worked with. Actually, good design guidelines will allow for all types of architecture, while ensuring quality design and construction. Doug Berry stated some guidelines will be inconsistent with the zoning code, and the HZC will have to work through these.
- How does the HZC process stop low quality builds? Lyle stated the process will encourage better design and construction.
- Where could this process break down? Ms. Cottone stated this Ordinance must pass before anything else can proceed. Then, design guidelines must be created and overlay district boundaries must be established. It is essential to have public input during these processes.

Audience Question/Comments: None

Board Discussion/Findings:

J. Hastings and L. Wieck have reservations about historic zoning limiting design to the point Belle Meade will end up with many look-alike homes. J. Hastings feels there could be other, less complicated options to control demos and poorly designed homes. Can City develop a list of approved architects? Ms. Cottone stated she has never seen this and does not recommend it. Doug Berry stated all activities conducted by a city must be

authorized by state law. As such, state law does not allow for architectural review, site-by-site review, creation of a list of acceptable architects, or any other mechanism other than historic zoning. K. Rich feels historic zoning gives Belle Meade one more way to preserve the unique look of this City.

**Motion to Recommend Approval to Board of Commissioners: Rich Second: Tardio
Vote: Aye: Rich, Hunt, Tardio, Weigel; Vote: No: Wieck, Hastings
Motion Carries.**

Other Business: None

L. Wieck asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn: Rich Second: Hunt All aye

Meeting adjourned at 5:09pm.

Acting Chairman Larry Wieck

City Manager Beth Reardon