

**CITY OF RICHARDSON  
CITY PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES – FEBRUARY 15, 2011**

The Richardson City Plan Commission met February 15, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall in the Council Chambers, 411 W. Arapaho Road, Richardson, Texas.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** David Gantt, Chairman  
Bill Hammond, Vice Chair  
Gerald Bright, Commissioner  
Janet DePuy, Commissioner  
Barry Hand, Commissioner  
Jim Henderson, Commissioner  
Don Bouvier, Alternate

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Marilyn Frederick, Commissioner  
Thomas Maxwell, Alternate

**CITY STAFF PRESENT:** Sam Chavez, Asst. Director of Dev. Svcs. – Planning  
Steve Graves, Chief Information Officer  
Chris Shacklett, Planner  
Kathy Welp, Executive Secretary

**BRIEFING SESSION**

Prior to the regular business meeting, the Plan Commission met with staff to receive a briefing on:

**A. Agenda Items**

Mr. Shacklett briefed the Commission on the agenda items. No action was taken.

**B. Staff Reports**

Mr. Chavez briefed the Commission on upcoming development items. No action was taken.

**MINUTES**

**1. Approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of February 1, 2011.**

Commissioner Hand asked to add an “r” to the existing word on page 2, eighth paragraph, first line, fifth word.

**Motion:** Commissioner Bright made a motion to approve the minutes as amended; second by Commissioner Henderson. Motion passed 7-0.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

2. **Zoning File 11-02:** A request by Elise Bissell, representing Take Me Home Pet Rescue, for a Special Permit for a pet rescue and adoption organization at 561 W. Campbell Road (south of Campbell Road, east of Nantucket Drive). The property is currently zoned LR-M(2) Local Retail.

Mr. Shacklett advised that the proposed site was located in a retail center at 561 W. Campbell Road and had been previously used as a veterinarian's office. He added that the applicant was proposing to use the space for a pet adoption center that would include general office use, storage, sale of pet related items, and a pet photography studio.

Shacklett indicated that the applicant represented a non-profit organization that used their resources to help reduce the population of unwanted pets by rescuing them and placing them for adoption. In addition, he noted that 57 letters of support and one letter in opposition had been received.

Commissioner Hand asked why the proposal was before the Commission if the location had previously been a vet's office. He also wanted to know about the letter in opposition and the calls from those opposed.

Mr. Shacklett replied that even though the zoning allowed vet offices and pet supplies, the adoption center portion of the application was an unlisted use and required a Special Permit.

Regarding those opposed to the Special Permit request, Shacklett noted the letter was from the management company for the building immediately to the west of the site in question, and the two calls in opposition were concerned with the noise and smell from animals, waste disposal, and what would happen if a pet from an abusive background became violent; some of the same issues that would be associated with a vet's office.

Commissioner Bright asked if staff had any concerns regarding waste disposal.

Mr. Shacklett replied when the application went through development review process, the City Health Department stated that waste would need to be properly bagged and disposed of, as well as removing it from any impervious surfaces, and those concerns had been passed along to the applicant. He added that those items would not be addressed during the zoning process, but handled through code enforcement.

Commissioner Hand asked if the applicant currently had an office located elsewhere.

Mr. Shacklett replied that they have a home office and P.O. Box, but did not have an adoption site in the City.

Chairman Gantt asked if there were any code violations with the vet's office when it was located at the site.

Mr. Shacklett replied he had no knowledge of any violations, and the vet had since moved and built a new office on the north side of Campbell Road.

With no further questions for staff, Chairman Gantt opened the public hearing.

Elise Bissell, 3417 Custer Cove, Richardson, Texas, stated she was the co-founder and director of Take Me Home Pet Rescue, a non-profit organization that had been in existence since 2008. She added that the group was started by local women and children going to area shelters rescuing animals, but they had quickly outgrown their office space and were looking for a space that would allow for growth.

Ms. Bissell reported that the site was chosen because of the prior use as a vet's office and offered the needed space where all their volunteers could meet and where community service groups could come and help.

Bissell noted that the majority of the rescued animals were dogs, with a few cats, and the animals would only be at the site during weekend adoption events and while they were being evaluated for contagious diseases and temperament tested before being sent to foster homes.

Commissioner Hand asked how many animals were currently being fostered, how much foot traffic would be generated, and what would be the hours of operations.

Ms. Bissell replied that about 10-15 cats would be at the site on a rotating basis, and approximately 10 dogs. The goal of the adoption events was to have an enjoyable atmosphere for the adopting families to come and view the animals that need homes. She added that the hours of operation should be normal retail hours.

Regarding how much foot traffic would be generated, Ms. Pam Nachajski, 241 Meadowlark, Richardson, Texas, President of Take Me Home Pet Rescue, said that during a weekend adoption event where there could be six dogs up for adoption, one to two families would be scheduled to visit with the dogs at any one time so as not to overwhelm the animals and that would work out to approximately 30-50 people throughout the day. The only other time there might be additional people present would be if a fund raiser was being held.

Commissioner Henderson asked about how many staff members would be present on an average day, and how would the inside be laid out.

Ms. Nachajski replied that 1 to 2 people would be there during the week to feed the animals and clean the cages, and up to 5 on the weekend. She added that they did not have any paid staff, only volunteers.

Ms. Bissell replied that Halff and Associates would help plan the space, which would be the next step in the process, but the front would most likely have an open retail area and reception desk; down a hallway to the right would be the future location of the spay/neuter clinic; off to the right from the front would be an open area for the cats, and behind that a possible training area with the photo studio at the back that would be used as a tool to increase exposure for the animals that are ready for adoption. Ms. Nachajski added there were 4 dog runs already available at the site.

Commissioner Bright asked how the organization currently deals with animals that have health issues.

Ms. Bissell replied that sick animals board at their vet's office, but with the opening of the proposed facility the organization would be able to save money by not having to board any animals.

Commissioner DePuy asked if a vet was on call for the organization, and what would be the number of pets that would be at the facility.

Ms. Bissell replied that they have a vet who volunteers his services and may do some surgeries. She added that most vets' offices house 40-60 animals per day, whereas the adoption center would most likely have 15-20.

Ms. Nachajski added that the cats would be at the adoption center for viewing for a week at a time before going back to a foster family, and the dogs would stay with their foster families and only come up for events unless they had to be in isolation.

Commissioner Bright asked staff if the site was equipped to do surgical procedures and, if so, was there something else the Commission had to do other than approve the item.

Mr. Shacklett replied that surgical procedures would be allowed as part of a vet facility, which was allowed by right.

Vice Chair Hammond asked why the number of dogs listed in the reference material was 0-3 and what had been mentioned was 10-20. He also wanted to know how the organization supported itself and where did the animals come from.

Ms. Bissell replied that 0-3 dogs would be the animals that were held overnight in isolation and the higher number referred to dogs that would be at the center for the day with either their foster family or a prospective family. She added that their support came from donations.

Regarding the acquisition of the animals, Bissell replied that most of their animals came from area shelters, animal surrenders, and animals that had been dumped on the street.

Chairman Gantt asked if there were any plans to take the dogs for walks outside the facilities, and would the animals be on display outside of the center on the sidewalk during adoption events.

Ms. Bissell replied that the plan was to utilize the space behind the building in the grassy area and they were working on securing approval from the owner of that property.

Mr. Chavez replied that the City would treat the adoption center the same as any other retail business, but would prefer that the adoption activity would happen inside the facility; Ms. Bissell concurred.

Chuck Westenhiser, 4308 Aliso Road, Plano, Texas, the manager of the retail center stated the walls in the former vet's office were made of 8" hadit block and felt the concerns about odor and/or noise from the adoption center were unfounded.

No other comments were made in favor or opposed; therefore, Chairman Gantt closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Hand complimented the applicant on their work and their proposal. He added there could always be the possibility that an adoption center would be disruptive to some forms of retail; however, with the leadership involved and the proposed use he stated he was in favor of the item.

Commissioner DePuy concurred with Mr. Hand and wished the applicant well.

**Motion:** Commissioner Bright made a motion to recommend approval of Zoning File 11-02 as presented; second by Commissioner Hand. Motion passed 7-0.

3. **Zoning File 11-03:** A request by the City of Richardson to rezone a tract of land at the southeast corner of President George Bush Turnpike and Shiloh Road from R-1500-M Temp to R-1500-M Residential with a Special Permit to allow a 199-foot monopole antenna tower for a City of Richardson radio communications tower. The site is currently occupied by a North Texas Municipal Water District (NTMWD) facility.

Mr. Shacklett advised that the site was currently zoned R-1500 Temp after annexation into the City and the applicant was proposing to rezone the property to R-1500-M Residential to construct a communications tower for the City of Richardson. He added that an antenna tower was allowed by right, but the applicant was requesting additional height for both the tower and the antennas, and to waive the screening requirements.

Mr. Shacklett stated the purpose of the new tower and antennas was to enhance police and fire radio coverage especially in the panhandle region of the City, and was part of an overall upgrade of City's radio system to adequately cover the entire City. He added the applicant

was requesting a waiver to the required screening because the tower would be located within the screened NTMWD property.

Chairman Gantt acknowledged the stone and concrete screening wall along frontage road and Shiloh Road, but asked about the screening on the remaining three sides.

Mr. Shacklett replied that other three sides were fenced by chain link and quite a bit of vegetation.

Mr. Steve Graves, Chief Information Officer for the City of Richardson addressed the Commission stating that the tower would be part of the replacement for a 15 year old public safety radio system. Graves presented graphics highlighting the current single-site radio system versus the coverage that would be provided by an enhanced system. He added that the new system would give between 95 to 99 percent coverage and would be a simulcast system that would allow more than one site to send a signal at one time.

In closing, Mr. Graves noted that the higher the tower the better the signal, and they had looked at using City facilities, but the proposed tower provided the best option and would help the system last for the next 15 years.

Commissioner Hand asked if there was a signal spillover into Dallas and Garland, and could Richardson possibly use the spillover from their systems in our area.

Mr. Graves replied that the City's signal spills over into Dallas, Garland and Plano, which was actually good for the City because there are Memos of Understanding (MOUs) for public safety units to support those cities and allows the units to communication within those areas.

Regarding the other cities' spillover, Graves explained that each city has its own frequencies; however, the public safety units have an inter-operability where they can switch over and talk to those cities, but the public safety dispatchers can not hear what is going on.

Chairman Gantt opened the public hearing and no comments were made in favor or opposed, therefore, he closed the public hearing.

Vice Chair Hammond commented that the City was positioned in the center of the telecomm industry for North Texas and hoped it was making the highest and best use of technology and not overlooking anything that would give the City a more robust communication system.

Mr. Graves replied that because of the City's unique position in the telecom corridor, many companies brought their technologies to the City for testing including a new product from Alcatel called LTE. He added that the proposed system was a digital state of the art system called P25, but in the future most systems will be converting to a LTE type of system and the City will be ahead of the curve because of the work with Alcatel.

Mr. Graves replied that because of the City's unique position in the telecom corridor, many companies brought their technologies to the City for testing including a new product from Alcatel called LTE. He added that the proposed system was a digital state of the art system called P25, but in the future most systems will be converting to a LTE type of system and the City will be ahead of the curve because of the work with Alcatel.

Chairman Gantt asked if there would be the need for additional communication towers as the technology evolves.

Graves replied that the sites would be reused and LTE technology could make use of any existing towers. In addition, as LTE and some of the other technologies increase (i.e., streaming video from the patrol cars), light poles throughout the city would be used to transmit the increased data streams back to the 911 center for safety purposes.

**Motion:** Commissioner Henderson made a motion to recommend approval of Zoning File 11-03 as presented; second by Commissioner Bouvier.

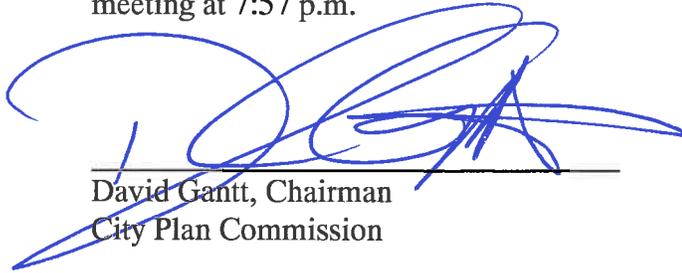
Mr. Chavez asked if the request from the NTMWD for a future single co-location site on the pole would be included in the motion.

Mr. Henderson declined to amend his motion based on discussions regarding the uncertainty of what would be located on the monopole and how that would change the appearance of the pole.

Motion passed 7-0.

## **ADJOURN**

With no further business before the Commission, Chairman Gantt adjourned the regular business meeting at 7:57 p.m.



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David Gantt, Chairman  
City Plan Commission