

**MINUTES OF THE IBERIA PARISH ZONING COMMISSION MEETING CONDUCTED ON
THURSDAY, JULY 12, 2012 AT 5:30PM IN THE IBERIA PARISH COUNCIL CHAMBERS
300 IBERIA STREET, NEW IBERIA, LOUISIANA 70560**

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Tommy Granger determined there was a quorum and called the meeting to order. Before the roll call Tommy Granger introduced and welcomed Mr. Nathaniel Mitchell, Sr. as a new member.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dana Dugas, Jane Braud, Lanie Borel, David Fangue, Nathaniel Mitchell and Tommy Granger.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Perry Judice, Barbara Laviolette, and Ronald Fremin

OTHERS PRESENT: Jacque Cousin, Charles Rader and Julie Armentor

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Dana Dugas made a motion to approve the May 17, 2012 minutes which was seconded by Lanie Borel; the vote was unanimous.

RECLASSIFICATION REQUEST #1: Edwin P. Blanchard – Belmont Road Tract 2 – Reclassification from General Business (C-2) to Mixed Residential (R-2).

The request was tabled. No action taken at this time.

RECLASSIFICATION REQUEST #2: Caryn C. Hymel – Melancon Road South – Reclassification from Mixed Residential (R-2) to Industrial (I-1).

Charlie Rader addressed the Commission and showed where the property was located and showed the industrial district on the map. He pointed out different businesses in the area.

Mr. Bryan Gautreaux and Caryn Hymel spoke and said they were the owners and were there to address any questions that the Commission may have. Mr. Gautreaux said they viewed this as an opportunity for not only his family but also residents of Iberia Parish. Mr. Gautreaux said their property is within the Hwy 90 corridor of economic development. He also said that their property is situated close to St. Martin Parish which has prospered from the commercial and industrial development along Hwy 90. He said one of their nearby neighbors was Baker Hughes and they were expanding with a \$19 million laboratory under construction.

Dana Dugas asked what type of business it would be. Mr. Gautreaux said they received a communication from the prospective purchaser that they are entertaining the idea of placing two metal building for use of office and warehouse activity but did not know the type of

business. Mr. Gautreaux said the purchasers are closely associated with one of the top one hundred Acadiana companies and has a significant presence in Lafayette Parish as well as St. Martin Parish. Dana Dugas asked if any chemicals would be stored there and Mr. Gautreaux said that they had not indicated that to them. He said their prospective purchasers have indicated to them that they would meet and comply with the Zoning Ordinance of Iberia Parish. He also indicated other commercial developments that were there already.

Dana Dugas said they just had to make sure that business does not interfere with the lives of the neighbors next door. Mr. Gautreaux said there were limited residents there and he also said in our ordinances when there is a property that is zoned I-1 and the abutting property is zoned differently there is a requirement of an eight foot (8') buffer zone and he said he thinks that might address some kind of objection that has been expressed if any.

After further deliberation, Dana Dugas made a motion to approve the reclassification from Mixed Residential (R-2) to Industrial (I-1) which was seconded by Lanie Borel; the vote was unanimous.

RECLASSIFICATION REQUEST #3: Ricky & Roxanne Watkins - Loreauville Road Behind Rodeo Lane between Candle Glow and Interlude – Reclassification from Agricultural (A-1) and Mixed Residential (R-2) to Manufactured Mobile Home Park (R-4).

Charlie Rader addressed the Commission and had one item to discuss in reference to the Zoning Regulations in Iberia Parish. He said the purpose of zoning states the purpose of this Ordinance is to promote the health, safety, morals, property, and general welfare of the citizens of Iberia Parish. It is the general intent of this Ordinance to regulate the use of land and structures, regulate and restrict lot coverage, population distribution and density, to promote the safety and efficiency of the streets and highways, secure safety from fire and flooding, provide adequate light, air, sanitation and drainage, and in general, to provide a better quality of life for the residents of the Parish by allowing for better compatibility of land uses in the Parish. He also said that we have some professional people that will present tonight.

Mr. David Moore spoke about what they were doing here and tried to explain what they were requesting and he said he was the engineer for the Watkins' project. Mr. Moore had a slide presentation explaining the roads, how the mobile homes were going to be placed, turnarounds and other information concerning the project. He said they were planning for only a single access to the mobile home park. Mr. Moore explained that they had a meeting with Public Works, Sewerage District, Fire Chief, 911 Director, a couple Councilman and other officials to discuss the planning of the mobile home park.

Roxanne Watkins gave a presentation showing what her intentions were for the mobile home park. She said Cardinal Point was going to be an upscale community and it was going to be a safe, nice and pleasant environment. She said every member was going to be photo identified, backgrounds checks, credit checks, and all manufactured homes moving in would not be older than 5 years, had to be skirted and she also said the park would be gated. Mrs. Watkins also said they would have a systematic progressive approach for compliance of the rules and regulations and briefly it will be verbal, written and then final.

Mrs. Watkins also said she thought this development would fuel the economy, provide instantaneous housing for the Port of Iberia, provide housing for the local community, and prevent people from moving to Broussard, Lafayette and Youngsville, add additional revenue for local business and additional tax revenues for Iberia Parish and stimulate growth in New Iberia. She said it would have approximately sixty five properties and it will generate Iberia parish during this development process close to four million dollars.

Mr. and Mrs. Dicky Gauthier addressed the Commission and said they had been living there for forty seven years. He said their neighborhood was quiet and safe. Mr. Gauthier said everyone goes to trick or treat because it is safe there. Mr. Gauthier said by them objecting to this project he asked for the Commission's understanding in this situation not to approve this project.

Mr. Wayne White spoke against the rezoning. He said he wanted to assure everyone that this was not a personal attack on the Watkins'. Mr. White also said he wanted a safe and quiet place to raise his family. He bought there because of people like the Gauthier's and he said it was pretty disappointing that they were trying to rezone after everyone has already built and lives there now. He said if they would take a poll several people would not have bought or built there if they would have known what was going to happen. He said he bought property all over the United States and every time he bought property he got with a realtor and found out what the zoning was. He said the property that the Watkins' bought is not zoned for what they want to do. He also distributed pictures of flooding houses. He said everyone knows Iberia Parish has been doing studies on Tete Bayou for three years. He said the drainage infrastructure that they have in place now cannot handle any more water and he asked them to look at the pictures. He said in closing he would like to ask that when they consider rezoning this property to think about what if they lived there and to consider that.

Mr. Mike Sokol addressed the Commission and submitted a new petition for the record. He asked the Chairman if they could have a quiet show of hands of all those who opposed this development. Almost everyone raised their hand. He said the petition represented 100% of the homes in three neighborhoods and also signatures from Sugarland, Estate Dr., other neighborhoods and all along the Loreauville Road where many of these people feel that if a precedent is set here, it can happen in any neighborhood with a cane field and it could happen to them. Mr. Sokol also said they were not against development and not against the parish

going forward but this was not a positive extension of their neighborhood it is a negative. He said many of the hard working people, tax payers in these neighborhoods have all experienced decreasing in their wealth. He said a big portion of these decreases have come in retirement plans that they lost but another big portion of it is going to be the loss of the value of their homes. He said he did not think anybody that was getting close to retirement could afford to lose another 15% to 20%. He said the developer came to them in their homes they did not go to them. He said they cannot come up with one positive thing on why this would be good for those people.

Mr. Stephen Minvielle also addressed the Commission and he said he owned the 80 acres to the South of the property and he also had a slide presentation and explained where the houses were outlined. He said the amount of money is personally assessed when they buy into a neighborhood, they build a house. Mr. Minvielle said they have invested interest in the neighborhood. He said talking to the people in the industry, as far as appraisers and real estate industries is that the impact will definitely make the existing value go down 10 to 20%. Mr. Minvielle asked if the property was zoned R-4 what would happen to Mr. Prioux's property right next to it and what would happen to his property and what could they do with it after the trailer park was there. He said he would not invest hundreds or thousands of dollars into a residential zoning which is what he intended to do and the gamble would be a loss.

Mr. Minvielle showed all the lots that were available and he said there were approximately 600 residents, 191 established homes, 30 undeveloped lots with assessments already paid, and in total 96 acres developed in the subdivision. Mr. Minvielle also said that all these resources will be directly negatively affected. He said he knew quite a few people who lived in mobile homes and he knows people who live in parks and he said their interest is a moveable object that they live in and they do not have a tangible asset in the property of real estate and all the people there do.

Jane Braud made a motion to deny the request because the reclassification of Agricultural (A-1) to Manufactured Mobile Home Park (R-4) would be (out of context) with the general character of the surrounding area; and not found to be compatible with existing land uses relative to the definition (compatibility of land) which is a determination used to define the purpose and intent of why zoning was established in the parish. The motion was seconded by Nathaniel Mitchell; the vote was unanimous.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: None at this time.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Lanie Borel made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Jane Braud; the vote was unanimous.

**Submitted by Charles C. Rader
Director of Permitting, Planning and Zoning Department**