



PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
August 15, 2023 at 6:30 PM  
City Council Chamber/Municipal Court Room  
2801 Ranch RD 1869  
Liberty Hill, Texas  
78642

**Commissioners Present:**

Steve Messana, Chair  
Chad Cormack, Vice Chair  
Diane Williams, Secretary

**Commissioners Absent:**

Bryan Rivera  
Sarah Novo

**City Staff Present:**

Liz Branigan, Mayor  
Paul Brandenburg, City Manager  
Jerry Millard, Director of Planning  
McKenzi Hicks, Planner II  
Shelby Claridge, Planning Technician

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Planning and Zoning Commission meeting was called to order by Chair Steve Messana at 7:05 PM on Tuesday, August 15, 2023, at 2801 Ranch Road 1869, Liberty Hill, Texas. Quorum was established and all members were present.

Chair Steve Messana led the invocation, and led the pledges of allegiance to US and Texas flags, respectively.

## **2) PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Public Comments are welcome. You may submit Public Comments in person, or you may submit to the City Secretary at [esimpson@libertyhilltx.gov](mailto:esimpson@libertyhilltx.gov) before 3:00 PM the day of the meeting.

There were no citizen comments.

## **3) PUBLIC HEARING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Liberty Hill has been asked to review and approve the following application(s), to wit:

- a) Discussion, consideration, and recommendation to the City Council on a request to amend Appendix A, Chapter 2.00 Review Authority and Procedures, Article 2.03 Administrative Officials and Review Entities, Section 2.03.06 Planning and Zoning Commission, Section 2.03.07 City Council (Council), Chapter 3 Applications and Permits, Table 3-1 Applications PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING TUESDAY - AUGUST 15, 2023 - 6:30 PM Notice of AGENDA Council Chamber at Municipal Court - 2801 Ranch Road 1869, Liberty Hill, Texas 1 and Permits, Section 3.09.01 General Requirements for Approval of Plats, section 3.09.02 Administrative Plat Review, section 3.09.03 Preliminary Plat Review, section 3.09.04 Final Plat Approval, and Chapter 6.00 Site Development and Design Standards, Article 6.11 Assessment and Improvement of Transportation Network, Section 6.11.03 Administration of the Unified Development Code (UDC) for the City of Liberty Hill to incorporate the changes to the duties and responsibilities of the Planning and Zoning Commission in accordance with the recent by-law change adoption. (J. Millard)

City Council will hold a public hearing on this matter on August 23rd, 2023 at 6pm at 2801 Ranch Rd 1869, Liberty Hill, TX 7864

- i) Introduction and staff report.

Director Jerry Millard introduced the topic and presented the staff report, highlighting that this version was corrected based on the changes discussed at the last Commission meeting. Director Millard stated that to address the concerns of Secretary Williams on how to best handle the change from City Administrator to City Manager, in discussions with the City Attorney and the City Secretary, it was determined that a blanket change would be done to address it across the board for all ordinances.

- ii) Hold a Public Hearing.

Chair Messana opened the Public Hearing at 7:09 PM.

There were no citizen comments.

Chair Messana closed the Public Hearing at 7:09 PM.

iii) Recommendation regarding requested variance

Chair Messana asked for clarification on how the change from City Administrator to City Manager would be handled. Director Millard clarified that the change would not be made in this version since a change would be made across the board.

Secretary Diane Williams provided corrections to the staff report on the hearing date and references.

Secretary Williams inquired as to the absence of the change to Section 3.08.06G discussed at the previous Commission meeting in which Director Millard had said at the time that there was a need to clarify the type of variance referenced. Director Millard stated he thought the change would be done when the Board of Adjustments was addressed.

Secretary Williams requested clarification on the 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet point in the staff report on page 7 under Table 3-1 changes, as it appeared to be removing a role of the Parks and Recreation Board when it was discussed at the last meeting to leave it. Director Millard stated that it was because they would be in an advisory role to the Planning and Zoning Commission and he had discussed it with Director Katie Amsler. Secretary Williams commented that the current UDC text coincides with the advisory role aspect and stated the table correction itself was consistent with that, however, the bullet point should be deleted in the staff report because the 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet point already addresses that change.

Secretary Williams advised that she had checked the definition in the UDC related to Building Permit that Director Millard was proposing to change to Sign Permit and requested confirmation from Director Millard that he was certain that this would not leave a gap somewhere. Director Millard confirmed.

Secretary Williams pointed out that one of the changes had not been made that was agreed upon as noted in the minutes. This was in Section 3.09.02 i. wherein the previous change made would going to be undone. Secretary Williams noted that this was minor so she thought it was okay. Director Millard stated he thought it was a given and therefore not necessary.

Secretary Williams raised concerns on the wording of Section 3.09.02 j. on page 15, noting the first sentence should have "approval" inserted between "final" and "action" and explained when questioned by Director Millard that it was because the City Administrator cannot take final action on disapprovals given the change in legislation. Chair Messana noted that "Administrator" should be added after "City" at the start on the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence. Secretary Williams read the associated legislation and expressed her concerns that the proposed wording did not align with it. Following discussions, Chair Messana stated that the sentence should read "the application will be forwarded to", removing the wording "the applicant may request that the application be forwarded to".

Director Millard asked if the Commission wanted to review the document again before it was presented to Council. Chair Messana directed staff to run the revised copy by the Secretary Williams first before it went to Council.

Chair Messana asked Director Milliard if staff was recommending it since that portion of the staff report had not been presented earlier. Director Millard advised that staff recommended that the Commission recommend approval.

Motion: Secretary Williams moved, and Vice-Chair Chad Cormack seconded, to recommend approval to amend the UDC subject to the changes being made and a final review by the Commission Secretary. **Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 3-0.** Ayes: Messana, Cormack, and Williams Nays: 0. Abstentions: 0. Commissioners Rivera and Novo were absent.

#### **4) CONSENT AGENDA**

- a) Consider approving the August 1st, 2023 P&Z Commission Regular Called Meeting minutes. (Secretary Williams)
- b) Consider recommending approval of the Stonewall Ranch North Section 14 Subdivision Final Plat to City Council, consisting of approximately 9.76 acres of land generally located south of the intersection of Diorite Drive and Long Run, more particularly described as part of Williamson Central Appraisal District Parcel R022828, part of and out of the J.B. Robinson Survey, Abstract No. 521, Liberty Hill Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), Williamson County, Texas. (M. Hicks)
- c) Consider approving the monthly update to the Planning & Zoning Commission Annual Work Plan. (M. Hicks)

Motion: Chair Messana moved, and Vice-Chair Cormack seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda. **Motion carried unanimously by a vote of 3-0.** Ayes: Messana, Cormack, and Williams Nays: 0. Abstentions: 0. Commissioners Rivera and Novo were absent.

#### **5) REGULAR AGENDA**

- a) Discussion regarding the draft Future Land Use Map, Place Type designations, and Growth Sectors Map for the LHTX 2040 Comprehensive Plan. (M. Hicks)

Planner McKenzi Hicks addressed the Commission and noted this item had been included because it had been requested previously, noting she had additionally included the growth sectors that will be a driver in tandem with the Future Land Use Map (FLUM).

Vice-Chair Cormack advised this his questions may be more appropriately addressed by the Consultants and noted that he was embarrassed for the FLUM to have been shown to the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) when the Commission had not seen it. Vice-Chair Cormack asked what the process was for the Planning and Zoning Commission to work with the Consultant to go through several reiterations, especially before showing it to others. Director Millard advised that it was Director Millard's failure and it had been through 2 or 3 reiterations at the staff level. Director Millard stated that as a result, he thought it didn't need to come to the Commission and could be done at final adoption. Director Millard added that if it is done right now, it will prolong the plan.

Secretary Williams echoed the concerns of the Vice-Chair and stated that she too felt the Commission needed to go through it with the Consultant.

Chair Messana added that he doesn't understand the methodology on how the Consultant got to it. During discussions, Director Millard noted that one of the inserts for a new urban village was based on discussions with the EDC Director and that someone had expressed interest in that area. Vice-Chair Cormack again reiterated his concerns that the Commission had not been involved.

Vice-Chair Cormack stated that he wants a meeting with the Consultant to understand and get updated, and that he cannot believe it progressed to the stage it did without the Commission seeing it.

City Manager Paul Brandenburg said, in talking to the Consultants, the time for the review would have been March when it was sent. Chair Messana asked how we can proceed and noted while the timing was not good, the Commission must understand the methodology, adding that some aspects were also confusing. City Manager Brandenburg acknowledged that the Commission can't give its stamp of approval if not comfortable with what is presented, noting he would check into the delay and cost aspects. Chair Messana noted that the first step is when can the Commission have a workshop and spend time to make sure these aspects are explained. Secretary Williams stated that the Consultant may have a set workshop agenda for this next one and stated that meeting with the Commission should be before the joint workshop. City Manager Brandenburg noted the 2-hour schedule for the workshop next week. Mayor Liz Branigan expressed concern that a plan be sent to the Council half-baked.

Vice-Chair Cormack asked if staff was to blame for it not coming to the Commission. Director Millard stated that he was to blame as he thought it was enough. Vice-Chair Cormack stated that there had been several work sessions and he would like to ask the Consultant directly why they had not come to the Commission to review the FLUM as this is what the Commission uses to explain why someone may not be able to develop their property the way they want to because this is the plan. Vice-Chair Cormack reiterated it was embarrassing and that he wants to talk to the Consultant before the joint meeting as some of this, he believes, is on the Consultant. Vice-Chair Cormack also stated that the Commission has been asking for scope on several occasions and staff have still not provided it. There was discussion on the role of the Commission as the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC). Chair Messana requested that the scope be provided to the Commission by tomorrow.

Vice-Chair Cormack stated that the Consultant should be requested to stop work for now. City Manager Brandenburg stated that there will be a call with the Consultant on Thursday, noting we may not get what we want. Following more discussion, the Commission reiterated the need for a meeting with the Consultant prior to the joint meeting with Council.

Chair Messana also asked that the Commission be provided bigger versions in the future of the plans because they are too small to read. Director Millard asked if 11x17 would be sufficient. Chair Messana advised as long as it is landscape.

Planner Hicks asked if there was any other input at this time like the concerns raised in earlier discussions on industrial, parks, etc. Secretary Williams noted that one of the places marked as rural looked to be the 53 acres donated to the City for a park. Vice-Chair Cormack added that open spaces are often in the floodplain. Planner Hicks advised that was the case in Taylor. Chair Messana asked if institutions should be included. Director Millard stated there could be too many uses and explained that subdivisions, for example, could also have parks.

Vice-Chair Cormack asked if the zoning would be changed to land uses and how that would work. Planner Hicks explained how it would be updated to match with the UDC rewrite. There were further discussions on how this might work. Secretary Williams highlighted that this is why the Commission needs to understand the methodology. Vice-Chair Cormack agreed and added that the City has some unique aspects and this is why the Commission needs to talk to the Consultant.

Secretary Williams pointed out that this is exactly why it was important for the Commission to be able to check in with the Consultant monthly as had been requested early on.

Vice-Chair Cormack reiterated that the Consultant should not be given an option but to meet with the Commission next week before the joint session. Staff was given direction.

No action was taken.

## **6) REPORTS/UPDATES**

- b) Receive the overall P&Z Roles and Responsibilities Chart as it pertains to Bylaws Implementation. (M. Hicks/Secretary Williams)

Secretary Williams introduced the topic and presented the chart. Vice-Chair Cormack stated he wished this had been available when he first became a Commissioner, noting that he didn't think we had to wait on a process to be defined, that the Commission should just do it. Secretary Williams clarified she had not meant to imply that the Commission wait because there are many on the list that were in the original bylaws that still have not happened.

Vice-Chair Cormack asked if this needs to align with the Annual Work Plan. Chair Messana advised not really, that the Commission just needs to decide the process, when it will happen, and how to insert the Commission into it. Chair Messana suggested that the Commissioners review the chart and come back at the next meeting to discuss ideas.

Secretary Williams suggested that a Planning and Zoning Commission Calendar be prepared to highlight the various timings and Chair Messana noted these should also be in the Annual Work Plan in the future.

No action was taken.

## 7) DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMENTS

There can be no deliberation or action taken on these items.

Director Millard highlighted the following:

- a. City Council Update - P&Z Items
  - i. Stonewall Ranch North Section 15 Subdivision Final Plat - **Approved**
  - ii. Heritage Ridge Lot ii. Site Development Permit - **Approved**
  - iii. Storage King Site Development Permit - **Approved**
  - iv. St. Joseph's Court Lot 2 Site Development Permit - **Approved**
- b. LHTX 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update – The August 23<sup>rd</sup> workshop will be from 5-7 pm and staff would work on finding the additional time for discussion.

Director Millard noted that this was his last meeting and provided his final comments.

## 8) Future Items

Items for a future agenda may be identified and scheduled. There can be no deliberation or action taken on these items.

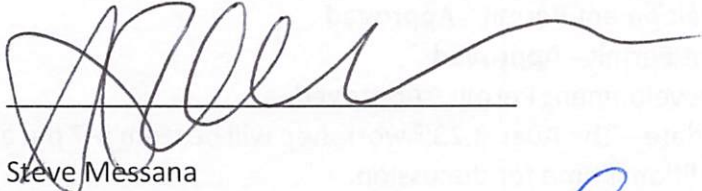
- a. List of Potential Variances Requested by Chair Messana
- b. Sign Ordinance Update
- c. Verdunity Stop-Gap Inquiry - Secretary Williams clarified that the item was not about the Consultant doing any additional “stop-gap” ordinances but an inquiry as to the scope of work related to the ordinances listed in the Work Plan, noting for example, while the Drainage Ordinance was listed, it was not anticipated that the Consultant would do the actual Drainage Manual. Chair Messana emphasized that the Work Plan should include draft targets and be clear on if the Consultant will do it and if they are not, then the City needs to.
- d. Parks & Recreation Board Signage Coordination
- e. Impact Fee Discussion - Chair Messana asked for clarification if this was the one originally on the Council agenda. Planner Hicks confirmed and stated that she plans to coordinate with other offices concerned and wants to provide the Commission with additional information to aid in the discussion at a future time.

Secretary Williams inquired as to how often an update on Dark Skies should be included. Chair Messana stated that it should be put as a Report every meeting for an update, noting if there is no update, then that would be what is stated in the report.


9) ADJOURNMENT

Given there were no further agenda items and hearing no objections from the members, Chair Messana adjourned the meeting 8:22 PM.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Planning and Zoning of the City of Liberty Hill, Texas on September  
5, 2023, on vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays, and 0 abstentions.



Steve Messana  
Chair



City Secretary