

The CITY OF OLMOS OARK  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD  
JUNE 29, 2016

The Planning and Zoning Commission for the City of Olmos Park, Texas held a meeting at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 29, 2016 at City Hall. Members present were Patricia Meier, Sandra Ryan, Deanna Rickabaugh, Blair Young and Wade Giddens. Members that were not present were James Griffin and Jody Lutz. Administrative staff present was Celia DeLeon, City Manager; Diane Gonzales, City Secretary; Ricardo Cavazos, Building Official; Fire Chief Surber and City Attorney, Richard Lindner. Also present was Stephen Kramer, S&K Architects, Alan Chesler, 727 Contour; Heidi White, Thomas Bradley & Associates; Mary Barker, 106 E. Mandalay; Bridget McGregor, 107 Brittany; Matthew McGregor, 107 Brittany; Corbin Barker, 106 E. Mandalay; Judy Barker, 627 E. Mandalay; Beth O'Brien, 103 E. Mandalay; Mary Labatt, 310 E. Mandalay; Lauren Bullock, 122 Brittany; Lesley Neyland, 122 E. Mariposa; John Neyland, 122 E. Mariposa; Sanford Grossman, 301 Stanford; Andrea Nauschutz, 102 Stanford; Mike Seringer, 130 E. Wildwood; Claire Holshouser, 107 E. Mandalay; Mark Barhim, 107 E. Mandalay; Erin Seki, 601 E. Mandalay; Donna McElroy, 114 E. Mandalay; Rudy DeLeon, 4334 McCullough; Mary Sawyer, 307 E. Mandalay; Henry Sawyer, 307 E. Mandalay and Deb Prost, 130 Stanford.

Vice Chair Meier called the meeting to order and announced a quorum was present at 5:03 p.m.

Approve minutes from May 25, 2016.

Deanna Rickabaugh moved to approve the May 25, 2016 minutes.

Blair Young seconded the motion.

The vote in favor of the motion was unanimous.

Public Hearing on the application for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a Car Wash on the following property currently zoned Local Retail Commercial District: CB 4048 BLK 16 LOT E 110 FT OF 21 THRU 25, known as 5005 MCCULLOUGH AVE OLMOS PARK, TX 78212.

Stephen Kramer introduced himself as the Architect working with Alan Chesler who is my client regarding the Special Use Permit proposal for a carwash at McCullough and Zilla.

Vice Chair Meier stated I am judging by the letters that have been sent to the City Manager and has been forwarding them to this committee, everybody is very aware of this car wash proposal and they are here to speak tonight and these letters have a lot of concerns.

Vice Chair Meier opened the public hearing at 5:05 p.m.

Mary Barker stated she lives at 106 E. Mandalay Drive and is speaking on behalf of many concerned neighbors and businesses and we have 70 signatures on our petition, many more would have signed but they have conflicting personal or business relationships. So many of us believe this project is a bad idea for countless reasons. This type of development does nothing to enhance the charm or beauty of our historic neighborhood. Even with high quality landscaping and modern design we would be looking at an industrial eye sore. Our City has worked through years to improve upon beautification of our neighborhood and it goes without saying a car wash would completely contradict this position direction, secondly car washes generate high volume of traffic and does not conform to the pedestrian friendly boulevard that our City envisions with soon to be bike lanes and sidewalks. According to statistics a single town car wash averages 45,750 washes per year and hope that the City would place the safety

of our community's pedestrian, auto and bicycle traffic at the forefront of any other consideration. Third a town car wash is a majority contributor to noise pollution surrounding businesses and homes will be inundated with constant loud sounds generated not only by the car wash but by the dryer machine, the water recycling unit and the vacuums. Furthermore, customers that are detailing their cars often play their music loud and these facilities are notorious for being cited for noise violations as they regularly go over their City's sound decibel restriction. In closing it should be mentioned the property does not meet the requirements for a Special Use Permit approval because according to Article 6, properties seeking a Special Use Permit must be orderly and compliant and compatible in your community and not having any adverse effects or impact on its neighbors. Clearly this project does not meet these requirements and our City has a great source of pride and we have our committee to thank for so many beautiful improvements in the recent years. A car wash is a big permanent step backwards from this wonderful direction and we asked that the Board strongly consider our concerns today.

Bridget McGregor stated she lives at 107 Brittany Drive which is within 200 yards of the McCullough tunnel car wash and I am here representing the 70 plus neighbors and business owners who signed a petition against this plan. Thank you for the opportunity to speak and to explain to you why we think this is a bad idea for our neighborhood. Our City's current zoning code prohibits the ability to build this structure without a Special Use Permit and specifies that the Zoning Commission shall recommend denial of the Special Use Permit unless it finds this structure has not adverse effect on traffic, public health, public safety and the general welfare. It should also be denied if it contributes to the loss deterioration, destruction and deprivation of existing neighborhood integrity. We think this proposed tunnel car wash will have a clear negative impact on our neighborhood and its industrial size is not in keeping with the character of Olmos Park and will create traffic problems and will be detrimental to pedestrians, bikers and local drivers. Noise will create frequent irritation to nearby residents for these reasons we would like to see the Special Use Permit denied. The pictures I am showing you are pictures of Mr. Chesler's current car wash named Tejas Wash located on Southwest Military Drive in San Antonio. This is the one equivalent to the one proposed at 5005 McCullough Avenue. The McCullough property is more compact and has the wash and detailing area will be closer to the Olmos Park neighbors. As you can see this car wash is undeniable unattractive and is heavy and industrial and does not fit with the character of our neighborhood. I have a short video to show you of how noisy the car wash is and the self-serve vacuums are a noise nuisance even greater. Our community strives to maintain a more charming and walkable safe environment on our main corridor, this tunnel car wash with its ugly appearance blaring industrial sounds with potential traffic snarls will be a step in the wrong direction. This is a map of all the tunnel car washes that already exists in close proximity to Olmos Park and does not include all the hand wash ones like the Frog Car Wash. We hope that you will agree that this is an unnecessary project and is not a good fit for our community. I would like to submit to you the petition signatures that we received.

Donna McElroy stated she lives at 114 E. Mandalay which I can actually see this property standing in front of my yard and I completely echo what has been said already and this does not meet the legal standard and is impossible for them to meet that burden. I moved here in 1997 and we plan to stay here until we have grandchildren as long as there is not a car wash at the end of the driveway and at the end of the day whoever is building this property isn't living across the street from it. We did not come to Olmos Park to have this kind of commercial establishment and it's not what we are about, what we are about is a very close knit community that takes care of each other and when I can't take a left hand turn off McCullough to go downtown to go to work every morning and it's busy right now so what am I going to do when a car wash traffic is stopping. I don't even know how we would get out from Mandalay if I have to

deal with cars coming at me and once school starts you can't make a left hand turn, I have started to go down Shook to get downtown. Let's not forget about the character of who we are and what we want as a community, we have the safest neighborhood and I brag about it all the time and I once broke a coffee cup walking the dog late at night and the Police all of the sudden came up because somebody called in a said they heard a crash and we would lose this type of character with this type of facility. I would defy that gentleman that owns it to live across the street from it.

Andres Andujar stated he lives at 126 E. Mandalay Drive and is on the EDC but is not a representing the EDC has they have no opinion on this but I spend a lot of time thinking about what McCullough can be and I think some of the steps that you are taking to put a code in place to make improvements that makes this a friendlier pedestrian environment is beginning to take us in the right direction from my point of view. What I want to see there is more pedestrian friendly environment with wider sidewalks and landscaping, the things we have been talking about since 2008. We need more store fronts that are inviting to the neighbors and visitors from outside the neighborhood. I think you get what you design and if you design for the automobile then you are going to get more cars, if you design for the pedestrian than you will have a friendly pedestrian environment. I think this particular request for a Special Use Permit is necessary because what is being proposed is not to the zoning and not to the code and is industrial use and requires special consideration and it is against my intentions for the street and I bet you to reject the Special Use Permit.

Mike Seringer stated he lives at 130 E. Wildwood and everyone has brought up good points and I was out of town last week and as I was going through some small towns I noticed there are no car washes and all the businesses are right on the street like Olmos Park and all the car washes are outside the City's center. I am renovating a house at 443 Thelma and I showed some business people the house and told them that a car wash was going in on McCullough and they said that "car wash would never fly here" so my point is it is within your power that we want this community a certain way and that is why we live here and pay the price to live here. McCullough is improving and I feel this would be a step backwards and hopefully you will make the right decision and something should go there that fits there, it's a small space and right up by the street and we already have the Frog car wash.

Alan Chesler stated he is also a resident of Olmos Park and has lived here since 1992. I asked my son to come today to see how this process works because I think it will be an interesting lesson for him and how neighbors work together with each other. I would like to invite anybody that has any questions about the car wash or this piece of property to come by my house at 727 Contour and see me. For all of you that are concerned about some of the issues that you have raised here today and I would prefer not to get into a point counterpoint upon any of them.

Vice Chair Meier closed the public hearing at 5:20 p.m.

Pat Meier stated she wanted to thank you and commend you for what position you took and glad your son came to see that involvement should be the way government is run and that people are open and articulate about their concerns.

Discuss and take possible action regarding application for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a Car Wash on the following property currently zoned Local Retail Commercial District: CB 4048 BLK 16 LOT E 110 FT OF 21 THRU 25, known as 5005 MCCULLOUGH AVE OLMOS PARK, TX 78212.

Alan Chesler stated the information you were presented with is not representative of what we have been working on for this location. I am flattered of whoever put the video up of our other

car wash and took the time to do that and researched some industry statistics but you are comparing a semi-trailer to Volkswagen because what you saw on the video....Mr. Chesler was interrupted by a citizen and did not get to finish his sentence.

Donna McElroy asked would you agree that there will be more traffic coming out of the car wash that is currently there now?

Alan Chesler stated I think that is a rhetorical question.

Vice Chair Meier stated I think that is obvious, there will be more traffic.

Donna McElroy asked when there is more traffic how do you propose to manage people trying to get in and out of Mandalay turning onto McCullough?

Alan Chesler stated the property that you see is the front of the property and there is some additional property behind it and we intend to use that property as well to address these issues because remember, I am your neighbor. In what you were shown on the video is in no way a representative of what we would do on this location and should have been obvious because the size is completely incongruous, the design is completely incongruous and I am not insensitive to the traffic, design or any other issues pertaining to how it would be designed, managed and run. In particular because I live here and I had no idea that so many people felt so strongly about this or felt anything about it one way or another and I had no idea there was a petition going on and I would have liked the courtesy of somebody telling me that there was a petition going on and don't know whether that is a standard process here because many people here have emphasized how important the neighborly aspect of this neighborhood is. Generally I would not think that you would do something like that without taking into account that it's a neighbor you are talking about.

Vice Chair Meier stated this is just a process and everybody in that area within 200 feet were notified and this is their reaction to it and it's to the business not personal.

Alan Chesler stated it is feeling a bit personal, so what you are considering today does not take into account what you were shown on the video because it couldn't be more different than what we are working on by virtue of its design and size and have already spoken to the City about incorporating the pedestrian improvements. There was a video that was presented as being taken from the opposite end for the other side of Southwest Military and that is not true, so whoever took that video and represented that wasn't being forthright.

Vice Chair Meier asked how does this differ from the car wash in the video, how does this differ from that.

Alan Chesler stated typically car washes are neighborhood businesses, they have to address and be suitable to the needs of people who live around them as those are who the customers are so in that particular neighborhood the folks that we spoke to wanted that kind of product so our initial design didn't look much like that what you saw we actually changed it to address what the neighbors wanted which was a different size tunnel.

Vice Chair Meier asked do you measure volume, is that the way you address your productivity and size?

Alan Chesler stated what you saw on the video is called a limited service tunnel and in that particular location there is no detailing that is done, the neighbors did not want it. The price

points that we have there are couched so as to address the desire for a quicker experience so that the car pulls in and takes less than a minute to go through.

Vice Chair Meier asked how does this compare to what will happen on McCullough?

Alan Chesler stated this one would be a much shorter tunnel by more than half and we talked about having a coffee bar inside the facility and serving baked goods and the price will be higher because I think the clientele would demand more detail oriented experience. Generally speaking with washes by virtue are actually designed for with safety in mind because the owner does not need to be in the car if they don't want to and whoever that took the photos of the other car wash would have seen that we have a SAWS designation because we re-cycle our water and use less water than you would if you washed your car in your own driveway and in terms of conservation and in terms of preservation and what we are doing far exceeds what would immediate take apparent to somebody who was not familiar with this business.

Blair Young stated I do not see any letters in support of this and you knew you were asking something of the City that we did not have the zoning for. We see in other variances support from neighbors and that is a good way to get a variance but to say you don't understand how this could happen is bewildering to me because anyone who is sincere about this would have gone to their neighbors and asked to write a support letter.

Alan Chelser stated he was actually instructed not to go to my neighbors and I have never have gone through the process before and if you want me to get letters I would be happy to do that.

Blair Young stated I am not looking for an argument but if you have lived here as long as you have you would know that we are a very open neighborhood and the amount of emails we have received is staggering and to say that you were not expecting it is quite surprising. We have seen petitions for walkways here and we want to know what is going on the other side of Olmos Park on Contour as much as we do on Devine. We are very tightly knit and are only 1/2 square mile.

Alan Chesler stated let me save you some trouble and honestly as my neighbors I wish you would have come to me first and I would like to withdraw our application effective immediately and I am sorry if I have offended any of you if I did and I invite any of you to come by and introduce yourself in a less pretentious environment, I am actually a very nice fellow. I have lived here since 1992.

Vice Chair Meier stated I would like to make a comment before you leave, it is really not personal and normally you don't go and ask it's the City that notifies the people within 200 feet of the project and you are getting impersonal reactions about how citizens feel and how the property should be utilized.

Alan Chesler stated right now it looks like a bit of an eye sore but if that is preferable than that is fine.

Vice Chair Meier stated we thank you for your offer and accept your withdrawal of the Special Use Permit.

After further discussion Mr. Chesler withdrew his application for a Special Use Permit.

Discuss future agenda items:

1. Request from City Council to review and discuss with City Public Service representative to draft an ordinance for the business district to bury utilities or place an above ground junction box or other connections at back of their property.
2. Review and discuss amending sec 32-111 driveway widths.
3. Discuss creation of a new apartment zoning district for McCullough Avenue.
4. Discuss creation of outdoor lighting regulations in all districts.
5. Discuss amending Sec 40-113 limited use of right-of-way.
6. Discuss and review maintenance of property.

Next meeting will be July 27<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

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James Griffin  
Chair

ATTEST:

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Diane Gonzales  
City Secretary