

MUNICIPAL REGIONAL SPECIAL-CALLED PLANNING COMMISSION  
Meeting Minutes – January 15, 2019

Members Present:

David Taylor	Mack McCluskey	Chad Williams	Kathy Adams
Mike Walls	Robert King	Ronnie Kelley	Chuck Daley
Camille Burdine	Jesse Gilliam		

Staff Present:

Paul Corder	Mary Turner	Kathleen Vail	Sarah Haston
Regina Santana	Shahad Abdulrahman	Seth Harrison	

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman David Taylor called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM. Commission member Robert King opened with the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairman David Taylor explained the order of proceedings.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Request by Krishna Patel for a Zoning Code Amendment to Title 14, Chapter 9 to add Section 14.905 Hotel and Motel Standards Overlay District in order to add certain minimum standards for the development of hotel and motels surrounding interchanges

Planner Mary Turner explained that this new district is intended to specify certain minimum requirements and standards for hotels and motels surrounding highway interchanges within the City limits. The ordinance will apply to any hotel or motel development within a one-mile radius of I-40 interchanges that provide access to the City. Hotels and motels shall include a minimum of 100 guest rooms with each room accessed from an interior corridor and not from an exterior parking lot or entrance. Hotels and motels must have a lobby, which is staffed, 24 hours, 7-days-a-week and offers complimentary maid service. A second ordinance also was presented that was the identical except it had a Section 4.- Sunset Clause that would expire four years after its effective date, unless extended by ordinance. In Section 1. C. Standards, she explained that the developers had the option of choosing a minimum of the three of the four amenities listed:

- 1) A paid or complementary full hot breakfast offered to the guests of the hotel.
- 2) A minimum of 3,000 square feet of indoor and/or outdoor common area open to guests and the general public. Indoor space can include lobbies, but excludes guest rooms, corridors, meeting rooms, swimming pools, guest room corridors, or health club facilities. Outdoor space can include patios but excludes swimming pools and drop-off areas.
- 3) A business center measuring at least 200 square feet. The business center shall have Wi-Fi availability, and contain computers, printers, and associated office equipment.

- 4) A minimum of 2,000 square feet of dedicated meeting space that is of ballroom quality and available to rent to the general public and guests of the hotel for compensation. The meeting space should be one contiguous space that can be divided with temporary sound proof wall.

Hamel Surati of 611 Concord Drive, Gallatin said that he does not think it is beneficial for the City to do something like this. He is a landowner and is building a hotel in Lebanon and he meets a few, but not all of the stated requirements. He said he does not think it is beneficial to the City and to the developers. He said that in his opinion, requiring hotels with 100 rooms is not going to be good for the City.

Roshan Patel of 109 Geers Drive said that he discussed this with Staff and what the City has come up with is a fantastic plan. He said we all know we don't need any more limited service hotels here in Lebanon which has fallen behind Mount Juliet. He said that the F&B (Food & Beverage) component is needed; the County needs it with the Expo Center and the City needs it for future growth. Full service is going to bring in demand. If the City continues to allow minimum service hotels, the pot will continue to be divided because we are not gaining any taxable revenues. He said that he feels the amendment's terms are great and will encourage developers.

Vimlesh Shah of 108 Waverly Place asked whether this amendment affects his hotel that had already been approved.

Planner Mary Turner replied that it would not as long as construction begins before the site plan expires.

Krishna Patel of 829 S Cumberland Street sponsored the request. He noted that other municipalities have done something similar and it did not hinder their growth. He said that Lebanon could look at their neighbor, Mount Juliet, because since that ordinance has been adopted, three new hotels have met the ordinance to build with another two in the pipeline. A lot of the venues that they work with really need these kind of hotels and he said that that the City is looking at 112-acre sports complex which will attract weekend teams and having a F&B hotel will service their needs.

Hamel Surat asked how does the City enforce the F&B and the other items.

Planning Director Paul Corder said the City would review it at both the Site Plan and the Building Inspection stages. A few things have been removed as far as the operational aspects. These are the things that the City can enforce.

Hamel Surat asked what the timeframe for this would be. He said that he just received the notice and that with this ordinance, he would not be able to build a 77-room hotel here because it would have limited service. He said that the newer hotel brands require improvements. A lot of the older hotels are required to make those improvements and if this ordinance goes through, they will not have to make those. There are hotels in Lebanon that do not meet those requirements and he said that the hotel brands will require the improvements and if they are not done, they will give it to somebody else. How does that correlate that they get to keep their hotel and we have to increase ours to 100-rooms, with all the extras and who will develop that.

Planning Director Paul Corder said that first, the Planning Department sent out notices to owners. This amendment would have to go through two readings at City Council with the first reading and public hearing would be February 5, 2019 and the second reading would be February 19, 2019.

Commissioner Mack McCluskey asked about Section C Standards and asked why only three of the four amenities would be required, and why not all four.

Planner Mary Turner said that Staff looked at the ordinances from Mount Juliet and Franklin for reference and that it was also her understanding that if three of the items were met, it would be considered a full service hotel.

Commissioner McCluskey enquired whether there is anything that prevents the commission from requiring all four amenities.

Planner Mary Turner said that there is nothing that prevents the commission from changing and modifying the amendment.

Commissioner Kathy Adams asked how many cities Staff used as comparison and if they used Murfreesboro.

Planner Mary Turner said that they just found ordinances from Mount Juliet and Franklin. Regarding Murfreesboro, Mary said that in conversations with the Economic Director, Sarah Haston, that city has attracted full-service hotels in coordination with the Medical Center in Murfreesboro.

City Councilor Camille Burdine pointed out that if the hotels usually have the three amenities then they have the fourth one.

Krishna Patel said that that was incorrect and speaking as a developer, everyone looks to how they can shave off some money. He said that eliminating the ballroom for example, which would be the highest in cost, would be a huge mistake and that requiring all four amenities would be a great addition. The hotels that the developers build today will be standing for 30-40 years and he pointed out that we can see the hotels that were built 30 years ago and what they had become with various concerns.

Commissioner McCluskey said that when he used to be in corporate meetings, it would have been a huge negative for one of these four amenities to be missing. He also asked why there was a limit of four years in Section 4 of the ordinance.

Krishna Patel said that they never proposed a timeline for the expiration of the amendment.

Commissioner Chad Williams arrived late.

Chairman David Taylor asked why 3,000 sq. ft. was chosen and is that number an average.

Planner Mary Turner pointed out that the minimum is 2,000 sq. ft. for the meeting space, the 3,000 sq. ft. includes the lobby and indoor space. That square footage is close to the other cities regulations.

Shanker Patel asked when the last time Lebanon built a limited service hotel and how many new hotels had been built in the past 10 years.

Planning Director Paul Corder replied that Fairfield Inn, Hampton, and My Place Hotel were the new hotels built, plus three more that have been approved.

Special Called Planning Commission Meeting

A motion was made by Mack McCluskey and seconded Chuck Daley to recommend approval of the Zoning Code amendment to City Council with all four of the listed amenities and with the Section 4 - Sunset Clause removed. Motion carried 10-0.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS – None.

PLANNING DIRECTOR COMMENTS – None.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 11:27 AM.

David Taylor  
Chairman, David Taylor

Kathleen Vail  
Recording Secretary, Kathleen Vail

02/26/19  
Date

3/01/19  
Date