

TOWN OF BROOKLET
PLANNING & ZONING MEETING
FEBRUARY 8, 2005

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER;
The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Belle Gay.
Members present: Ms. Janie Ruth Smith, Mr. Bill DeChristopher and Mr. Charlie Howell. Mr. Charles Wilson was absent.

2. REVIEW AND MOTION TO APPROVE DECEMBER MINUTES.
Motion made by Mr. Howell to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Smith, passed with all ayes.

3. PUBLIC HEARING # 1
APPLICATION: SE 22-023
APPLICANT: BROOKLET FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
AGENT: PATRICIA LANE
LOCATION: 111 WEST LANE STREET B05-046
PRESENT ZONE R-1 (residential)

According to minutes, a conference was held by the Brooklet First Baptist Church members on March 17, 2002. A vote was taken on selling the church on Lane Street including the Pastorium. The result was 88 voting to approve the motion to sell the property and 10 voting against. Some members abstained. Patricia Lane had an offer on the property and filed a request for a Special Exception in order for the purchaser to operate a small private school in the church building, and rent out the classrooms for conferences and meetings. The adjoining properties are Residential and Commercial, with a church and day care across the street.

Ms. Gay asked Ms. Lane to present her information to the Zoning Commission. She informed them of the agreement to sell the church property so she put it on the market and they now have a contract. The purchaser plans to use the church as a faith-based private school. They need the zone changed from R-1 in order to use this as a private school. They expect to have no more than 30 students to begin with and should not cause a problem with traffic nor the septic system. There is a Day Care in the Church across the street.

PUBLIC SESSION OPEN:

Several people from the Baptist Church and Methodist Church signed up to speak for and/or against the request.

Comments: They would like to see it used as a church and are concerned the request would allow for commercial business, which is not compatible with the property. If the Variance is granted, they would like to place a condition on the request that the zone reverts back to residential so that it may be used as a church again. Others were also in favor of this. Other concerns were the possibility of student increase. Some members feel the faith-based school would help the community and a good drawing card for people moving in to the area. Another member spoke in favor of the request and believes we are in a stage of growing and likes the small community of Brooklet, but does not feel this will cause a tremendous growth or traffic problem. He feels this would encourage people to have the opportunity to have multi choices of a public or faith-based school without leaving the area. A question was asked if the school did not work out would this revert to a Commercial Zone. No, not *unless* there was another request made and passed for commercial zone. If this exception is granted, the zoning commission and council could put a stipulation in the motion if the school did not work out, the property would revert back to R-1, which is what the property is zoned at the present time.

Question was asked, why worry about re zoning the property until it is sold and it was her understanding that the church could not be sold at this time. Ms. Lane advised she had addressed this in the package the Board members received. A letter from Attorney Wallace Wright indicates the deed contains no language prohibiting the sale of the property. It does allow the property to be disposed of subject to the discipline and governing body of the Brooklet Baptist Church. There is a 16 foot strip of Railroad Right of Way on the property. Ms. Lane advised there is a contract to sell the church and they are ready to close, but it needs the zone change to enable the people to use the property for a school. Members of the Methodist Church spoke person advised they have a pre-school which has been there for over 20 years. She and others at the Methodist Church are concerned about the traffic, especially during the week with both schools going on. There is already a lot of traffic in this area. Another concern was the renting out of the rooms for a fee because their church is across the street and she does not want to see a big party going on while they try to have church. Ms. Lane assured her the rooms would not be rented out for parties, but for conferences and or meetings. Pastor Doug McCart explained how the sale of the church property on Lane Street would enable them to re locate to the property on Highway 80 West to build the new facility. He feels the traffic will increase because of new subdivisions and this part of the county is growing fast. He was speaking for the requested change and this to be presented to council for approval.

BOARD MEMBERS SESSION OPEN.

Ms. Smith asked what grade levels they would have. Ms. Lane thinks one through five or six grades with regular school hours.

Mr. DeChristopher asked about growth estimate. Ms. Lane said they would start with about 30 students and this would not be a day care center, but a Monastery School. There was a discussiin on whether or not a Monastery School was a faith-based school. The buyers, Mr. & Mrs. Dutton intend this to be a faith-based school.

Mr. Howell asked how you would separate a Monaastery School from other schools. Mr. McCart says it is more or less an elete private school. Other comments, French-Based, a school for highly motovated students who progress at their own pace, a lot like a charter school.

Mr. Howell asked if they were for profit or non profit. Ms. Lane answered, for profit. Mr Howell also wanted to know if they were for profit, if this would call for a commercial zone.

Mr. DeChristopher feels this is a tough decision, not knowing what the school plans are, such as projected growth, hours of operation, parking, fenced in play yard, number of personnel, cafeteria, septic system, and proposed layout.

Mr. Howell spoke for the Zoning Commission, that all the above issues need to be addressed. He knows the commission cannot make everybody happy, but they will try to do what is in the best interest of the citizens of Brooklet. Mr. Howell then made a motion to table the issue until such time as all needed informatin is gathered. Motin seconded by Ms. Smith and passed with all ayes.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Mr. Dechristopher, seconded by Ms. Smith, passed with all ayes.