



CITY OF FRANKLIN

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ENGINEERING

MINUTES FRANKLIN CITY PLAN COMMISSION May 16, 2023

Members Present

Joe Abban
Suzanne Findley
Janice Giles
Debbie Gill
Georganna Haltom
John Kempinski
Jim Martin
Irene Nalley
Mark Richards

Secretary
Member
Member
Member
Member
Vice President
President
Member
Member

Others Present

Lynn Gray
Joanna Tennell

Legal Counsel
Senior Planner II

Call to Order

Jim Martin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call & Determination of Quorum

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

April 18, 2023 – Georganna Haltom moved to approve. Suzanne Findley seconded. Passed unanimously, 9-0.

Swearing In

Lynn Gray swore en masse all intending to speak during the proceedings.

Report of Officers and Committees: April 20, 2023 – Joanna Tennell reported on two agenda items. The first item was the Dunn and Snapp Annexation and Rezoning which will be heard tonight. The second item was the Essex expansion. The property is located at 3200 Essex Drive. The property is zoned IG (Industrial: General). They are proposing to add on to the west side of the structure along with a small addition on the east side for approximately a total addition of 65,000 square feet. They will also expand the parking lot to accommodate the expansion and additional employees.

Old Business

None.

New Business

PC-23-06 (A) & PC-23-07 (R): Dunn & Snapp Annexation & Rezoning – Ms. Tennell introduced the joint petitions from Hugh Dunn and the Snapp Joint Trust. The first request is to annex approximately 240 acres. The second request is to rezone the western 80 acres from Johnson County Agriculture to IG (Industrial: General) and to rezone the eastern 160 acres from Johnson County Agriculture and Residential to A (Agriculture). The subject property is located on the north side of Earlywood Drive, immediately east of RJ Parkway. One hundred percent of the landowners are petitioners, and the property is slightly over 20% contiguous with existing city limits. The property is in the Needham Fire Protection District. According to Indiana Code, should annexation be approved, it would take effect the second January 1 following adoption by the City Council. Or the petitioners could go to the Needham Fire Protection District and Johnson County Commissioners to request the property be removed from that district prior to final adoption of the annexation. The petitioners have gone before the Needham Fire Protection District and a resolution approving the property be removed is being forwarded to the County Commissioners for final action. This is the first step in regard to the fire district and does not affect the decision making process before Plan Commission nor City Council.

Attorney Larry Gesse represented the Dunn and Snapp families in these requests. Mr. and Mrs. Snapp were also in attendance. The Dunn property is the farthest west 80 acres which is immediately adjacent to property zoned IG (Industrial: General) in the City of Franklin and requested to be zoned IG (Industrial: General). The Snapp property is 160 acres immediately east of the Dunn property and current zoning is agriculture and residential under County jurisdiction. The Snapp's are requesting that their entire property be zoned Agriculture if annexed. Neither property is currently under immediate consideration for any type of development.

1. Comprehensive Plan: The request for the Dunn 80 acres is consistent as there is IG (Industrial: General) zoning immediately to the west as well as to the south. The Snapp 160 acres is consistent as no change is asked for but for it to remain A (Agriculture) in its entirety.
2. Current Conditions: The Dunn property is immediately north of property developed as industrial as well as the immediate west property zoned IG (Industrial: General).
3. Desired Use: The property immediately to the west and other industrial properties to the south are currently the use Franklin is interested in and allows for the existing industrial zoning or larger developments in the future.
4. Property Values: Mr. Gesse stated that the property values should not decrease with the request.
5. Responsible Growth: The Dunn property is immediately adjacent to other industrial zoned and developed properties. The Snapp property is requested to be zoned A (Agriculture) which is consistent with its current use.

A public hearing was held. Dr. Jill Beavins expressed three areas of concern.

1. Traffic Flow: Earlywood Drive between US 31 and Graham Road - there are single lanes of traffic at the stoplight at US 31 with no right or left turning lanes which rapidly backs up semi traffic. There is a school zone approximately 200 meters from the intersection with speed reductions twice a day. There are heavily used railroad tracks. The four-way stop at Graham and Earlywood is not designed for semi traffic and routinely backs up several vehicles in all directions. Vehicles must stop 50 meters short of the stop sign to give semis enough clearance to turn right or left in to oncoming traffic lanes. The infrastructure from US 31 to Graham is not suitable for increased commercial traffic, particularly semi traffic in that area.
2. Safety: Earlywood Drive/300 N between Graham and Hurricane, is where safety concerns begin. It is a high-speed and heavily traveled area. It withstands significant semi traffic on a daily basis. Earlywood Drive/300 N does not meet the minimum shoulder width requirements for commercial truck traffic. The lane width is not intended nor optimized to the defined specifications for safe semi travel. Earlywood Drive/300 N routinely floods in two spots between Graham and Hurricane. The excess water and semi traffic have caused multiple road failures along Earlywood Drive/300 N. There have been two semi accidents in the last 18 months. Both snapped off multiple power poles, brought down power lines,

destroyed private property and left residents on the south side of 300 without power. Road closures of several hours resulted after both accidents. The most recent accident could have killed a neighbor and his girlfriend sitting at the end of their driveway if they did not put the vehicle in reverse to miss being hit by the semi. With approved developments coming, traffic will be even more increased. There is a plan for an I-65 interchange at Earlywood Drive/300 N.

3. Watershed: Dr. Beavins produced a map (Exhibit A) showing all north-south running waterways. She maintained that all changes from tillable land from pervious ground to impervious ground dramatically increases the runoff, volume and rate of water. All runs in to Hurricane Creek and Canary Ditch and ends in downtown Franklin, increasing the likelihood of flooding in the city.

Linda Norton asked if annexed property has to pay both county and city taxes. Ms. Gray confirmed. Ms. Norton also asked once a property is annexed, how long does the city have before required to provide services and are all services required from the city. Ms. Gray stated that all services are provided immediately with the exception of sanitary sewer. Sanitary sewer is provided in the same fashion as with new development. Annexation requires the review of whether the city has the ability to provide the appropriate services. Ms. Norton sent an e-mail (Exhibit B) to commission members prior to the meeting and reiterated her belief that Franklin has hit the limit on further warehouse development. Her desire is for incoming business to be both environmentally and economically beneficial. She suggested waiting for an appropriate business or project to present the request for zoning.

Kelli Gordon was in full support of Dr. Beavins' remarks. She also concurred with Ms. Norton's belief that Franklin has enough warehouses. She does not wish to see more warehouses but prefers the view of trees and farmland. Ms. Gordon also believes the roads are already not appropriate for current semi traffic. Ms. Gordon identified that it was her son in the car with his girlfriend involved in the second semi wreck Dr. Beavins cited. She requested the commission delay their decision for zoning until further thought and research can be considered.

Jill Jongeling stated that her parents own property right off of Earlywood Drive/300 North. She supported all previous remonstrance.

Mr. Gesse reiterated there being no plans for immediate development of either property. The public hearing was closed.

Ms. Findley asked what the purpose was for rezoning the Snapp property from residential to A (Agriculture). She understood it to be zoned A (Agriculture) and changed to residential recently. Mr. Gesse stated his understanding that part of the property is zoned A (Agriculture) and part R-2 and advised that it seemed to make the most sense to have the Snapp property all zoned the same in preparation for any future development and to be consistent with the surrounding properties. Ms. Findley surmised that zoning could change again at the time a specific project is submitted. Mr. Gesse confirmed that to be an appropriate possibility at such a time in the future but that currently there are no developments under consideration. Ms. Haltom asked if it did not seem better to wait until a specific project was being reviewed prior to zoning a property industrial. Mr. Gesse explained the desire to address both properties at once. Mr. Abban asked if the county could make this a TIF district. Ms. Gray responded that to be possible. Mr. Abban stated his support of annexation and waiting on rezoning. Ms. Gray explained procedural mandates through this process.

Ms. Tennell explained that because Franklin used to have the Buffer Zone, this property would have already been zoned with one of the city's zoning districts. However, since the city no longer has the Buffer Zone, any property annexed as an expansion of the City of Franklin will require a request for a zoning district which could be agricultural, institutional, residential or industrial. The existing R-2 zoning is not a City of Franklin zoning district. The petitioner's request for zoning is separated between the two properties because one property is closer to the already developed industrial zone and the other closer to the areas that are currently agriculture and residential in nature.

Staff's recommendation was for a favorable recommendation for annexation to be forwarded to City Council. Mr. Abban made a motion to forward a favorable recommendation for annexation to City Council. John Kempinski seconded. Passed unanimously, 9-0.

Staff's recommendation was for a favorable recommendation to be forwarded to City Council to rezone the Hugh Dunn 80 acres to IG (Industrial: General) and the 160-acre Snepp property to A (Agriculture). Mark Richards asked if they should be voted on separately. Ms. Tennell said they could be voted on separately. It was her understanding, similar to packaged variances, that recommendations could be separated out on the 80 acres and the 160 acres. Petitioner did not object to the separation. Mr. Abban made a motion to forward a favorable recommendation to City Council on the Snepp 160 acres for A (Agriculture) zoning. Debbie Gill seconded. Passed unanimously, 9-0.

Mr. Abban made a motion for an unfavorable recommendation to be forwarded to City Council for the Dunn 80 acres to be zoned IG (Industrial: General). Ms. Gill seconded. Passed 7-2, with Mr. Richards and Mr. Martin voting nay.

Ms. Tennell announced introduction to be at the June 5th City Council meeting. Public hearing will be on June 19. Official action would be tentatively scheduled for July 5th.

Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion for adjournment was made and seconded, passing unanimously.

Respectfully submitted this 15TH day of AUGUST, 2023.



Jim Martin, President



Joe Abban, Secretary