

VILLAGE OF OAK LAWN
ZONING & PLANNING COMMISSION
Village Hall Auditorium
Monday, December 6, 2021
Meeting Minutes #2021-15

I. ROLL CALL: Meeting called to order at 7:31 p.m.

- A. Chairman: Vernon Zumhagen
- B. Members: Dave Bennett Rich Piazza
Tom Duhig (7:32 p.m.) Vernon Zumhagen
Bill Lundy
Mike Moriarty
- C. Staff: Kevin McGuinness, Village Planner
Kevin Casey, Village Attorney
Deanne Adasiak, Recording Secretary

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Zumhagen.

III. APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES:

A motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes #2021-14 dated November 15, 2021 was made by Commissioner Bennett and seconded by Commissioner Lundy.

Roll call: Zumhagen, yes; Piazza, yes; Moriarty, abstain; Lundy, yes; Bennett, yes.

Motion to approve passes: 5-0-1.

The Oath was administered by Chairman Zumhagen.

IV. ALLEY PETITION:

A.) Pet. #2021-32 - Request for an Alley Vacation from Marion Avenue to Ridgeland Avenue Parallel to Southwest Highway Measuring 20 Foot Wide by 345 Foot in Length, Nicki Janis Vessol, Petitioner

Ms. Nicki Janis Vessol, 10019 Southwest Highway, Oak Lawn, Illinois

The petitioner stated that she owns all of the properties that border the subject alley. She stated that she would like to encapsulate those properties. The petitioner explained the inconvenient nature of the existing cut-through traffic and the desire to reduce transient traffic. She stated that in the future, she will have a more formal assemblage of the property in terms of redevelopment.

Commissioner Bennett asked whether the petitioner owns both sides of the property all the way back. The petitioner replied that is correct. Commissioner Bennett asked about the petitioner's redevelopment plans. The petitioner responded that she does not have specific plans in place but intends to do something in the future, whether it is to assemble and redevelop or sell the property.

Commissioner Bennett asked staff whether the alley could be completely paved. Mr. McGuinness replied yes. Commissioner Bennett mentioned that the alley is currently all gravel and wonders if there is a concern about water. Mr. McGuinness responded that if the petition is granted and the petitioner decides to pave the alley, she will need to obtain a permit, and during the permit process it will be determined whether drainage is required.

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Commissioner Zumhagen asked staff whether commercial properties require MWRD review. Mr. McGuinness responded that MWRD review is typically not required for paving projects. The petitioner stated that she has contacted Landmark Engineering in order to have the property removed from the flood plain. Commissioner Bennett stated that he is certain that the area floods. The petitioner responded that there are no flooding issues on her properties. Commissioner Bennett recalled a period in the early 1990s during a rain event when the area had nearly 9 inches of water.

Commissioner Bennett stated that all he wants to know is if flood-prevention measures are in place. Mr. McGuinness pointed out that if the alley is paved, it will include several properties. Commissioner Bennett asked about landscape design. Mr. McGuinness responded that there would not be a landscaping requirement.

Commissioner Duhig asked about the structure with the two-door garage. The petitioner responded that if the property is redeveloped, that structure will be demolished. She stated that it will be determined by the economic climate. Commissioner Duhig referred to a document in the Meeting packet. He made a comment on Plan B shown on the rendering. The petitioner responded that she did not submit that page. Commissioner Zumhagen informed Commissioner Duhig that the page he is referring to is a conceptual drawing for the Comprehensive Southwest Corridor Plan submitted by Village staff.

Commissioner Lundy made a comment about the petitioner's properties, referring to it as an industrial plant. He questioned the petitioner's desire for the alley to be vacated in the absence of specific plans. The petitioner replied that she has no immediate plans to sell or redevelop the property, but she would like to reduce transient traffic. Commissioner Lundy asked whether any residential homes would be impacted. No, said the petitioner. The petitioner stated that one residential property does not border the subject alley and that she owns the other residential property.

Commissioner Lundy asked if the petitioner owns the property closest to Ridgeland Avenue. The petitioner stated that she recently purchased the property but that it is currently vacant. Commissioner Lundy reiterated the lack of tangible plans. The petitioner stated once more that she did not present a plan. Commissioner Lundy expressed his concern about the lack of a plan and its impact on his decision to grant the petition. He believes that having a plan in place would help him make a decision. The petitioner expressed that things happen in increments; She stated that she does not have a fully developed plan to sell the properties and that it will be dependent on the economic climate. The petitioner said so much can change between now and when she implements a plan.

Commissioner Piazza asked the petitioner if she owns the south property at 10036 Ridgeland. The petitioner responded no and said that property address is actually 10003 Ridgeland. Commissioner Piazza referenced the property off of Marion. The 10300 Marion property is owned by the petitioner.

Commissioner Zumhagen expressed that he understands the other Commissioners' frustrations about the lack of a plan, but he also understands the petitioner's point that the plans could go in any direction. Commissioner Lundy stated that he believes the petitioner intends to buy all of the properties in the area. The petitioner stated that she is unsure whether she will proceed with the purchase of the Marion properties. She stated that those properties are currently at a high premium. Commissioner Lundy said he believes that if the alley vacation is granted, the petitioner will buy

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Village Hall Auditorium
Monday, December 6, 2021
Meeting Minutes #2021-15

everyone out. According to the petitioner, the use will dictate the type of layout, land, and so on. Commissioner Lundy asked the petitioner what she envisions for that area. The petitioner responded retail development. The petitioner mentioned that she has been in contact with CBRE (Commercial Real Estate Services) regarding the property's potential redevelopment.

Commissioner Bennett asked staff if the easement will remain in place regardless of what happens. Mr. McGuinness said yes. Commissioner Bennett asked staff whether the easement could be removed. Mr. McGuinness replied in the negative. Mr. McGuinness explained that the easement can only be removed if the utilities are relocated. The petitioner informed the Commissioners that the diagram shows a shopping center on the other side of the Ridgeland Avenue homes. She stated that she is the owner of the shopping center. She inquired as to whether there is a section of the alley that is on the easement. According to Village Counsel, it is dependent on where the utilities are located. Mr. McGuinness informed the petitioner that utilities do run down the alley. He also stated that the alley must maintain the 20' width requirement. The petitioner asked staff about the possibility of relocating the utilities. Mr. McGuinness responded that if the alley is vacated and the petitioner is the owner, the utilities can be relocated at the petitioner's expense. Commissioner Zumhagen stated that it is an expensive endeavor. Mr. McGuinness speculated that there might be a water main in that area as well. Commissioner Zumhagen reminded the Commissioners that the motion may include a provision to maintain the utility easement.

A motion was made by Commissioner Moriarty to approve Pet. #2021-32 – Request for an Alley Vacation from Marion Avenue to Ridgeland Avenue Parallel to Southwest Highway Measuring 20 Foot Wide by 345 Foot in Length, Nicki Janis Vessol, Petitioner. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Butler.

Roll call: Bennett, yes; Duhig, yes; Lundy, no; Moriarty, yes; Piazza, yes; Zumhagen, yes.

Motion to approve passes: 6-1.

V. OTHER BUSINESS:

- A.) Chairman: *None.*
- B.) Members: *None.*
- C.) Staff: *None.*

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Bennett and seconded by Commissioner Duhig.

Voice vote: All in favor, aye.

Motion carries.

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.