



Belton Planning and Zoning recommends annexations



David L. Tijerina | Posted Mar 12, 2004

BELTON -- The Belton Planning and Zoning Commission voted Thursday to recommend to the City Council it proceed with a series of protective annexations.

Both Fred Morris III, the city's development services coordinator, and City Manager Sam Listi said during a city staff presentation and commission workshop on the issue, they wanted to inform the commissioners of regional developments -- the potential for Killeen under federal and state laws to annex five miles and Temple to annex three miles of land annually because of the size of their populations -- which could effect Belton.

Besides protecting the city from the encroachment of other communities, Morris said the annexations -- if approved -- would be undertaken to provide reasonable land use controls and access management standards, to insure the future function of roadways, and to protect the Lampasas River corridor's water quality and ecological diversity.

Though both Morris and Listi said there were no definitive plans for annexing particular pieces of land, they said there could be a need in the future -- the next 15 to 20 years -- for the City Council to approve annexation of 1,000 foot strips along important transportation corridors and environmentally and ecologically sensitive areas.

"(Annexation) needs to be managed as opposed to ignored," said John Agan, the commission's chairman, saying he was glad the city staff had decided to give the commission an idea of what could occur so they could consider it when making planning and zoning decisions.

Of particular interest to the city will be the protection of the portion of the Interstate 35 corridor where the city is installing a water line and the area near the proposed Lake Stillhouse Reservoir and Belton Lake dam-to-dam road.

Morris told the commissioners many public hearings would be required and approval by the Department of Justice would be needed before any annexation was approved.

Listi said the workshop was designed to give the commissioners an idea of potential annexation issues the city might face and that a three-year annexation plan is called for under the city's strategic plan. He also stressed that the City Council may or may not take action regarding the commissioner's recommendation.

When annexations do happen, the process normally takes a minimum of three months and they

occur on a first-come-first-serve-city basis. One city can beat another city when annexing land if it can complete the process first, he said.

In other business the commissioners also:

-- Voted unanimously in favor of recommending the City Council adopt the parks master plan. City staff members presented a draft of the 2004 update to the commissioners at their February meeting for their review and recommendations on changes.

-- Held a public hearing on a zoning change request to rezone 3.743 acres at 2309 S. Wall St. from Commercial revitalization) overlay to allow a mobile home to be placed there. When mobile homeowners are required to install a CR overlay, they are required to remove the mobile home's wheels and make it look similar to a house. Commissioner Dan Kirkley made a motion that a vote be taken on the matter, and because no one seconded it, the request was not voted on. Commissioner Mark Collier made a motion that the body recommend the City Council deny the re-zoning request, which was seconded by Commissioner Bert Peeples. The commission then voted 4-1 to recommend the City Council deny the request. Kirkley was the lone dissenter.

-- Held a public hearing and voted on recommending to the City Council a zoning change for 6.575 acres of land at the end of West 9th Avenue, West of Harris Street, from Agricultural to Multi-Family for development and construction of a 60-unit multi-family apartment complex for seniors.

-- Voted in favor of recommending to the City Council it vote in favor of a preliminary plat for an 11-lot residential subdivision to be called Beal Street Place. North Beal Street borders the site on the west and North Blair Street on the east. East 11th Avenue and the railroad tracks are to the south.

-- Voted unanimously in favor of recommending to the City Council it vote in favor of creating an 11-lot subdivision in the city's extraterritorial jurisdiction on West Amity Road.

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