

REGULAR SESSION

March 21, 2017

The Planning Commission of the City of Athens, Texas met in Regular Session on Tuesday, March 21, 2017, 5:30 p.m. in the Development Service Center, 622 S. Prairieville St., Athens, Texas, with the following members' present, to-wit:

Steve Barksdale
Brady Autry
Paul Ingram
Kari Wilmeth

Barbara Holly, Managing Director of Development Services
Yadira Chairez Development Coordinator

constituting a quorum at which time the following proceedings were enacted, to-wit:

**CONSIDER APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 14, 2017
REGULAR SESSION.**

A motion was made by Member Ingram, seconded by Member Autry to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2017, Regular Session. The motion carried unanimously.

**DISCUSS/CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AN AMENDING REPLAT FOR LOT 6,
SOUTHVIEW ADDITION AND A CALLED .879 ACRE TRACT CREATING
LOTS 1 AND 2, BLOCK 1, SOUTHVIEW ADDITION NO. 2 (P-03-17001).**

Barbara Holly, AICP, Managing Director of Development Services, explained that the proposed subdivision is located on the west side of South Palestine Street immediately north of Rosedale Circle. Ms. Holly stated the lot line is being moved to provide a larger backyard for a single family lot, Lot 6, within the Southview Addition. Ms. Holly stated that staff recommends the replat be approved.

After consideration and a brief discussion, a motion was made by Member Autry, seconded by Member Wilmeth to approve the replat of Lot 6, Southview Addition, creating Lots 1 and 2, Block 1, Southview Addition. The motion passed unanimously.

**DISCUSS/CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AN AMENDING REPLAT FOR LOTS 8
AND 9, ROBBINS CREST PARK SUBDIVISION, CREATING LOT 8 R
(P-03-17-002 BENCHREST).**

Ms. Holly explained the proposed subdivision is located on the east side of Robbins Road at 612 Lantana. A lot line is being dissolved to create one lot out of two.

After consideration and discussion, a motion was made by Member Ingram, seconded by Member Autry to approve the amending replat for Lots 8 and 9, Robbins Crest Park Subdivision, creating Lot 8 R. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE CITY OF ATHENS REQUEST FOR CHANGES TO CHAPTERS 4 AND 5 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, AND THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO ELIMINATE FARMING AND RANCHING OPERATIONS FROM RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS; ALLOWING NO MORE THAN SIX HENS AS BACKYARD CHICKENS IN RESIDENTIALLY ZONED DISTRICTS; ESTABLISHING A MAXIMUM NUMBER OF FARM ANIMALS ALLOWED PER ACRE IN AGRICULTURAL ZONED LANDS; AND ESTABLISH THE MINIMUM SIZE OF FUTURE AGRICULTURAL LOTS TO BE FIVE ACRES (Z-03-17-001).

Ms. Holly explained that the Zoning Ordinance treats the Agriculture zoning designation as a holding designation; all properties initially annexed into the City of Athens are given an Agriculture designation until a more “permanent” zone is sought. Ms. Holly explained the code allows farming and ranching in all residential zones with no limitation on the number of animals as long as the lot size is a minimum of one acre, which allows conflicting land uses within residential areas as farming and ranching operations are closer to industrial uses and are not compatible within residential districts. Ms. Holly explained farming and ranching are legitimate land uses that should be excluded from residential neighborhoods, and recommends a maximum number of animals per acre. Ms. Holly further explained to receive an agricultural exemption, Henderson County Appraisal District uses 3.5 acres per cow or horse, or five small animals per 3.5 acres and staff recommends the same standard here. Member Ingram motioned to close the Public Hearing, seconded by Member Wilmeth. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUS/CONSIDER FOR THE CITY OF ATHENS REQUEST FOR CHANGES TO CHAPTERS 4 AND 5 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCE, AND THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO ELIMINATE FARMING AND RANCHING OPERATIONS FROM RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS; ALLOW NO MORE THAN SIX HENS AS BACKYARD CHICKENS IN RESIDENTIALLY ZONED DISTRICTS; ESTABLISHING A MAXIMUM NUMBER OF FARM ANIMALS ALLOWED PER ACRE IN AGRICULTURAL ZONED LANDS; AND ESTABLISH THE MINIMUM SIZE OF FUTURE AGRICULTURAL LOTS TO BE FIVE ACRES (Z-03-17-001).

Member Autry expressed concern with limiting the number of animals, like cattle, in agriculturally zoned areas especially if it is newly annexed into the City. Member Autry stated he understands the reasoning with limiting the chickens in residential areas, but does not like a hard and fast rule of one cow per 3.5 acres.

Ms. Holly informed the Commission that the changes would be effective once final approval from City Council and not affect current uses of property; they would be grandfathered. After discussion and consideration, a motion was made by Member Ingram, seconded by Member Wilmeth to approve the changes to Chapters 4 and 5 of the Code of Ordinance, and the Zoning Ordinance to eliminate farming and ranching operations from residential zoning districts; allow no more than six hens as backyard chickens in residentially zoned districts; establishing a maximum number of farm animals allowed per acre in agricultural zoned lands; and establish the minimum size of future agricultural lots to be five acres. The motion was approved with the following votes: Member Barksdale, aye; Member Ingram, aye; Member Wilmeth, aye; and Member Aultry, nay.

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ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned.

PASSED AND APPROVED ON THIS THE 7TH DAY OF JUNE 2017.

Steve Barksdale Chairman

ATTEST:

Sheila Garrett, Development Coordinator