

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 16TH DAY OF MAY, 2022

The Caddo Parish Long Range Planning Committee met in legal session on the above date at 1:56 p.m., in the Government Plaza Chambers, with Mr. Hopkins, Chairman, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Atkins, Hopkins, Johnson, and Young (4). ABSENT: Commissioners Chavez, Gage-Watts, and Jackson (3).

Mr. Young gave the invocation, and Mr. Atkins led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Discuss proposed change to Parish UDC*

Mr. Hopkins gave a brief summary of how the Parish got to its status today with regards to zoning. In 2019, there were over 230 complaints concerning violations. After review of the UDC, it was determined that the UDC was not written for the rural area. Discussions were had, and the MPC staff started revising the code before bringing it back to the full body. During that time, Representative Danny McCormick presented a House Bill in the Legislature removing the Parish from the MPC. Mr. Hopkins said that the Parish's UDC still has not been addressed. The Caddo Parish Commission is currently waiting on an Attorney General's opinion to determine if a planning board is needed. Mr. Hopkins requested that Mr. Clark come to the Committee today and propose changes that are needed for the UDC.

Mr. Alan Clark, MPC Executive Director, agreed with Mr. Hopkins in that there were several missteps made during the process of the UDC. He understands that the needs of the rural areas were not properly addressed. Mr. Clark said that the original UDC was an urban code that governed both the City and the Parish. He recalled the Parish's Zoning Chapter 54 in the Code of Ordinances being different from the City's Zoning Chapter 106 in their Code of Ordinances. Even though both chapters paralleled, there were several differences between them.

Mr. Clark also said that the Parish funds the MPC at 25%, and the City funds them at 75%, but there has always been the same amount of representation from both entities. He said that this has been an issue over the years.

Prior to House Bill 697, several townhall meetings were conducted to better address the needs of the citizens in the rural areas of the Parish. Mr. Clark said that those meetings were well-received. Mr. Clark clarified that the MPC enforce the code that the Caddo Parish Commission adopted. The MPC did not "create laws and went out and proactively tried to force them". Mr. Clark said that they are more than willing to revise the code to make it more rural-friendlier for the citizens who live in the Parish. He also mentioned that there is an incredible diversity in the Parish. Some citizens want a more relaxed code, whereas others do not. Mr. Clark said that their mistake with the UDC was that they tried to "make one size fit all".

Mr. Atkins wanted to know if the MPC is still imposing citations in Parish. He said that he's getting calls from citizens receiving citations and letters. Mr. Clark said that the Parish asked the MPC to respond to violation complaints, but do nothing proactively. By proactively, he means by going out and looking for violations. Mr. Atkins clarified that when the Zoning Administrator does go out, he imposes the code as written, which was in 2016 or 2017. Mr. Clark agreed, and said that is why the codes need to be addressed to meet the rural lifestyle.

It was Mr. Hopkins' understanding that they only relaxed the RV storage in the front yards. Mr. Clark agreed.

Mr. Johnson said that he was one of the Commissioners who asked the MPC to go and enforce zoning codes in the Lakeview area because he was starting receiving calls that the Parish was not doing anything in that area. He then contacted Mr. Clark and asked him to do a sweep of Lakeview. Violations came out of that. Mr. Johnson also said that since he's been in office, there has always been complaints of not having any teeth in the laws that are on the books. He understands that the UDC has more teeth than he expected, but it is what's on the books right now. Mr. Johnson also said that he was not for the UDC as it was written because it was "way overboard". He agreed that there needs to be something in place, but there needs to be compromise to be able to do what they want with their property without impacting their neighbors' values of their homes.

Mr. Hopkins said that there are some items in the UDC that needs to be addressed, such as livestock, commercial vehicle storage, manufactured homes, etc. He agreed with Mr. Johnson on the compromise.

Mr. Clark also agreed and said that there needs to be protection for those citizens who are on smaller lots. He also said that in rural agriculture settings, it should be less restrictive.

Mr. Young understands the UDC as a document that governs areas close to the city, so that when it grows, it will grow into uses that are compatible with the city. Mr. Young does not feel that the

city should grow more. He said that it is a sparsely populated city and growing more would make it harder for services because of the distances it needs to travel. Mr. Young wanted to know how big the “five-mile” zone should be. Mr. Clark explained that initially the city was annexing territory into the city as it grew, but those areas were not compatible with what was already in the city. This led to a drastic change that those citizens were required to do. The footprint of the City of Shreveport is much larger than what the it can afford to maintain the infrastructure as it is. He also mentioned that there are citizens who would like to de-annex because they are not satisfied with the services they are receiving. Mr. Clark also said that Commissioner Atkins, at one time, was discussing two miles around the City instead of the five miles.

Mr. Young also wanted to know if there was a way to have different types of zoning in the five-mile radius. He gave an example of the northern part of the Parish wanting to be more rural, while the southern part of the Parish wanting more urban style zoning regulations. Mr. Clark explained that there could be tiers of zoning to address the needs of those citizens, but they are researching to see the legality of it. Mr. Young asked Attorney Bernstein’s opinion on this. Attorney Bernstein said that if there was a zoning category more tailored to more denser neighborhoods, such as Timberline, then there could be another district with looser restrictions for areas like the northern part of the Parish.

Mr. Young asked for more clarification regarding parish wide zoning. Attorney Bernstein said that it is zoning throughout the unincorporated areas of the Parish, not just the five-miles. Mr. Clark interjected and said that he and his team went all through Caddo Parish once House Bill 697 passed to see what the different parts of the Parish’s zoning consisted of. They created a residential zoning classification catering to those areas.

Mr. Young also asked for more clarification regarding “non-residential uses that are allowed which are compatible with the low density open character of the district”. Mr. Clark said that this is what Attorney Bernstein was referring to. He further explained that the citizens in the rural areas with large tracts of land wanted to do non-residential uses on their land.

Mr. Atkins requested the Clerk of the Commission to forward the Commissioners a map of the five-mile zone, as well as the revised copy of the UDC.

Mr. Atkins then wanted to know who would be developing the Caddo Parish Code. Mr. Hopkins said that it would be the Parish Planning Board, pending the Attorney General’s opinion.

Mr. Atkins then wanted to know how the MPC plans to address the issues of higher density development in District 9, but some of the citizens want it to remain how its always been. Mr. Clark said that there is not a code that addresses these types of situation. He also said that they will need some help creating a code to meet the demands of both sides of that story. Mr. Atkins agreed and can see both sides of the situation.

Mr. Johnson said that the template is already here. He gave the example of Dallas, which is now considered a mega city with smaller cities around it gravitating to the city limits. Mr. Johnson said that Shreveport is not going to grow anymore, but the towns around are, such as Blanchard, Greenwood, Keithville, etc. He suggested focusing on that growth, rather than Shreveport’s growth.

Mr. Clark agreed and said that the 2030 Great Expectations Master Plan addresses the direction of growth for Shreveport and the Parish. He said that everything is changing, but they are still operating on the outdated Master Plan. Mr. Clark also mentioned that they will proposing to the Commission body to update the Master Plan and ensure that it reflects where the City and Parish are heading. He also said that they would like to reinstate the Master Plan Subcommittee, who will consist of members from the Caddo Parish Commission, Parish Planning Commission, Metropolitan Planning Commission, and the City Council. He said that this committee will meet quarterly and bring information from their respective bodies to achieve the overall goals of growth for the City and Parish.

Mr. Hopkins wanted to know if it would be more conducive to have representation from the other municipalities in the Parish. Mr. Clark said that they’ve tried unsuccessfully in the past to achieve this. Mr. Hopkins suggesting to just reach out to see if they would like to be a part of the process, especially to Greenwood and Blanchard.

Mr. Clark also suggested that a Caddo Parish Development Code be drafted, and the other municipalities adopt it as well.

Attorney Bernstein mentioned that the planning area is the area outside of the Shreveport limits, which is currently regulated under the Parish UDC. The limits of this area are set by the Caddo Parish Commission by ordinance. To determine those limits, another ordinance would need to be adopted to reflect those changes.

Mr. Young asked about the process of changing the limits. Attorney Bernstein said that historically, it went to the planning board for recommendation to the full body.

Mr. Young then wanted to know the reason for hiring outside consultants for revising the Master Plan. He wanted to know if this could be done in-house. Mr. Clark said that they could assist to reduce costs, but they would like a consulting firm to lead the charge in reviewing the Master Plan. He said that the process is quite an involved process, including public input. He said that the consulting firm will provide an independent view of how the planning limits would look.

Mr. Hopkins wanted to know if there needs to be a resolution to ask the MPC to gather this information and present it to the Parish Planning Commission. Attorney Bernstein said that it could be done that way, or the Parish Planning Commission could just do it on their own.

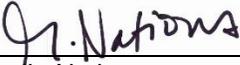
It was **moved by Mr. Hopkins**, seconded by Mr. Atkins, *to recommend to the full body a resolution asking the MPC to forward their recommendations to the Parish Planning Commission with regards to proposed changes to the UDC.*

Mr. Hopkins asked that the MPC forward those proposed changes to the Commissioners prior to the June Work Session.

At this time, Mr. Hopkins' motion carried, as shown by the following roll call votes: AYES: Commissioners Atkins, Hopkins, Johnson, and Young (4). NAYS: None (0). ABSENT: Commissioners Chavez, Gage-Watts, and Jackson (3). ABSTAIN: None (0).

Attorney Bernstein pointed out that the Parish Planning Commission ceases to exist on June 30. He suggested that the Caddo Parish Commission put forth legislation to allow the Parish Planning Commission to continue to exist.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:01 p.m.



Michelle Nations
Assistant Commission Clerk