

**MINUTES  
UNIVERSITY PARKWAY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**PARISH GOVERNMENT COMPLEX BUILDING  
300 S. 3<sup>RD</sup> STREET, 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR  
LEESVILLE, LOUISIANA**

**THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2013  
3:30pm**

The University Parkway Development District Planning Commission met in Regular Session, Thursday, May 16, 2013 at 3:30pm in the Police Jury meeting room with following members **PRESENT**: Wayne Bush – Chairman, Charles Babineaux, Leroy Cooley, Donna Nance, and Jeff Howell. The following members were **ABSENT**: None.

The invocation was given by Ms. James B. “Jim” Tuck, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Leroy Cooley.

The University Parkway Development District Planning Commission was convened by Mr. Wayne Bush and was then ready for the business on the agenda.

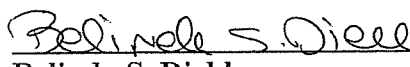
There was no public comment on any agenda item.

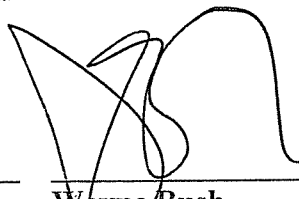
A motion was made by Mrs. Nance, seconded by Mr. Cooley and carried, to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2013 Regular Meeting and dispense with the reading of the minutes.

Mr. Bush turned the meeting over to Mrs. Lauren Marschall, Center for Planning Excellence, and Mrs. Janet Tharpe, Tharp Planning Group, to conduct the Code Committee meeting. The minutes for the Code Committee are attached and should be considered a part of the official record of this meeting.

Mr. Bush asked for board members to volunteer for the vacant officer positions on the board. Mr. Cooley volunteered to be Vice Chairman and Mr. Howell volunteered to be Secretary. Mr. Bush thanked them for their willingness to serve.

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Cooley, seconded by Mr. Babineaux and carried, to adjourn.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Belinda S. Diehl**  
Interim Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Wayne Bush**  
President

# Code Committee Meeting

Date and Time: Thursday, May 16, 2013, 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Vernon Parish Police Jury chambers

Attendees: Donna Nance, Charles Babineaux, Jeff Howell, Wayne Bush, James Tuck,  
Leroy Cooley, Rhonda Plummer, Stephanie Sarver, Lorna  
Hanes, Jackie Self, Belinda Diehl, Courtney Christian,  
Michael Reese

Facilitators: Lauren Marschall, Center for Planning Excellence  
Janet Tharp, Tharp Planning Group

## Minutes:

The meeting began at 3:30 p.m. Wayne Bush opened the meeting, performed University Parkway Development District Planning Commission business, and then introduced Lauren Marschall and Janet Tharp. Ms. Marschall and Ms. Tharp led the planning commission and code committee through the bullet points under number 8 on their agenda, which are summarized below:

- Short summary of last meeting: Ms. Marschall reviewed the last meeting's discussion, which included the process of getting from a comprehensive plan to the Louisiana Land Use Toolkit and the first two steps of mapping the toolkit, which include changing the comprehensive plan map to the Regional Growth Sector map and creating a Context Area map based on those.
- Review Regional Growth Sectors with changes from last meeting: Ms. Marschall reviewed the Regional Growth Sector map with changes based on feedback from the last code committee meeting. The map is still open to change but the committee will now move on to the next steps of the toolkit.
- Review preliminary Context Area map: Ms. Tharp briefly reviewed the Context Area map covering the entire parish and explained that the committee will now step back from looking at the entire parish and focus first on the University Parkway Economic Development District, and after that will address parish-wide zoning districts and standards. The Regional Growth Sector and Context Area maps will continue to serve as a long-term guide, but when the entire parish is zoned, the district will receive the most attention, while the rest of the parish will be zoned very minimally. The Context Area maps will serve as a guide for possible future rezoning.
- Discussion—specific Context Areas: Ms. Tharp led the discussion of Context Areas, as summarized in the bullet points below:
  - Ms. Tharp explained the definition of each context area and went through the context area map of the district in detail.
  - A general site plan is needed within the University Parkway Economic Development District because the district is so large. A site plan will provide guidance for potential priority development areas in the district.

- Another consideration is phasing in the implementation of the zoning of the development district so that the district is not over zoned, resulting in development occurring that is not desired within the district.
- According to the comprehensive plan and the regional growth management study, 1000 to 2000 new housing units are projected over the next 10 years in Vernon Parish. However, changes in Fort Polk or the arrival of a new industry could change these projections.
- To visualize the size of other existing developments on the map, and compare them to the proposed context areas shown in the development district, Ms. Tharp showed paper cutouts representing River Ranch in Lafayette, Villaggio in Bossier City, and Perkins Rowe in Baton Rouge. River Ranch is 256 acres and has 1050 housing units (including single family homes and condos), Villaggio is currently 14 acres and has 239 apartments, and Perkins Rowe in Baton Rouge is 23 acres and has 88 condos and 138 apartments for a total of 226 housing units.
- To create the preliminary context areas, the consultant team created a site plan showing where the centers could be located and where development should be concentrated given the market, roadway patterns and existing development. This site plan is flexible but provides a realistic amount of land in each desired development type.
- One proposed center is located around NSU and the new elementary school that will be built. Since these developments are already built or planned, creating a center that supports the educational uses and creates a campus-type main street and community area is proposed.

Ms. Tharp emphasized that specific locations of certain context areas are not as important right now as defining the types of development desired in the district. That will allow the consultant team to write the zoning district ordinance correctly, and allow the parish to enact zoning in the district in phases to encourage development in key areas.

- Other topics of discussion raised by the code committee included:
  - All property owners in the district should be consulted over the next few months to discuss the process and direction with them and to obtain their input
  - Make sure zoning does not interfere with normal timber and forestry operations, especially on parcels that are in holding areas where development may occur in the longer-term.
  - Need to protect the visual appeal of roadways, especially entrances to Fort Polk and the new parkway in the district
  - Mobile home parks are a concern in agricultural or rural zone
  - Balance the fairly strict zoning regulations in the district with the very minimal regulations in the rest of the parish.
  - Buffer areas around Fort Polk training areas are needed to protect the fort from encroachment. In other forts around the country, training areas have had to be closed or troops reduced because noise and other effects of training exercises negatively affected surrounding residential areas.

Providing a buffer around training areas would show the military that Vernon Parish is planning long-term for mission growth. One proposal was for this buffer to be located on private property surrounding the fort. Committee members agreed to bring examples of other similar buffer requirements around other forts.

- Next steps are to focus on describing the zoning districts. We will focus less on the Context Area map which can change if necessary as we move through the process, and will still serve as a guide for possible future rezoning.
- Introduction of Zoning Districts: Ms. Tharp described each zoning district and the possibilities for each. Example zoning districts are provided in the Louisiana Land Use Toolkit, but this process allows the code committee to customize the zoning districts to Vernon Parish's needs. There are many options, but the zoning districts should be kept as simple as possible.
- Next steps—discuss and map Zoning Districts: for the next few meetings, the consultant team will bring a detailed description of each zoning district and show real-life examples for each. The code committee will work through approximately two district definitions per month. After defining the zoning districts, the committee will look at special standards like landscaping and signage.

Wayne Bush adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m. after determining there was no new business.