

STATE OF TEXAS §
COUNTIES OF POTTER §
AND RANDALL §
CITY OF AMARILLO §

On the 21st day of June 2021, the Amarillo Planning and Zoning Commission convened in special meeting at 3:00 PM on the first floor of City Hall, in Room 105, 601 South Buchanan St., Amarillo, Texas, with the following members present:

VOTING MEMBERS	PRESENT	NO. MEETINGS HELD	NO. MEETINGS ATTENDED
Renee Whitaker	Y	12	12
Royce Gooch	Y	79	74
Rob Parker, Chairman	Y	161	136
Jason Ault	Y	58	44
Fred Griffin	Y	12	12
Dick Ford	Y	106	95
Pedro Limas, Vice Chair	N	58	53

PLANNING DEPARTMENT STAFF:
Cris Valverde, Assistant Director of Planning and Development Services
Emily Koller, Economic Development and Neighborhood Revitalization Manager
Jason Taylor, Planner I
Brady Kendrick, Planner II
Torie Benshushan, Planner I
Amanda Medellin, Recording Secretary

Chairman Rob Parker opened the meeting at 3:04 PM, established a quorum and conducted the consideration of the following items in the order presented.

- I. Call to order and establish a quorum is present.
- II. Discussion of the North Heights Rezoning Initiative

Emily Koller, Economic Development and Neighborhood Revitalization Manager, gave a brief explanation on the background of the rezoning. She explained that in Part 1 of the rezoning there will be 1,440 properties proposed to change; 21 non-residential properties, 768 residential- single family homes/ duplexes/ apartments, and 472 vacant properties.

Chairman Rob Parker asked if and how vacant lots either have or get utilities.

Cris Valverde, Assistant Director of Planning and Development Services, explained that developers typically are responsible for constructing utility infrastructure for new development. This has been the City’s Policy for most instances and that not all of the vacant lots have City utilities. Part of the thought process for the rezoning is that this could spur investment by developers for things such as installation of utilities.

Chairman Rob Parker asked if 39 of the 204 properties will be non-conforming when the proposed rezoning changes.

Torie Benshushan confirmed that approximately 39 properties will be non-conforming after the rezoning according to Staff research.

Commissioner Renee Whitaker explained that she felt like the public’s main concern is being non-conforming after the 12 month period and asked if Staff felt that this was one of the primary concerns.

Cris Valverde said that the 12 month period as it pertains to non-conforming status is one of the most commonly expressed concerns.

Commissioner Renee Whitaker suggested changing the period after which a vacant property has to conform to current standards from 12 months to 24 or 36 months for the North Heights Neighborhood.

Chairman Rob Parker also expressed interest in this.

Leslie Schmidt, Senior Assistant City Attorney, explained that changing the clause to 24-36 would likely be a legal issue due zoning standards needing to be the same across the City.

Commissioner Dick Ford asked if it would be problematic for property owners to sell after the rezoning.

Cris Valverde explained that sale of a particular property in which down-zoning creates a Legal Non-conforming use on the site is not an issue and the current use of the land could continue as long as the use held its Legal Non-Conforming status.

Commissioner Jason Ault asked if the grandfather clause will change to 6 months after the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite.

Cris Valverde explained that it would likely stay at 12 months after initially being proposed to change to 6 months.

Commissioner Dick Ford mentioned that he drove around the North Heights neighborhood and he noticed some properties that were not in Staff's data.

Torie Benshushan stated that she would look into it and that the list certainly may not include every non-conforming property, but Staff felt it captured most of them.

Commissioner Fred Griffin asked why Amarillo Blvd is changing from Light Commercial to General Retail.

Emily Koller stated that this was a recommendation from the North Heights Neighborhood Plan.

Commissioner Fred Griffin asked if there was a plan for the former St. Anthony's Hospital.

Emily Koller explained that St. Anthony's Hospital would be involved in the 2nd part of the rezoning but there is a project under way to redevelop a portion of the site with Senior Living Apartments.

After further discussion of the above statements Emily Koller asked the board for a potential recommendation. Multiple Commissioners discussed various potential recommendations with Commissioner Dick Ford suggesting to break up the proposal into multiple pieces.

Multiple Commissioners agreed that Staff should send them the agenda and supporting documents with more time prior to a potential meeting date. Staff stated that a potential meeting to consider this item could be July 7, 2021.

III. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 PM.



Cris Valverde,
Assistant Director
Planning and Development Services