

**MINUTES
CITY OF HELOTES
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

The City of Helotes Planning and Zoning Commission met for a special meeting on November 14, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in City Hall Council Chambers, 12951 Bandera Road, Helotes, Texas. This was an open meeting subject to the current open meeting laws of the State of Texas.

Commission Members

Present: Gregg Michel, Chair
Jason Wightman, Vice Chair
Alex Blue, Secretary
Anne Carraway
Buck Russel

Staff Present: Michael Gallardo, DS Coordinator

1. Call to order.

Chair Michel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll call.

Commissioner Blue called roll. See above for members present.

PUBLIC HEARING: *The speakers are grouped by position.*

3. Public Hearing to give all interested persons the right to appear and be heard on a land use request by MN&O Investment Group, LLC for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) establishing Trailhead at Helotes, a proposed mixed-use commercial and residential project on property zoned General Business District (B-3), located generally at 14410 Bandera Road, Helotes, Texas 78023, and identified as BCAD Property ID Nos. 242100, 1097255, and 242130.

Chair Michel opened the public hearing at 7:03 p.m.

Shawna Misiong, Richard Acuna, Chris Cooley, Amy Barile, Sheena Morillo, Wally Morillo, Gina Joyce, Ed Joyce, Ruby Deering, Benjamin Cox, Patrick McGowan, Charles Roberts, Sabrina McGowan, and Mark Salinas spoke against the Planned Unit Development application for the Trailhead at Helotes (Agenda Item No. 8). A shared reason for opposition was the high residential density (220 rental units in new plan). The speakers believed this part of the project did not serve the community and noted that several rental communities surround Helotes already. Other concerns raised were the possibility of increased traffic, additional strain on first responder personnel, and the projects effect on the identity and historical preservation of the nearby Old Town Helotes Special District. The speakers agreed the subject property should remain zoned B-3 for needed commercial development like sit-down dining restaurants, a grocery store, clothing stores, and other professional/retail services.

Ray Horn III and Stan Goodson spoke in favor of the Planned Unit Development application for the Trailhead at Helotes (Agenda Item No. 8). Reasons for support include the mixed-use commercial and residential development is what Helotes needs, the careful consideration and planning of the green belts, and the development compliments the nearby Old Town Helotes Special District.

Salomon Orozco and Isidro Orozco signed up but decided not to speak.

Chair Michel closed the public hearing at 7:32 p.m.

OPEN SESSION:

4. Citizens to be heard.

No one signed up to speak.

ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION:

5. Discussion of and action on the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission dated October 3, 2023. (Approval Item; Staff)

Motion was made by Commissioner Carraway, second by Commissioner Wightman, to approve the minutes as submitted.

Motion to approve carried unanimously.

6. Discussion of and action on a request by EZZI Signs for approval of signage under Municipal Code of Ordinances Chapter 66 *Signs* to reflect the rebranding for Walmart located at 12550 Leslie Road, Helotes, Texas 78023, identified as BCAD Property ID No. 1175530, and includes:

- a) **Updating the external facing of two existing monument signs pursuant to Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 66 *Signs*, Section 66-49 *Single Business Use Monument Type*;**
- b) **Updating the external facing of (11) existing wall signs pursuant to Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 66 *Signs*, Section 66-51 *Wall Signs*;**
- c) **Installation of (6) new wall signs and associated size and number variances pursuant to Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 66 *Signs*, Section 66-51 *Wall Signs*; and**
- d) **Establishing a master sign plan, as requested by the Planning & Zoning Commission, pursuant to Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 66 *Signs*, Section 66-71 *Master Sign Plan*. (Recommendation Item; Applicant)**

(*Note - The total allowable wall signage for the Walmart building is 514 square feet. The existing wall signage total is 735.47 square feet, or 221.47 square feet over the allowable size. The wall signage includes Walmart signs (696.97 s.f.), a Subway sign (16.5 s.f.), and a FedEx sign (22 s.f.). The said overage was granted through variances by the City Council.)

The Commission had no concerns on Item No. 6a and proceeded to Item Nos. 6b - 6c. The total square footage of the wall signage for the Walmart building, including the Subway and FedEx tenant signage, is reducing to 705.03 square feet (or 191.03 s.f. over the allowable size). Council Member Blue stated the design of Code was not for a storefront 500 square feet across. The number of wall signs in Item Nos. 6b - 6c is consistent with the size of the building, and a bulk of the wall signs serve in more of a directional sense. Lastly, the Commission agreed that Item No. 6d solidifies the signage plan for Walmart, especially the wall signage placement, total square footage, and variances. Moving forward, Staff would use the Master Sign Plan to process similar sign rebranding administratively.

Motion was made by Commissioner Carraway to recommend approval of the item as written. Second by Commissioner Russel.

Motion to recommend approval carried unanimously.

7. Discussion of and action on a land use request by Killen, Griffin, Farrimond, PLLC for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) establishing Bandera Ranch, a proposed mixed-use commercial and residential project on property zoned General Business District (B-3), located at 15030 Bandera Road, Helotes, Texas 78023, and identified as BCAD Property ID No. 242013. (Recommendation Item; Applicant)

Chair Michel clarified this item was for amendments to the Bandera Ranch Planned Unit Development (PUD).

Speaking on this item was Ashley Farrimond, Killen, Griffin, Farrimond, PLLC. Since the PUD's approval (on October 13, 2022) a lot of engineering and architectural work has been done. The requested changes are on the residential site plan and do not change the original 230 residential unit count. The changes include:

- Adding 98 two-car garages
- Updating the unit mix as follows:
 - 118 1-Bedroom Units (increase from 100 units)
 - 97 2-Bedroom Units (decreased from 116 units)
 - 15 3-Bedroom Units (increased from 14 units)
- Increasing the unit sizes as follows:
 - 1 Bedroom/1.5 Bathroom – 932 s.f. (increased from 851 s.f.)
 - 2 Bedroom/2.5 Bathroom – 1,314 s.f. (increased from 1,207 s.f.)
 - 2 Bedroom/2.5 Bathroom – 1,466 s.f. (increased from 1,220 s.f.)
 - 3 Bedroom/2.5 Bathroom – 1,527 s.f. (increased from 1,367 s.f.)
- Increasing the building setbacks on Scenic Loop Road and the northwest property line as follows:
 - Buildings located along Scenic Loop Road will be setback approximately 150'– 200' (originally a 40' setback)
 - Buildings located along the northwest property line will be setback approximately 100' (originally a 25' setback)
- Increasing the open/green space throughout the project

The Commission agreed the changes were positive and appreciated the increased building setbacks on Scenic Loop Road and the northwest property line.

Motion was made by Commissioner Wightman to recommend approval of amendments to the residential site plan of the Bandera Ranch Planned Unit Development. Second by Commissioner Carraway.

Motion to recommend approval carried unanimously.

8. Discussion of and action on a land use request by MN&O Investment Group LLC for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) establishing Trailhead at Helotes, a proposed mixed use commercial and residential project on property zoned General Business District (B-3), located at 14410 Bandera Road, Helotes, Texas 78023, and identified as BCAD Property ID Nos. 242100, 1097255, and 242130. (Recommendation Item; Applicant)

Speaking on this item was David Morin, MN&O Partners. Since the proposal presentations (on July 11 and July 27, 2023), the Trailhead at Helotes PUD concept was changed. The changes consist of decreasing the residential unit count to 220 units (366 units in proposal), reducing the building height to 2-story (3-story in proposal), changing the building type to single-family homes, duplexes, and townhomes (apartments and townhomes in proposal), increasing the retail footprint to 39,880 square feet (34,000 s.f. in proposal), and removing the spaces for food trucks. The property will still have large tree buffers and greenbelts (40' on Bandera Road and the perimeter and 20' between the retail and residential area). The retail site plan (6.57 acres) is a dog park bar and restaurant, pickleball courts (indoor and outdoor), food hall, splash pad, and a stand-alone restaurant with a patio. The residential site plan (15.13 acres) will have a hill country design with limestone and metal materials.

A majority of the Commission agreed this project posed traffic challenges, was not suitable for the site, did not meet the retail/service needs of the community, and not compatible with the surrounding area. Commissioner Wightman differed, stating this type of project might be what the Old Town Helotes Special District needs for sustainability, as he's seen several stores in the district change hands due to lack of people in the area.

Motion was made by Commissioner Carraway to recommend denial of this item as written. Seconded by Commissioner Russel.

Motion to recommend denial carried: 3 Ayes – Commissioner Carraway, Commissioner Russel, and Commissioner Blue; 1 Nay - Commissioner Wightman.

Adjourn.


With no more business to come before the Commission, Chair Michel adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Gregg Michel, Chair

ATTEST:



Celina Perez, City Secretary

