



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE  
PLANNING AND ZONING MEETING  
CITY OF THIBODAUX  
THIBODAUX, LOUISIANA  
March 1, 2023**

The Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Thibodaux assembled in regular session at its regular meeting place, City Hall, 310 West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Thibodaux, Louisiana, on Wednesday, March 1, 2023 at 5:00 P.M.

There were present: Clay Breaud, Drew Andrews, Mark Kearns, and Robert Mire  
Absent: Trey Ledet

The minutes of the January 4, 2023 Planning and Zoning Commission Meetings were approved as written.

Breaud introduced a request by Councilman Mike Naquin to amend the City of Thibodaux's Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, Section 506, Table 5.3: Commercial District Permitted Uses and Special Exceptions to have "Restaurant - Quick Serve" as a special exception (SE) within B-1 Zones.

Mike Naquin, 406 Destrehan Drive, City Council Seat D, was present to represent his request. He stated that this matter was previously brought to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council for approval to allow Quick Serve Restaurants in B-1 Zoning Districts as "permitted". This request was from Bridget Morris so that she could operate a snowball/snack shop in a B-1 Zone. Although the City Council wanted to make it a special exception, they had to vote on the request as written, so they approved it to prevent any further delay for Ms. Morris opening her business. Naquin re-submitted the request to allow Quick Serve Restaurants in a B-1 Zoning District as a "special exception" once Ms. Morris had been approved by the Board of Adjustments to operate with a parking variance. The City Council believed that making it a special exception would give the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Council more oversight in where Quick Serve Restaurants would operate within B-1 Zones in the City of Thibodaux. He also stated that it would be the same process as someone applying to open a "specialty restaurant" in a B-1 Zoning District.

Breaud stated that he doesn't always like to deal with special exceptions, because they can get too political, but he recognized that in some cases, more oversight is necessary. Kearns stated that in some B-1 Zones, parking would be an issue for these types of businesses and traffic problems would occur. Therefore, being able to decide each request separately would allow them to consider those concerns.

Breaud also stated that he was requesting to have representation from the Public Works Department at the meeting so that the Planning and Zoning Commission would be able to get further input from the administration on requests being brought before the board.

On motion by Kearns, seconded by Mire, the Board voted to approve the request by Councilman Mike Naquin to amend the City of Thibodaux's Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, Section 506, Table 5.3: Commercial District Permitted Uses and Special Exceptions to have "Restaurant - Quick Serve" as a special exception (SE) within B-1 Zones.

....upon roll call the vote was as follows:

YEAS: Breaud, Andrews, Mire, Kearns,  
NAY: None  
ABSTAINED: None  
ABSENT: Ledet

Breaud introduced a request by City Council to amend the City of Thibodaux's Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, Section 704, Table 7.1: Off-Street Vehicle Parking Requirements as follows:

Bar: 1 space / 100 sf GFA *including all outdoor areas*  
Social Club / Lodge: 1 space / 300 sf GFA *including all outdoor areas*  
Community Center: 4 spaces for first 1,000 sf plus 3 spaces / each 1,000 sf GFA *including all outdoor areas*

Breaud stated that he was not against the request, but he didn't fully understand it. The definition of Gross Floor Area (GFA) does not reference exterior space, so we would have to define what we mean by "outdoor areas".

Mayor Kevin Clement, 205 St Michael Street, stated that the intent of this request was to specifically include outdoor areas, like patios, when considering parking requirements. He added that, as time change and businesses change, we are seeing more activity outdoors, such as patio areas, sometimes overlooking waterways. There are a few businesses in Thibodaux that have outdoor areas and they are not currently being governed by the zoning ordinances. Breaud stated that we need to clarify "outdoor space". He read the definition of GFA and stated that it almost contradicts this request, because it specifically excludes spaces like breezeways and terraces. Clement stated that this request was one interpretation of what the ordinance should be, but that discussions happen for this very reason, to clarify any proposals.

Gene Richard, 516 Foret Street, stated that business along Bayou Lafourche is growing, and they will be moving more activity outside with the increase in activity on the bayou itself. This outdoor activity may include the use of a deck or an entertainment area or eating area that holds people. He added that people will be traveling to these businesses by car, so we should include them in the off-street parking requirements. Breaud asked how this outdoor space will be measured. He uses Rox's Bar in downtown Thibodaux as an example, because there are plans to add outdoor patio space to the business. This business, however, is exempt from the off street parking requirements because of its location downtown.

In cases of businesses along the bayou, Breaud questions if the area included in the measurement will be from the water's edge to the building. Richard was not sure exactly how to word it, but he believed this measurement would include "usable" space that would be occupied by people, not green space. Breaud added that people may use temporary structures like portable tents as outdoor entertainment space.

Monique Reulet, Public Works Secretary, suggested possible changes to the wording of this request in order to make it more specific. Some examples given were "outdoor seating and standing areas", "active patio and outdoor seating areas", "outdoor gathering areas", "outdoor dining space", or "outdoor eating areas". Breaud suggested incorporating outdoor spaces into the current definition of GFA, because this request contradicts it.

Naquin suggested making the parking requirement "4 spaces for the first 1000 sq. ft plus 3 spaces/each 1000 sq. ft. GFA in addition to spots for every 1000 sq. ft. or 500 sq. ft. of outdoor areas. Breaud stated he liked the suggestions to specify outdoor areas. He added that there will be some events that will put up multiple tents which would expand the outdoor areas significantly. Reulet suggested that they could specify in the language that they are referring to permanent structures like patio or decks, as opposed to temporary structures like tents.

Breaud suggested tabling the matter in order to clarify it. Naquin wanted to question the current parking requirements for a community center, stating that a 2000 sq. ft. center would only be required to have seven (7) parking spots.

Breaud questioned if there was any business currently in the works with outdoor areas that they could use as an example for the discussion. Richard stated that The Juice Factory, 444 St Mary Street, has deck space out back along the bayou. This space is expected to be used by patrons of the bar, therefore it should be considered when calculating the number of parking spots required for the business. The current occupancy load by the State Fire Marshall office is forty-one (41) people, and the parking requirement is fourteen (14) spaces. Reulet clarified that although The Juice Factory has the space for approximately twenty-five (25) parking spaces, they are only required by the current Zoning ordinance to have fourteen (14). Breaud questions if they would be measuring the size of the deck and adding that to the sq. footage being counted for parking. Richard agrees with that suggestion. He added that he does not want to count green space that won't be holding people.

Kearns stated that he thinks Reulet had some good suggestions on how to clarify the wording of the request. Reulet restated some of the suggestions. Richard and Naquin liked the suggestion of "outdoor gathering areas". Breaud liked the word "active". Naquin suggested you could list all of them, and state "included but not limited to". Breaud questions where this addition would go, the GFA definition or as an asterisk in the off-street parking requirement table. Naquin stated it should be an addition to the definition, because it does not meet the definition of GFA but it could meet the definition of the parking requirements. Reulet suggested adding it to the definition of GFA and adding it the parking requirements. Breaud stated that the definition of GFA specifies "all dimensions shall be measured *between* exterior faces of the walls". This request to add outdoor space would contradict that part of the definition, so that would have to be taken out of the definition. Naquin stated you would not have to take that out, but simply continue the definition with "in addition to".

Breaud and Kearns are in favor of tabling the matter pending further clarification of the request.

Clement does not think we should make any changes to the wording of the GFA definition. Naquin stated that they shouldn't mess with the definition of GFA because that refers to the building, and suggests

adding the outdoor space as a use/definition in the Zoning ordinance. He added that properties could have both indoor and outdoor space. Reulet confirmed that this is possible and it would qualify as mixed use. Breaud suggests adding it to the off-street parking requirements table, as another use and put an asterisk at the bottom of the table. Reulet questioned if they would want to add outdoor space as a definition, into the district use table and the off-street parking requirement table, or just the off-street parking table. Breaud stated that the GFA definition should stand alone.

Clement requests that Reulet communicate with the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding the clarification of the wording of this request, and the future request prior to resubmitting it for approval.

Breaud suggested adding an asterisk to the bar, social club/lodge, and community center in the off-street parking table. Kearns questioned is restaurants should be considered as well if they have outdoor areas. Naquin stated that if you set up a separate use in the table, then it would no longer be limited to those three types of businesses. He stated that outdoor areas could stand alone or be an additional use on a property. Breaud states that the three uses specified in the original request were the areas of concern, so we should focus on those for now, and asterisk those in the table. The asterisk would state in addition to parking requirement per GFA, the measurement for outdoor space requirement as described in the table. Kearns questioned if that would also include restaurants, and Breaud said no unless they wanted to expand to every business.

Reulet questioned where in the use table this would go. Breaud stated that it would go just with the three uses (bar, social club/lodge and community center) as initially requested. Clement thinks they should address restaurants as well.

Breaud suggested adding this information as an asterisk to the bottom of the Off Street Vehicle Parking Requirements table (Table 7.1), to clarify that GFA includes outdoor areas, such as patios, decks, or other active gathering spaces. Reulet questioned if this would be added to an asterisk that is already there under the table and Breaud said yes.

Naquin questioned places like Starbucks that has tables outside. Breaud specified that Starbucks would be grandfathered in. Reulet confirmed that this would apply to businesses similar to Starbucks that have tables and chairs outside.

On motion by Kearns, seconded by Andrews, the Board voted to table the request by City Council to amend the City of Thibodaux's Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, Section 704, Table 7.1: Off-Street Vehicle Parking Requirements as follows:

**Bar: 1 space / 100 sf GFA *including all outdoor areas***

**Social Club / Lodge: 1 space / 300 sf GFA *including all outdoor areas***

**Community Center: 4 spaces for first 1,000 sf plus 3 spaces / each 1,000 sf GFA *including all outdoor areas***

....upon roll call the vote was as follows:

**YEAS: Breaud, Andrews, Kearns, and Mire**

**NAY: None**

**ABSTAINED: None**

**ABSENT: Ledet**

Breaud had a few questions for Mayor Clement. Clement thanked the Planning and Zoning Commission for their service. He stated that the Public works Department is going through a transition, and is working on getting an Assistant Director who can work with the Planning and Zoning Commission and attend meetings. He also added that Gilberto Burbante, Public Works Director, has been working on getting updated zoning maps for everyone.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.