

**NORMAN PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**

FEBRUARY 13, 2020

The Planning Commission of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Council Chambers of the Norman Municipal Building, 201 West Gray Street, on the 13th day of February, 2020. Notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Norman Municipal Building and online at <http://www.normanok.gov/content/boards-commissions> at least twenty-four hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Chair Lark Zink called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

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Item No. 1, being:

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Matthew Peacock
Erin Williford
Nouman Jan
Tom Knotts
Lark Zink
Erica Bird
Sandy Bahan
Steven McDaniel

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dave Boeck

A quorum was present.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Jane Hudson, Director, Planning &
Community Development
Roné Tromble, Recording Secretary
Lora Hoggatt, Planner II
Janay Greenlee, Planner II
Ken Danner, Subdivision Development
Manager
David Riesland, Traffic Engineer
Beth Muckala, Asst. City Attorney
Bryce Holland, Multimedia Specialist

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Item No. 7, being:

O-1920-37 – ALPHA OMICRON FACILITY CORPORATION OF KAPPA ALPHA THETA SORORITY REQUESTS REZONING FROM R-2, TWO-FAMILY DWELLING DISTRICT, TO RM-2, LOW DENSITY APARTMENT DISTRICT WITH SPECIAL USE FOR AN OFF-STREET PARKING LOT, FOR 0.33 ACRES OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 748 COLLEGE AVENUE.

ITEMS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:

1. Location Map
2. Staff Report
3. Site Plan
4. Pre-Development Summary

PRESENTATION BY STAFF:

1. Janay Greenlee reviewed the staff report, a copy of which is filed with the minutes. Staff supports this request and recommends approval of Ordinance No. O-1920-37. One letter of support was received within the notification area, which amounted to 2.3% support.

PRESENTATION BY THE APPLICANT:

1. Gunner Joyce, representing the applicant – This is the second half of that energy in the room tonight. Very excited crowd for this opportunity of expansion. This is the Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority, a long-time member of the Norman community. Been here over 100 years, but been in the current house since 1935, so a long-time neighbor to this neighborhood, a long-time community member. This is north Greek Row, just like Janay said. This is now all sororities north of Parsons. This is the subject property right here. It is, just like has been said tonight, the last residential remaining north of Parsons. This is the 2025 and zoning, again. The current 2025 plan is High Density Residential. Once again, no change needed for this request. The zoning is currently R-2, which is a higher density residential. This requests to change the zoning to RM-2, which is kind of a more updated version of R-2, and solely doing this for the Special Use of the Off-Street Parking Lot. This, again, is an aerial, zoomed in this time, subject property and then the surrounding sororities. This is the site plan of the parking lot. As Janay said, the architect has gone out of their way and has done a very good job to get this to the R-1 65% impervious area, so it is compliant with the current R-1 zoning. It also leaves quite a bit of trees and really focused on keeping this corner of College and Parsons landscaped and compliant with the feel of the residential neighborhood. Once again, this is the overlay on top of the aerial. Staff has recommended support, has stated that this will provide an additional off-street parking location where it is certainly needed. Currently, there's a lot of need for parking in this area. There's on-street parking, and so this additional parking can get cars off the street and clean this up. There's also been similar amendments right up here. In the last 30 years, there's been six in this direct location that have gone into fraternity/sorority uses, so this is, again, with the flow of the current surrounding neighborhood. The history, like I said, the house was built in 1932. They've been there for a very long time. They're very excited about this opportunity to expand with a new parking lot. We have a support letter. Just to read you a little bit from it, this neighbor right down here where the star is located has stated they're fully in favor and fully in support of this. They enjoy the sorority as a neighbor and stated that they always maintain impeccable property, that it increases their property value and they have no doubt that this will do the same. The existing house right there now – the sorority looked at trying to convert that into a chapter house and do the best they could, but has found through due diligence and through conversation with neighbors that it's dilapidated. It would be almost impossible to save, and is not feasible to convert it into anything other than the parking lot. So that's how they ended up with this plan. We thank you for your consideration and happy to take any questions.

2. Mr. Peacock – Can you tell me a little bit about what the current parking requirements are for fraternities and sororities?

Mr. Joyce – I'm not sure I know off the top of my head. I know that they currently utilize a portion up here to the north of their property, and then they utilize a little bit over here to the west. So this will be additional. I know that – I believe they're not compliant currently, so this helps bring them into compliance.

Ms. Hudson – I was just going to let you know – the parking requirement you're asking for fraternities and sororities – it's one for each accommodation.

Mr. Peacock – So is this parking going to be designated for people living in the house, or will this be parking for visitors?

Mr. Joyce – It will be utilized for people in the house. I don't think they're placing restrictions on it, but it will be their property and so only their uses.

Mr. Peacock – Were you able to provide any kind of remodel estimates on the existing house that you said was dilapidated?

Mr. Joyce – No, they never got that far to remodeling. They know that there is quite a bit of asbestos in it and so anything was outside of the realm that they wanted to get involved in.

Mr. Peacock – That asbestos would also have to be dealt with in any kind of demo phase, so that's going to factor into the cost for the parking lot as well.

Mr. Joyce – Right.

Mr. Peacock – Would the applicant be willing to have the City Forester come out and inspect the existing trees?

Mr. Joyce – To the extent of the ones that they're keeping? Is that your question?

Mr. Peacock – Moreso the ones that are coming down. I see that you've got a really big one on the north side of the property there that's coming out with intentions to replace it – but, like you said, those are old-growth trees, so I'd like to know if having the City Forester come and actually take a look at them would be a feasibility.

Sean Rieger – Let me interject, Commissioner. Thank you. We would, although you know, as an architect, it is hard to lay out a parking lot – particularly difficult – and particularly difficult in terms of access points. I know the access point is something that I think they wanted on this side because they have the alleyway coming down, and we wanted to keep the access point away from the corner, as well. There's a lot of dictations there as far as the planning that sort of structured this. I don't think we have any problem with the Forester coming out and looking and, of course, giving us their feedback. Not a problem. Mr. Vermillon has been very helpful in that regard. We just had one the other night where we talked about that. But I would just caveat that, in the context that it's a structured layout that can be difficult to adjust.

Mr. Peacock – I understand that completely. Speaking of that actually – so you said the exit onto Parsons was going to be vacated. But I see the common alley here still remains. Is that going to be an exit onto Parsons as well?

Mr. Rieger – The common alley? Yes. Yes.

Mr. Peacock – That's going to remain?

Mr. Rieger – Correct. The alleyway is actually public way, basically, so we are not affecting the alley access at all.

Mr. Peacock – Okay. And then last question I have – I noticed they also have an existing parking lot across the street. I was just curious if you could maybe speak a little bit to the necessity of having a second parking lot in the rear, as opposed to some of the other houses there with just the one.

Mr. Joyce – They currently don't have enough parking as to the requirement of the current ordinance so they obviously are a non-conforming use because they pre-date all the modern ordinances. But they certainly do need more parking.

3. Ms. Williford – Can we go back to the existing property? Besides asbestos, what else did you find? Is it currently vacant? How long has it been vacant? What other problems exist with it?

Mr. Joyce – I know that it is currently vacant. It has been vacant for some time. I don't know the details of it. I know that the applicant has done an inspection and has determined

that they're not willing to undergo the cost. It's quite overgrown with native grass and trees and so it has kind of become an eyesore to some of the neighbors.

Mr. Rieger – I want to add, too, Commissioner. I know that the property owner attempted to sell this house to multiple other parties through other means, and those parties each refused to go under contract or continue under contract after they did inspections of this property. So I think it was a motive of this owner to actually try very hard to sell it to somebody that would keep it as a house, and they were simply unsuccessful. It was then that they turned to the Thetas and asked would you look at purchasing this property. So it was more the owner focused, when they were unable to sell it for anybody that would get in to redo the house.

Ms. Williford – Did she just try and private-party sell it, or did she – because I can't find any listing information about it.

Mr. Rieger – I don't know. We haven't represented her. But I believe she went – I believe she did have a broker, I thought, but you would have seen that.

Ms. Williford – Well, I just did a cursory look just now.

Mr. Rieger – I think previously she did.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

None

DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION:

*Tom Knotts moved to recommend adoption of Ordinance No. O-1920-37 to City Council.
Nouman Jan seconded the motion.*

There being no further discussion, a vote on the motion was taken with the following result:

YEAS	Erin Williford, Nouman Jan, Tom Knotts, Lark Zink, Erica Bird, Sandy Bahan, Steven McDaniel
NAYES	Matthew Peacock
MEMBERS ABSENT	Dave Boeck

Ms. Tromble announced that the motion, to recommend adoption of Ordinance No. O-1920-37 to City Council, passed by a vote of 7-1.

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