

**NORMAN PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**

**JULY 9, 2015**

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 9<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2015. 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 Sandy Bahan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

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Item No. 1, being:

**ROLL CALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Andy Sherrer  
Roberta Pailes  
Erin Williford  
Tom Knotts  
Sandy Bahan  
Jim Gasaway  
Chris Lewis

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dave Boeck  
Cindy Gordon

A quorum was present.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Susan Connors, Director, Planning &  
Community Development  
Jane Hudson, Principal Planner  
Janay Greenlee, Planner II  
Roné Tromble, Recording Secretary  
Larry Knapp, GIS Analyst II  
Leah Messner, Asst. City Attorney  
Terry Floyd, Development Coordinator  
David Riesland, Traffic Engineer  
Ken Danner, Subdivision Development  
Manager

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Item No. 5, being:

**O-1415-44 – Z & A LIMITED PARTNERSHIP REQUESTS SPECIAL USE FOR A MIXED BUILDING FOR PROPERTY CURRENTLY ZONED C-3, INTENSIVE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT, LOCATED AT 226-228 EAST MAIN STREET.**

**ITEMS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:**

1. Location Map
2. Staff Report
3. Excerpt of June 11, 2015 Planning Commission Minutes

**PRESENTATION BY STAFF:**

1. Janay Greenlee – Z&A Limited Partnership is requesting a Special Use for a Mixed Building at 226 and 228 East Main Street. The existing zoning is C-3. The existing land use is commercial. This is a slide of the six other special uses for mixed buildings granted within the last ten years, basically since the Main Street revitalization went on east of the railroad tracks. This is the site itself; it used to be the Blair Furniture building. It is zoned C-3. In C-3, a mixed building is allowed with a Special Use. This is looking west on Main Street. This is the rear of the building and the alley between Crawford and Peters. This is the parking lot that is directly behind it; it's the old furniture store building parking lot. They do rent out spaces to people that live in the loft apartments downtown. As you know, there is no parking requirement in C-3. This is looking east. So, with that being said, the applicant is requesting the Special Use for a Mixed Building. There have been six others granted in the last ten years, and staff does support and recommends the Special Use, Ordinance No. O-1415-44. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

2. Mr. Gasaway – Just a curiosity question. What's the square footage proposed for those?  
Ms. Greenlee – It is six loft apartments. I don't have the exact square footage, but Mr. Adair is present and he can probably give you a better idea on that.

3. Ms. Pailles – This is almost a historical question. When Landsaw's was downtown, which is a while ago now, there were actually apartments above it and they must have been grandfathered in. They were narrow, tiny hallways. There was a total fire trap. Tiny little apartments. Old wood. I assume all of that's changed, brought up to code. Nothing is grandfathered in.

Ms. Greenlee – Correct. When they come in for the interior remodel, they have to go through the building permit process and meet all of those regulations.

**PRESENTATION BY THE APPLICANT:**

1. Jim Adair, 111 North Peters – Good evening. I have spent most of my life across the street from this property. For the last 33 years, this was Blair's Furniture. Gene Blair started the business in 1982 when he bought the building from the Ewing family. When Gene retired, his son Scott continued the business. And upon Scott's retirement, they were kind enough to let us buy it and we hope to shepherd it into its next life. The applicant is Z&A Limited Partnership, which is a family partnership that belongs to me, my son, and my daughter. And, in all honesty, for us it doesn't get much more fun than this. Our desire would be to preserve this property and its historical elements, but also to help it fit into the future. We'd like to enhance its use and add to its contribution to the vitality of downtown. To the best of my knowledge, the upstairs has not been occupied for, I'm going to say, 60 years. It's little more than a shell. Literally, the first time we walked through it and today – it has been re-roofed a couple years ago but there's more plaster on the floor than there is on the ceiling. It has had some hard times. The request before you tonight is for Mixed Use for residential above commercial. This is the third time in 13 years that we've gotten to come before you to do this. I go back a little further – Janay only went back 10 years. There really aren't that many opportunities downtown to do loft apartments. Frequently, the upstairs has been remodeled extensively into something else, or it just doesn't lend itself to loft apartments. The other thing we're really excited about on this one – in our family, we have five loft apartments downtown today. Three of those are 1,500 square feet or larger. And lots of times that's dictated by the building. I like to say you have to let the old

building talk to you. This one, the way it's configured, our current plan is seven loft apartments, probably from 600 to 800 square feet. Again, I don't have detailed plans. We actually closed on the property two weeks ago, and it would be a little presumptuous to do a lot of architecture before Council approves this. That's very generally where we're heading today. It isn't part of this application. The downstairs will obviously remain commercial. We don't have anything definitive on it yet. We're talking to a restaurant and hoping that will work out. Originally we had thought we would do four one-car garages off the back of the building that would open to the alley. When we got into it and saw the structural supports in the back of the building, it's cut into perfect thirds, so I think we will probably do three one-car garages and either do individual or a shared bicycle storage for the other units. I don't want to take a lot of your time. I don't see a lot of people behind us tonight, but I would stop there and be glad to answer any questions you all have. Roberta, I was trying to remember your questions a minute ago. You were talking about apartments above Landsaw's. Landsaw's was north of the First Baptist Church and was demolished a number of years ago. There are, to the best of my knowledge, still loft apartments above Mister Roberts. It was a hotel many, many years ago and those have been grandfathered in. We've already been in meetings with Ms. Connors and Mr. Christian and are working through code issues. By the time you meet fire and safety codes, get natural light into each unit and deal with the physical constraints of a 100 year old building, these are a lot of fun.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:**

None

**DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION:**

1. Mr. Lewis – Mr. Adair, I would say to you I think this is a great opportunity to bring vitality back down to our downtown at a cost that's affordable when we're looking at square footage. So thank you for that.

*Chris Lewis moved to recommend adoption of Ordinance No. O-1415-44 to the City Council. Jim Gasaway seconded the motion.*

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

YEAS	Andy Sherrer, Roberta Pailes, Erin Williford, Tom Knotts, Sandy Bahan, Jim Gasaway, Chris Lewis
NAYES	None
MEMBERS ABSENT	Dave Boeck, Cindy Gordon

Ms. Tromble announced that the motion, to recommend adoption of Ordinance No. O-1415-44 to the City Council, passed by a vote of 7-0.

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