



PINE BLUFF
PLANNING COMMISSION
APRIL 27, 2010
4:00 p.m.
Council Chambers

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES: March 30, 2010
- III. OLD BUSINESS: None
- IV. NEW BUSINESS:
 1. Use Permitted on Review request by Hope Apostolic Faith Ministries to build a new church facility at the north end of Shamrock Drive within an R-1 Residential Zone.
 2. Use Permitted on Review request by The Scent of Pure Oil Outreach Ministry to conduct church services at 2221 S. Olive Street, Suite G, within a B-3 Commercial Zone.
 3. Use Permitted on Review request by Carl & Sons Appliance Repair to operate a small appliance repair shop in a commercial building at 6305 Sheridan Road in an R-1 Residential Zone.
- V. COMMITTEE REPORTS
- VI. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT
- VII. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
- VIII. OPEN DISCUSSION
 1. Renaming of Hazel Street
- IX. ADJOURNMENT

**RECOMMENDATION
TO THE
PINE BLUFF PLANNING COMMISSION**

SUBJECT: Use Permitted on Review request to construct a new church facility at the north end of Shamrock Drive within an R-1 Residential Zone.

APPLICANT: Hope Apostolic Faith Ministries, Julius E. Wright, Sr. as applicant.

ZONING AND LAND USES:

ZONING:	North:	R-1 Residential	LAND USE:	North/Northeast:	I-530
	South:	R-1 Residential		South:	Single Family Residential
	East:	R-1 Residential		West:	Single Family Residential
	West:	R-1 Residential			

REVIEW COMMENTS

The applicant desires to construct a new church at the north end of Shamrock Drive in an R-1 Residential zone. The property contains 4.21 acres and has been clear cut. The proposed auditorium will seat 200 persons. The applicant has indicated that at some time in the future they intend to construct a "life center" as well, although the life center is not a part of the current application.

The general area in which the applicant desires to construct a church is an area of single family homes that has only two accesses in and out (East Lake Drive and Chapel Heights Drive) Generally, the affected area contains two subdivisions that will be impacted by the proposed development, Chapel Heights and Western Chapel. Chapel Heights contains two primary roads, East Lake Drive and Shamrock Drive. It is a mixed race and income neighborhood with primarily owner-occupied single family homes. This subdivision contains over 100 single family homes, and there are also about 10 homes on that are located on East Lake Drive before you enter the subdivision. The subdivision is a stable neighborhood that has not seen the deterioration as other neighborhoods of the City built about the same time (late '60s early '70s). Western Chapel is located to the west of Chapel Heights and is a more rural type subdivision with larger lots and no curbs or sidewalks. Developed subsequent to Chapel Heights, it contains about 60 single family homes and is also a stable neighborhood.

The major reasons these neighborhoods have remained stable over the years is because they are not subject to through traffic and land uses other than single family homes have not been introduced. Due to this, they have developed a neighborhood identity. When new land uses are allowed to be developed in a neighborhood, they can change the identity of the neighborhood, change traffic patterns, and spur other new land uses, all of which can lead to neighborhood deterioration.

Allowing the development of a church on the subject site will introduce a land use into the neighborhood that interrupts the neighborhood cohesion and its single family identity, which can adversely affect the neighborhood and harm its stability in a number of ways.

1. Churches cause an increase in traffic. There are only two streets that provide access to the almost 170 homes in the two subdivisions. A church that seats 200 people is expected to add 100 cars per trip (50 entering then 50 leaving) each time a church activity occurs. When this is added to the number of cars already utilizing these two streets, periods of congestion are imminent, not to mention the steady stream of cars on these roads going to and from the church property that will disrupt the residential aspect of the neighborhoods.
2. The increased traffic poses additional safety issues to children in the Chapel Heights neighborhood. This subdivision was developed when it was outside the City Limits. As such, most of the homes were developed with single carports and driveways that cause parking on the street. The neighborhood contains many families with small children. The increased traffic creates additional safety hazards to these small children who may dart into the street, many times between cars parked on the street.
3. Increased traffic will cause a change in neighborhood traffic patterns. Many residents of the neighborhoods will feel they have to rearrange their schedules to leave earlier or later for their own appointments during those times that the church will have an activity. Neighborhood streets other than Shamrock and Chapel Heights will see an increase in traffic as both residents and church members look for a quicker and less congested route of travel. All of these streets are local streets not constructed for intense traffic and will require more maintenance by the Pine Bluff Street Department.
4. As an area without through traffic, the neighborhoods currently are accessed only by those persons living in the neighborhoods or those visiting neighborhood residents. This allows residents who are vigilant in watching for potential criminal activity to know what cars should and should not be in the neighborhoods. Development of a church in the neighborhoods, particularly Chapel Heights, will have numerous cars that “don’t belong in the neighborhood” driving through it, which presents problems to the ability to identify potential thieves or other criminal element who are scoping out the neighborhood.
5. Church activities can be loud and disturbing to nearby residential properties. This can be a particular problem to residential properties adjacent to the subject site. Being located next to an intense and possible noisy use detracts from the attractiveness of adjacent properties as a residential asset.
6. A church building and parking lot facilities do not aesthetically fit in with a single family home development. The Chapel Heights neighborhood is comprised of one story single family homes. Without question, the proposed 100’ x 110’ building will not look like a single family home and there is no guarantee that the building façade materials will be residential in type. A 50-space paved parking lot will increase the summer temperature of the residential properties adjacent to it and provides no aesthetic value to the neighborhood.

7. Once a new, more intense land use, such as a church, is introduced into a residential neighborhood, owners of vacant property often see an opening to have their properties rezoned to more intense uses. There are several undeveloped parcels located on Chapel Heights Drive whose owners have inquired about using the properties for uses other than single family residential. It is expected that if they see that the City is open to allowing more intense uses in this residential area that they will also ask to be able to develop more intense uses. If the City allows the proposed intense use to locate in the residential neighborhood, it will be more difficult to deny additional intense uses. This is a good way to kill a neighborhood.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Staff recommends denial of the UPOR request to construct a new church facility at the north end of Shamrock Drive.

**RECOMMENDATION
TO THE
PINE BLUFF PLANNING COMMISSION**

SUBJECT: Use Permitted on Review request to operate and conduct church services at 2221 S. Olive Street, Suite G in a B-3 Highway Commercial zone.

APPLICANT: The Scent of Pure Oil Outreach Ministry, Linda Stricklen as applicant

ZONING AND LAND USES:

ZONING:	North:	B-3 Commercial	LAND USE:	North:	Part of the Shop-Walk
	South:	B-3 Commercial		South:	Part of the Shop-Walk
	East:	R-3 Residential		East:	Residential
	West:	B-3 Commercial		West:	Various Commercial

REVIEW COMMENTS

The applicant desires to conduct church services and other related religious activities. The applicant states the facility has a seating capacity of 50 to 75 persons, and church services will be on Tuesday night from 7 to 8 p.m. and Sunday morning from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. They expect attendance on Sundays of 30 to 50 persons.

The subject church was originally located in this same building in Suite L, however they did not have a zoning permit to do so. They are now asking for Planning Commission approval to locate their church at this same address, but in Suite G (formerly the site of an event center).

The subject site is largely vacant. The building is almost 400 feet long, but the only active businesses or organizations located in it are an insurance agency, a restaurant, a barber shop, a beauty shop, and an office. There have been a variety of other businesses that have gone in and gone out of the facility.

Because the subject site is not located directly on Olive Street, the location lends itself more to uses where visibility is not a factor and the destination of the user is not spontaneous. It does not appear that the use would have a negative impact on existing businesses in the shop-walk. The times of operation of the church for the most part will be during those times most commercial businesses and offices are closed.

There are about 100 parking spaces for the facility as a whole, and it appears that the parking is adequate for the facility, including the proposed use.

RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends approval of the request for the subject suite and applicant only (no expansion or change of churches without receiving separate UPOR approval).

**RECOMMENDATION
TO THE
PINE BLUFF PLANNING COMMISSION**

SUBJECT: Use Permitted on Review request by Carl & Sons Appliance Repair to operate a small appliance repair shop in an existing commercial building at 6305 Sheridan Road within an R-1 Residential Zone.

APPLICANT: Carl Kennedy

ZONING AND LAND USES:

ZONING:	North:	R-1 Residential	LAND USE:	North:	Single Family
	South:	R-1 Residential		South:	Single Family
	East:	R-1 Residential		East:	Large Metal Commercial-Type Bldg
	West:	R-1 Residential		West:	Apartments

REVIEW COMMENTS

The applicant desires to operate a small appliance repair shop at 6305 Sheridan Road in an existing commercial building. The subject building is a large metal building with one bay door that was constructed a number of years ago before the area was in the City Limits.

This area contains a variety of uses including single family, multi-family, and auto repair. It does not appear that the proposed use would be detrimental to the neighborhood. The building already exists, it is located on a four lane highway, and the proposed use is most likely less intense than the original use (it was probably built as an auto repair garage). There is a paved parking area in front of the structure that appears to be sufficient for the proposed use.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Staff recommends approval of the UPOR request subject to repair of the parking area. This shall include filling in the pot holes, cleaning it up, and striping the parking spaces.

RENAMING OF HAZEL STREET

As you may know, Alderman Brown is recommending that Hazel Street, from 13th Avenue to 73rd Avenue, be renamed to Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. Alderman Brown's City Council committee has referred the request to the Planning Commission for public hearing purposes and your recommendation. The item is being placed under Open Discussion on the Commission Agenda this month, and public notices on the name change will be placed in the paper for next month's meeting in order to inform the public of the time and date of the hearing.

After the last street name change, the Planning Commission determined that people should be honored in other ways than having an existing street name changed to theirs. The Commission recommended that street sign toppers that honor the person in question be placed on existing street name signs (i.e. In Honor Of xxxxxxxx, or Honorary xxxxxxxx Drive) instead of changing the street names. At his committee meeting, Alderman Brown stated he would not be interested in implementing that system until after Hazel Street is renamed. He further stated that over 700 cities have named a street Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and that Pine Bluff should be progressive and do the same. He said he determined that Hazel Street was the best street to be changed to MLK, Jr. Drive, as it was a major street and had signs on I-530. He was informed that there were numerous businesses and dwelling units on Hazel Street that would be affected if the street name were changed as well as other impacts the name change could have. He said the City would give people a year to make the name change.

The staff is refraining from giving our recommendations until such time as the street name change becomes an Agenda action item. At this time, we would like to discuss how the Planning Commission would like to informing businesses, residents, and others who will be impacted by the name change. The proposed name change affects all Pine Bluff residents, not just those located on Hazel Street, because it is such a major street.

We would recommend, in addition to placing the item in the Public Hearing Notice published in the paper that list other agenda items, to request the Pine Bluff Commercial to do an article on the name change the week before the Commission meeting that lists the time, date, and location of the meeting and putting flyers in several of the businesses on the street so not only would they be informed, their clientele would also be apprised of the proposed change.