

**FRANKLIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
November 2, 2015
5:30 P.M.**

Present: Commission Chairman Thomas Bridges
District 1 Commissioner Robert Franklin
District 2 Commissioner David Strickland
District 3 Commissioner Jeff Jacques
District 4 Commissioner Eddie Wester

Media: Shane Scoggins, Franklin County Citizen Leader

Staff: County Manager, Beth Thomas
County Engineer, John Phillips

Chairman Bridges welcomed everyone to the public hearing and thanked them for their attendance. He said that there is one item on the agenda which is a rezoning request from AI to RM. Chairman Bridges said the public hearing will last 30 minutes. He said that there will be 15 minutes allowed to speak for the request and 15 minutes allowed to speak against the request. Each person who wishes to speak is asked to come forward to the podium and state their name. Chairman Bridges asked if anyone would like to speak for the rezoning request. There was no one present who wished to speak for the rezoning request.

Chairman Bridges asked if there was anyone to speak against the rezoning request. Mark Hamner a resident of Pleasant Hill Circle said that he lives just west of the proposed chicken house apartments. He said that the residents and property owners of the Pleasant Hill Community are united in opposition to the proposed rezoning at 2223 Pleasant Hill Circle from agricultural intensive to multiple family residential proposed by Walker and Davis. The new owners knew that this land was zoned agricultural intensive when they bought it. Mr. Hamner stated that the new property owners' rights should remain subject to what the zoning was when they bought it. He said that if they wanted to build multi-family housing they should have bought land that was zoned for that. Deliberately placing multifamily low income housing away from infrastructure is an undue burden on the public.

Mr. Hamner stated that the new owners' have proposed this zoning change for one of two reasons, either they intended to raise chickens and were not aware of the condition of the houses and requirements of the chicken growing industry or they never had any intentions of following the zoning requirements. In either case the new owners' should not be permitted to come in after the fact and integrate the character of the

community for financial gain or convenience. Mr. Hamner stated that the land should not be used as a source of financial gain for detached landlords who care little about the character of the community or the quality of life of the nearby residents. The utopian proposal by the new owners' is too good to be true because it is. Necessary utilities and public services are either absent or far away. This old chicken farm is dotted with chicken pits and is in an unsuitable location for such a proposed project. To tell otherwise would be misleading to the public. The Pleasant Hill area is a stable, peaceful community made up of family farms and single family residents.

Mr. Hamner said that the neighbors in the Pleasant Hill community cooperate with each other. He said that he lives on a farm that his family has owned since 1975. He plans to live there for the rest of his life. His children and grandchildren will live there too. Mr. Hamner said that he did not want the future generations of Franklin County residents to have to deal with a disastrous precedent that would be set by the short sighted, ill-advised approval of the zoning change. Mr. Hamner thanked the Commission Board for allowing him to speak against the zoning request.

Jason Campbell came forward to speak against the zoning request. Mr. Campbell said that he lives at 920 Pleasant Hill Circle, just below Mr. Hamner. He said that his thoughts are if you buy a chicken farm you should be planning on raising chickens. He said that he has lived in the Pleasant Hill community for 12 years. There are very few problems in the area. When there are problems it is usually associated with one of the properties owned by Walker/Davis. Mr. Campbell said that thought the proposed zoning change would devalue the properties in the Pleasant Hill area and would cause problems. Mr. Campbell thanked the Commission Board for allowing him to speak against the proposed zoning change.

Marion Sisk came forward to speak against the proposed zoning change. Mr. Sisk said that he lives next to Mark Hamner, who lives next to the Walker/Davis property. He said that he has lived there for 30 years. Mr. Sisk said that his wife had asked Ms. Davis if she planned to live on the property and Ms. Davis stated no. He said that Ms. Davis does not plan to live there; she only wants to make money off of the community. Mr. Sisk said that he did not want the zoning change because he does not the property values going down due to the proposed housing. The proposed housing is for 40 four person dwellings. This could potentially be 160 people in a small area. Mr. Sisk thanked the Commission Board for allowing him to speak.

Frank Brothers came forward to speak against the proposed zoning change. Mr. Brothers stated that he is the Fire Chief for Line Volunteer Fire Department which serves the community of Pleasant Hill. He said that he has lived in the Pleasant Hill community for 42 years. His wife was born and raised in the Pleasant Hill Community. Mr. Brothers stated that chicken houses were never designed to be changed into structures for residential use. There is not enough water in this area to be able to put sprinkler systems in the structure which are required by law. There is not enough water in this area for a passive system which is the difference between getting people out of the house and protecting the structure. This is a major concern for safety along with the

lack of sewage in this area. The plans from Ms. Davis are also in violation of the zoning regulations for Franklin County. Mr. Brothers stated that he does not want Franklin County to be known as the chicken house residents of the world. He also said that the way chicken houses are built that they burn quickly. Mr. Brothers thanked the Commission Board for allowing him to speak.

Amy Neese came forward to speak against the proposed zoning change. Ms. Neese said that she lives at 1060 Pleasant Hill Circle. She said that she has lived there since 1999. Ms. Neese said that her concerns are the same as those previously stated by the other property owners. She said that she bought her property in a rural area for a reason and she would like to keep it that way. Ms. Neese thanked the Commission Board for allowing her to speak.

Tim Harris came forward to speak against the proposed zoning change. Mr. Harris said that he lives at 926 Pleasant Hill Circle. He said that he and his family are the previous owners of the chicken farm in question. Mr. Harris said that when the chicken houses were built his father placed the chicken houses in an area away from the neighbors and the road. He said that his father did not want something that would look bad in the neighborhood. This farm was built with everything behind each other so that the area would not look junky. Two of the chicken houses were built in 1982; two of the chicken houses were built in 1986 and two others in 1994. Chicken houses are not suitable for people to live as they burn easily if they catch on fire. He is concerned for the safety of people if this became dwellings for families. Mr. Harris said that if you cannot save chickens in these houses you would not be able to save people's lives. It would be a disaster for the community if this property was turned into dwellings. Mr. Harris thanked the Commission Board for allowing him to speak.

Chairman Bridges asked if there was anyone else who wanted to speak for or against the agenda item. There was no one else who wished to speak for or against the zoning change. The meeting remained open until 6:00 p.m. to give an opportunity for others to speak.

Signed on the _____ day of _____, 2015

Chairman J. Thomas Bridges

Robert L. Franklin, District 1 Commissioner

David R. Strickland, District 2 Commissioner

Jeff Jacques, District 3 Commissioner

Eddie Wester, District 4 Commissioner

Elaine H. Evans, County Clerk