

From the Mayor's Desk
November 2019

Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z)

We had a Joint Meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council on October 10th to receive testimony on a Special Use Permit (SUP) Application for a commercial equine boarding facility on land currently zones as Neighborhood Residential (NR). This is a 45 acre tract of land near the Setterfeld subdivision which had already supported equine uses with its previous owners.

This was a very interesting exercise to consider a facility that is primarily geared toward supporting horse owners who engage in the sport of dressage. When we originally wrote the zoning ordinances of our Unified Development Code, we did not contemplate a category for an equine facility in a residential neighborhood. We have a number of these situations in the city which are effectively "grandfathered in" as non-conforming uses. To address this void, we put together a citizen group of horse owners in the city to help our staff draft a meaningful set of restrictions for these types of facilities. Another great example of volunteers pitching in to help us keep our city a great place to live.

The property owner was most helpful in the hearing and very obliging in accepting a few restrictions that the P&Z thought were appropriate to include. P&Z met separately after the joint meeting and voted to recommend approval. The recommendation was presented to council at our evening meeting on October 17th and was approved.

Zoning Board of Adjustment

ZBOA has not had a need to meet since the last report.

It's Tax Time Again!

I got out the check book and a box of Kleenex this week and paid our property taxes. I suppose I should be thankful that we don't have an income tax in Texas, but it still hurts when we have to pay the Tax Man! I will remind everybody that the Bexar County Tax Assessor-Collector (BCTAC) serves as our agent to bill and collect for our city taxes.

Whether you live in Bexar, Kendall, or Comal County, you will get a bill from BCTAC for your city taxes. You may recall that the Kendall County Tax Appraiser's office used to act as our agent, but they chose to end our contract a year ago. We actually got a better deal both in terms of services for our residents and pricing by moving the servicing to BCTAC.

Sorting out all the different entities is confusing. One of my friends in DME pointed out language on the BCTAC flyer that comes with your tax bill that might make Kendall and Comal residents think Bexar County Appraisal District does your tax appraisals. They don't. Everyone's assessed value for taxes is set by the tax

appraisal office for the county where their property is located. The counties share assessed value information with BCTAC for billing purposes. I will also remind everyone, that the Boerne Independent School District billing and collection is done by the Kendall County Tax Appraiser office. Got all that? Go by the Club and read this through a glass of wine and it will all become clear!

New Municipal Court Judge and Prosecutor Sworn In

At our October 17th evening meeting we did a formal swearing in ceremony for our new Municipal Court Judge and our Municipal Court Prosecutor. Kimberly S. Keller was sworn in as Municipal Court Judge and Cynthia Trevino from Denton Navarro Bernal Rocha & Zech was sworn in as Municipal Court Prosecutor. We congratulate both of these ladies on their new responsibilities and are looking forward to working with them. Kim's entire family including the Kolodziejs and the Stolarczyks attended the ceremony as well as one of Kim's best friends. I especially thanked Kim and Shane's daughter, Quinn, for not bringing her pet goat with her to the ceremony!

Top Workplace Award

For the second year in a row, the City of Fair Oaks Ranch was recognized as one of the Top Workplaces in the San Antonio area. This competition is sponsored by *The San Antonio Express-News* and is administered by an independent third party. Our employees provide independent input on our city as a workplace including our values and culture. It was an honor to attend the award ceremony in San Antonio with a few of our employees and to celebrate with the other entities recognized in the greater San Antonio area.

Development of the Pfeiffer Tract/The Reserve

There has been no additional activity on this development. The developer is planning to come back to the city with an updated development plan in the near future. I will keep this item as a recurring topic in the monthly newsletter because I know it is important to everyone.

Elevated Storage Tank

Ryan Sowa, P.E. and his associates from Kimley-Horn and Associates updated council on the results from Community Workshop #2 regarding this project. They also updated us on continued engineering studies related to this planned facility. Ryan and the other engineers fielded questions from council regarding the project. We also opened the question session to the public in attendance and several of them asked questions. We are expecting council to approve a final site in November of this year. Engineering design is expected to be completed by August 2020 with construction to begin around November 2020. Construction time for a project of this magnitude is about a year, so that would indicate completed construction around November 2021.

Boerne-Fair Oaks Ranch-Kendall County Transportation Planning Committee

The full for this project met on October 8th at 2:00 p.m. at Kronkosky to have their first working session. They took public comments, reviewed minutes of the first meeting, and deliberated and decided on decision making protocols for the meetings. I was impressed with the openness of the dialogue of this group and the quality of the discussion. They landed on a modified consensus methodology with some rules around what level of voting would be required to advance a decision. From a parliamentary viewpoint I would describe their decision as requiring a super majority to approve an idea that could not achieve 100% consensus. They gave consideration to future presentations and will likely begin with some reviews of demographics. Boerne Independent School District is helping with demographic data as well as providing a continuing place for the team to meet in their training center. All in all, I think this group is off to a good start.

Deer Census

The Wildlife Education Committee, working under the guidance of Jessica Alderson, Urban Biologist from Texas Parks and Wildlife, has completed its field work consisting of driving four different routes three times each. The drives were conducted on three successive Sunday evenings.

The observers identified bucks, does, and fawns. This time, the observers also differentiated between native whitetail and Axis deer. The data will next be analyzed using a computer model belonging to Texas Parks and Wildlife and an estimation of population will be made.

The process was well run and I was especially glad that we used scouts and other young people in the observer role. They really had a blast doing this work. The more we get our young people engaged, the better our community will be.

National Night Out

On October 1st, the Fair Oaks Ranch Police Department supported National Night Out. This program is designed to heighten crime awareness, strengthen neighborhood spirits and police-community partnerships. I enjoyed once again getting to ride with our police department and attending gatherings in a number of our communities. We all appreciated the hospitality and the opportunity to connect with our various neighborhoods.

Resident Volunteers/City Staffers at Work

- Our city Facebook page is continuing to attract readers. For those of you who are Facebook fans you can find us at City of Fair Oaks Ranch, TX. Our page is used for sharing information about the city, but it is not a public forum. The page is monitored and objectionable or off topic material will be removed.
- You may have noticed that our “Deer in Rut” signs are posted again. For any city slickers who have recently moved here who don’t know what “rut” is (yes, we get calls at the switchboard asking that question) that means the

annual whitetail breeding season is in high gear. The male deer through caution to the winds during this time and are much more likely to run in front of your car than usual. They are also more unpredictable, and therefore, more dangerous than usual. The female deer spend a lot of time running from the male deer and they, too, are more likely to end up in front of your car. Proceed with caution!

Our City/Our Neighbors

We have had a lot of unhappy rhetoric floating around recently tied to the Fair Oaks Ranch Homeowners Association (FORHA) bylaw update election. At the election meeting held this past Wednesday night at Fair Oaks Ranch Elementary School, FORHA president Carolyn Knopf asked openly for a healing process to begin in our community. Carolyn pointed out that we are all neighbors. We work on community projects together. Our kids go to school together. Many of us attend the same churches together.

I have been told that the election results have been tabulated and announced. Hopefully everyone will accept the results and move forward. It is my understanding that my friend, long time community leader Al McDavid, was assigned the task of proctoring the tabulation. With Al overseeing this operation, I have full confidence that it was done correctly. Let's put this unhappiness behind us and move forward as a community.

Looking forward to cooler weather, Veteran's Day observance, and Thanksgiving, I wish you all the best as we move toward our holiday season.

Garry Manitzas
Mayor – Fair Oaks Ranch