

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Planning Chair Karen Gautreaux

The secretary called the roll.

Commissioners Present: Nixon Adams, Claire Durio, Karen Gautreaux, Mike Pierce, and Brian Rhinehart

Absent: Scott Quillin

Also Present: Cara Bartholomew, Director Planning Department; David Parnell, City Attorney; Tina Myers, Secretary

Mr. Rhinehart made a motion to adopt the minutes from the April 11 and 25 regular meetings, and the April 17 special meeting, Ms. Durio seconded, and all were in favor.

Ms. Gautreaux moved to the Zoning Commission

New Business

Resolution 23-02 – A resolution of the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Mandeville adopting the Resiliency Plan

David Lessinger, CSRS Consultant who developed the Mandeville Flood Resilience Strategy and Brandon Campo, a water resources engineer were present at the meeting to give a presentation and answer and questions that the public or the Commission may have concerning the Resiliency Plan.

Mr. Lessinger said that his understanding was that the Planning and Zoning Commission that initiated this activity in the beginning that directed the City to undertake a resilience analysis that would then inform updates to the comprehensive plan and comprehensive land use regulations.

Mr. Lessinger said that he would be presenting a summary of a complete document that is posted on the City website and is publicly available.

Mr. Lessinger said that there were a couple of different steps taken. The first of which was looking at previous plans to understand what had been done before. They developed goals and principles to guide the process. They also undertook a flood risk assessment and watershed modeling as well. They then came up with a set of general strategies to be applied to specific projects. There is also a technical report that goes along with that.

They looked at historical development patterns and how they have shaped the City along with some environmental changes, such as the change in shoreline.

Mr. Lessinger said that they compared many different plans so they did not repeat anything and could build upon what had already been done. They realized that they needed to do a regional flood risk analysis as previous studies had been more general.

The planning principles used were stakeholder engagement and protecting and preserving the natural functions of the floodplain. They wanted to establish a timeline, so they aligned it with the coastal masterplan that looks out 50 years and was just updated this year.

The models were built to look at the probability of different types of flood events. They looked at a lot of different elements but two that are in the plan are the 100 year storm surge and 100 year rainfall event. The important thing to look at the is the low probability but high impact of a surge event.

They wanted to differentiate between nuisance flooding and catastrophic flooding. Nuisance flooding would not damage houses or threaten lives. There are strategies for mitigating both flooding events and they wanted to differentiate between them.

To address the risk of major flooding is nonstructural adaptation, which is changing how we occupy the environment and not how the water moves. Structural solutions would be levees, pumps and walls. Nonstructural solutions are elevations, buyouts, floodproofing.

It is going to be useful to develop a comprehensive nonstructural adaptation program instead of going project by project for elevations or floodproofing. Projected damages that were compared from 2022 to 2080 had hundreds of millions of dollars in damages so the more that risk can be mitigated now the more dollars are saved down the line.

Another recommendation is an adoption of a universal adaptation standard which would give a target to have a standard of properties be mitigated by a certain date.

There were recommendations under education and engagement as there is always more to learn. One action would be a flood risk education campaign. This could be educating K-12 students or using the model to make decision and show people how it works.

The main event to be considered is to integrate the findings into the process for the comprehensive plan. An example of this would be Norfolk, Virginia where they looked at areas and started to identify where they could have a sustainable physical footprint for future developments.

There are ordinances around Louisiana that they can direct people to so as they go through the comprehensive plan update they can consider.

For nuisance flooding mitigates strategies there were a few things considered. One of which was a storm water park to hold water either permanently or temporarily to help mitigate local flooding. An upstream detention area was also looked at. It would be in St. Tammany Parish, and while there was a benefit area it would be pretty limited.

Strategies along the Lakefront were also looked at such as maintaining the sea wall, floodgates, or a living shoreline.

Mr. Rhinehart asked if Mr. Lessinger could cycle through the various plans that were compared and reviewed. His questions was if there were any disconnects or takeaways from the different areas that would impact Mandeville. Mr. Lessinger said that the silver jackets was good to look at as that was the US Army Corps of Engineers saying that it was not worth it to build structural flood protection.

Mr. Lessinger said that look at the Comprehensive Plan and the St. Tammany Hazard Mitigation Plan. A hazard mitigation plan usually has a list of specific projects, and he did not see any specific projects listed. Ms. Bartholomew said it would have to be updated in 2025 and would include capital projects and some short term work projects.

Mr. Adams wanted to discuss the comprehensive plan for a minute. He said that this was great to have this information all in one place, he could not think of what would be changed in the comprehensive plan because they already emphasize the kind of stuff that Mr. Lessinger was talking about. Mr. Adams said that one of the priorities of the short term work program has always been identifying and buying up critical and sensitive areas. As far as he knows the City has never established a priority or identified all the lands around. That seems like what they ought to do before they build any new buildings.

Mr. Lessinger said that one of the things from the plan is a decision matrix to consider when squiring property. This would look at different factors like flood risk or other practical matters like if it is adjacent to a property that the City owns or if the owner wants to sell.

Mr. Rhinehart asked how good the modeling software was and who was using it.

Brandon Campo, Water Resource Engineer: The modeling software is built on the HEC-RAS system which is released by the US Army Corps of Engineers and is federally certified. The model can be used by engineers. The benefit of the model existing is that a large development cost has been taken care of. It can be refined for certain areas.

Mr. Lessinger said it looks at the watershed in finer detail than before. It can be used on an analytical level as well, there are some parishes that use it to look at single family permitting.

Mr. Rhinehart said his recollection was the software was dynamic and what was being shown is a snapshot. Mr. Campo said that the models are not static.

Mr. Rhinehart said the areas looked at were inside the City limits and then areas north of the City as well. Mr. Campo said that was correct and that way they were accounting for upstream rainfall. He added that there were ways to make it more accessible.

Ms. Durio said that education and funding assistance would be big benefits for the community, being someone who recently elevated without grant funding. The idea that when looking at the model and seeing where you are you can see that elevating was the right decision. It would be a great experience for people to look at this online as things continue to change.

Ernest Burguieres, 241 Wilkinson: Asked if the houses on Lakeshore Drive were 1,000 feet from the coastline when they were built in 1805. Mr. Lessinger said that where they are showing the prior shoreline is not the developed shoreline in Mandeville. Mr. Burguieres asked if the houses were 1,000 feet from the water. Ms. Durio said what was being shown as the prior shoreline was not on Lakeshore Drive and was further west.

Mr. Adams asked where Marigny property lines ended.

Mr. Lessinger said it looks like wetland area that has eroded.

Mr. Burguieres said his next question was the rainwater coming down. With an inch of rainfall 40% goes into the ground. From the Causeway to Bayou Castine there are only four major places where water can get into the Lake. That means all the water goes to those four places. How does it get there and what effect would it have on Mandeville.

Mr. Lessinger said he was thinking the same thing when he started this project. While development decisions are driving some flood risk, it is not the driver for flood risk. The added impervious surface to the development area north of I-12 and what they saw is that I-12 is acting like a levee so flood problems created there will primarily be affecting people nearby.

Mr. Burguieres asked if the majority of houses north of Mandeville are built upon slabs. Ms. Bartholomew said it would depend on their BFE. Mr. Burguieres said that each house built on a slab is situated on red clay that reduces the flow of water through it.

Mr. Lessinger said that Mr. Burguieres is raising issues of groundwater which is important but there are limitations to any model. Mr. Burguieres said that is what he expected out of them.

Mr. Rhinehart said the point was the model has been created so they can do that now. There was a slide in the study that mapped exactly what was being discussed and they can take that to the Parish.

Clay Madden, 224 Live Oak: The job of the administration is to take items from this plan and adding them to the budget and prioritizing which ones to do and how to get funding for them. He wanted to thank Mr. Lessinger and CSRS and his team and CPRA.

Resolution 23-03 – A resolution of the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Mandeville adopting the 2023 – 2024 Short Term Work Program

Ms. Bartholomew said she was going to run through each of the items from last year just to say what the status of them is.

She said for the CLURO amendments, the signage section is going to the city council at the next meeting so that is checked off.

There was a review and revision of the development fees so that is completed.

There are some other CLURO text amendments they want to get through but she wants to be careful of not tackling too many before the next comprehensive plan update and next CLURO rewrite.

For the update to the comprehensive plan they wanted to get through the Resiliency Plan as it would be able to inform the comprehensive plan. Ms. Bartholomew anticipates money being budgeted for an RFP and expects that to be coming in the fall.

Ms. Bartholomew said they will continue to coordinate with Parish to integrate any agreements they may have.

The Four Corners redevelopment has largely been done and been done privately. Mr. Adams asked if the administration was actively talking to people about putting what they want there. He said that there is a property on the southeast corner that is just screams out for something to be out there. Ms. Bartholomew said that if they were changed in anyway they would have to come into compliance with City regulations. Mr. Adams asked what the City would like to see there, Ms. Bartholomew said she is not sure how that would work and it gets tricky with private ownerships.

Mr. LaGrange said that there is a company that City of Slidell uses for economic development that is free, so that is something that is being explored. Mr. Adams said that probably about 80% of the income for the town comes from sales tax and probably 75% of that is from people who live outside the City.

Ms. Bartholomew said the Hazard Mitigation Plan would be updated in 2025 and the west wetlands plan is in permitting stages. Mr. LaGrange said they are reviewing with DEQ as they asked for some additional studies. The project is designed they are just trying to get through the permit.

Ms. Gautreaux said the City was lumped in with the Parish before and asked if there were plans to do a City iteration. Ms. Bartholomew said that was discussed at a high level, and now that the City is a Class 5 CRS community they probably need to look at that a bit closer as she thinks there might be more points if the City does one on its own, so that is something she would look at with the CRS coordinator.

Mr. LaGrange said the berm project is being discussed at the council meeting on Thursday.

Ms. Bartholomew said Harbor Field is being put out to bid for construction very soon. The Resiliency Plan was just discussed, and the west wetland shoreline protection is being coordinated with the Parish. Mr. LaGrange said that the holdup was that they were waiting on the Parish to finish modeling the Tchefuncte River.

Ms. Bartholomew said that there were negotiations for a couple pieces of property along watersheds and it is high on the priority for the Mayor to budget more money for acquisitions. There were also some annexations done this year with more on the horizon.

Ms. Bartholomew said they received a grant from Baton Rouge Green to do the Master Tree Plan and they completed all the public property and parks and inventoried the trees and that will be posted to the website.

The Regional Planning Commission did the Bike and Ped plan and that is posted to the website.

Ms. Bartholomew said the Bike and Ped plan and Resiliency plans were unique as the City was treated as a pilot program.

Mr. Adams said that they typically talk about the budget as well under the Short Term Work program and asked if there were any studies or anything they need to get done? Ms. Bartholomew said that she discussed putting together a list of Capital Projects with Mr. LaGrange. The big thing at the moment is getting the Comprehensive Plan update done.


Mr. Rhinehart asked if that would not be funded until the Fall, Ms. Bartholomew said there is some money for putting out an RFP to select someone. Mr. Rhinehart asked when an RFP would go out, Ms. Bartholomew said she would love to select someone in the Fall. The budget year starts September 1st so she will know before then what is being looked at for allocating.

Ms. Durio said she is impressed with how many things have been tackled and checked off. Ms. Bartholomew said she appreciates the commission as she knows it is a lot of extra meetings.

Mr. Adams motioned to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Rhinehart seconded, and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:41pm.



Alex Weiner, Secretary



Karen Gautreaux, Chairwoman
Planning Commission

Brian Rhinehart commenced the Zoning Commission Meeting.

Notification of Filing Case Addendum - Any additional information determined to be needed by the Commission in order to make a decision regarding a case shall be required to be submitted to the Planning Department by the end of business on the Friday following the meeting at which the additional information was requested or the case will automatically be tabled at the next meeting.

Mr. Rhinehart said that they would hear the cases first and then go back and hear the two resolutions.

New Business

V23-04-13 – Allison and Brian Froeba request a variance to CLURO Section 5.2.3.2. Drainage Overlay District and Fill Sub-Area A, Square 5 Lot 6A, R-1 Single Family Residential District, 1617 Lakeshore Drive

Mr. Adams said that he would think that they would want the water to go to the lake primarily.

Ms. Durio said that the drainage plan and letter were submitted by the applicants and asked if that was done in the capacity of an engineer. Ms. Bartholomew said that was correct and added that the applicants were both licensed engineers.

Ms. Bartholomew said that Public Works reviewed the plans and did not have any comments and added that the Public Works director, Keith LaGrange, was present if they had any comments.

Mr. Rhinehart asked if Mr. LaGrange had looked this over and had any comments. Mr. LaGrange said he personally did not review it, but he has full confidence in Clif Siverd who did review it. Mr. LaGrange added that the .6 being requested does not alarm him. Mr. Rhinehart asked if Clif had any findings or documentation. Ms. Bartholomew said that he may have sent an email to Alex Weiner, but that Mr. Weiner told her that Mr. Siverd did not have anything to add to the plans.

Mr. Rhinehart asked if the Commission needed anything for the next meeting. Ms. Gautreaux said that she would like to have Mr. Siverd's comment in the record. Ms. Bartholomew said she would get it.

Ernest Burguieres, 241 Wilkinson: His concern is that if the commission knows Phyllis Fromhurst, she is experiencing a lot of problems from the person behind her who was on Lakeshore Drive who built a huge mound up which caused draining to the sides and onto her property. He does know from an attorney's perspective that issue has come up a couple of times in Lewisburg, outside the City of Mandeville where people build retaining walls and develop their own drainage systems to make sure their property is dry. He would want to make sure that whatever system is devised here is not going to adversely affect the neighbors.

Ms. Durio asked if the natural draining of this property is to the rear and it would be changed to the front. Ms. Bartholomew said the property slopes from the front, on Lakeshore, down.

Brian Froeba, 1617 Lakeshore, Applicant: The elevation shots on the plan are higher on the sides of the property and lower in the middle. They believe that is due to an existing house that was demolished years ago and no fill being added. The elevation they were wanting to set the house at is typically one foot above the centerline of the street, which is at about 2.4' so they are setting the house at 3.5'. The existing lot typically drains to the south which is Lakeshore Drive. They are not adding much fill, maybe only one load of dirt. The existing neighbor's property has a slab elevation of about 4.25' from looking at the elevation shots

and he has hired Kelly McHugh to go out and confirm that. They would not be elevated above the neighboring property.

Mr. Rhinehart asked if the fill was only underneath the house within the footprint of the slab. Mr. Froeba said that was correct other than the gravel driveway.

Ms. Durio asked if it was anticipated that the property would drain to the sides and the swale would bring it to the front. Mr. Froeba said that was correct. He added that when they say swale it is not going to be a defined ditch, it is more of a lower area that would drain out. The .15% slope was the bare minimum to achieve that.

Ms. Durio asked if there was no neighbor to the west side. Mr. Froeba said that the neighbor to the west was the one that he was getting the top of slab elevation confirmed. He added that he believed the property to the right was owned by the house to the right, but he was not 100% sure and that it is an undeveloped lot.

Mr. Rhinehart said that Bayou Castine runs right by the applicant. Ms. Bartholomew said that behind the property was an unopened right of way. Mr. Rhinehart said that he did not think anything would be developed behind the lot. Ms. Bartholomew said that Claiborne Street was not going to be improved.

Richard James, 1605 Lakeshore: He owns the property to the east side of the applicant. His only concern is that currently everything drains to the rear of the property and any change in slope could affect his property next to it. He would hope that something would be done to help water not remain on the vacant property.

Ernest Burguières, 241 Wilkinson: If the property naturally drains to the north why would you want to disrupt that natural drainage? People start improving their own little island to the detriment of their neighbors. If the water naturally drains to the north, why not encourage that? Why try to go against the flow. His house was built in 1910 and there is no fill beneath it and no slab. It is not above grade. Now there are situations where everyone is building on an ant pile of clay and there are unforeseen effects on their neighbors.

Mr. Adams asked what the City Engineer thought. Ms. Bartholomew said that Mr. Siverd reviewed the plans and did not have anything to add to it. She clarified that what the commission is looking at is not how the property drains, they are requesting an amount of fill to go underneath the structure. When they go to permitting Public Works would review the residential drainage plan to ensure that there is no adverse impact. She added that the request they are looking at is to allow an additional six inches of fill.

Mr. Rhinehart asked the applicants what the impact would be if they did not add the fill.

Allison Froeba, 1617 Lakeshore, Applicant: If you look at the elevations there is a 2.33 shown. That is a sunken depression on the lot so the water would just sit there. They are asking to bring in six inches to get it to naturally drain like the rest of the lot. The front of the building is 3.25' and the 2.9' is the existing grade. They are trying to get the slab slightly over that so it would drain south like it currently does.

Mr. Rhinehart said the concern is that it does not currently drain at all and just pools there. Ms. Froeba said that is correct. She added that the elevation on the backside of the tree is higher so there is a depression there. Their reason for asking for this variance is the slab would be at the lowest point on the lot and would have water on the slab for every rain event. They are about nine inches lower than the neighbor to the west, and for the neighbor to the right there will be a swale to take the runoff from their property to get it to drain to the road. They are not changing the direction of the drainage; they are just trying to raise the depression slightly. Mr. Froeba added that there is an existing catch basin to the east of the property by the front of the street. That would tie into the existing municipal sewer system.

Ms. Durio asked if the catch basin is shown on the side with the new swale, Mr. Froeba said it is not shown on the survey as it is not located on their property. Ms. Durio asked what side it is on, Mr. Froeba replied that it was on the east side.

Ms. Durio said her only concern is that when you look at his property from the overhead view is that he is between the applicant and Bayou Castine and the swale is on the property line itself so her only concern is to what the elevation is of the lot that is not built on and whether they would be making that essentially hold the water now.

Ms. Froeba said that they shot elevations of their property line and the swale is inside their property line and is slightly lower. The property to the right would be at elevation and not be lower than that. The swale would be on their property, slightly lower, draining forward. The only way this works is with the additional six inches of fill.

Ms. Gautreaux said the front of the property is going to drain to the lake. Ms. Froeba said the front of the property is staying exactly like it is now. They are not changing how it flows. If you look at the elevations that are straight, they are what is existing. They are keeping those elevations like they are now.

Ms. Gautreaux said that if she understood, what was draining towards the wetlands in the rear would now be brought forward. Ms. Froeba said that from the back of their house would drain forward. Mr. Froeba said that if they look at the 3.66 elevation on the west side at about the middle of the building footprint is an existing elevation. It then goes to 2.4 in the front so the property naturally drains to the south already. They are just looking to take the depression out so there is no standing water under the house.

Mr. LaGrange said he wanted to add something. The 2.33 elevation is the lowest elevation on the property. They typically take the average of what is around the actual footprint of the structure. If he took the 2.33, 3.25, and the 2.67 they would not be at the .7 variance they are asking for. They are allowed six inches of fill. If he lands somewhere in the 3 and they are asking for 3.5 that is their six inches, so they would not need a variance.

Mr. Adams said that this is an exception not a variance as they have not claimed a hardship.

Mr. Pierce asked if there was a database which included the neighboring shots. Ms. Bartholomew said there were elevation shots she could get; they are for planning purposes and not for exact measurements, but they could provide a rough idea.

Dustin Port, representing 123 Foy, 131 Foy, 219 Foy: He does not have a problem with what is being requested. He asked if there was a universal intent for the drainage to run to the City drainage rather than to the wetlands. The reasoning is that if this was approved, he would ask for something similar for his lots. If one of the predications of this being approved was because it is redirecting towards Mandeville's infrastructure, he has three lots and would be here again.

Ms. Bartholomew said that was not part of this case. Mr. Rhinehart added that the Commission reviews on a case-by-case basis. What is in his mind is the ability to remediate the depression at the location of the slab, and the comments from Mr. LaGrange about this being nominal and potentially not needing a variance. When Mr. Port comes in front of the Commission, they can talk about it.

Ms. Durio said she had a question for Mr. LaGrange. It looks like the back of the house is lower so whatever currently drains there will continue to drain there and whatever is front will continue to drain front. The middle section would be the only thing raised and it would split from the middle of the house. Mr. LaGrange said that was correct and if they looked at the existing grades they are all around the 3.0, 3.1, and 3.15 and if they looked at the invert ditch on the west property it is at 3.1 so that is the highest grade where it would eventually drain to the back to the 2.4.

Ms. Durio said that she looks at the front draining front, the back is draining back, and the middle is a puddle. If the split the middle the direction of drainage is not changing at all. Mr. LaGrange said he would agree.

V23-05-18 – Roger Williamson requests a variance to CLURO Section 5.2.3.3. Fill Sub-Area B and Section 8.1.3. Supplemental Fence and Wall Regulations, Square A Lot 29, B-2 Highway Business District, 816 Carondelet Street

Mr. Rhinehart said he lives on this street and the applicant is right next to a gas station, so he has no problem with the fence hiding the gas station. It is pretty straight forward for him.

With all new business for the Zoning Commission finished, Mr. Rhinehart adjourned the Zoning Commission to move back to the Planning Commission to hear case P23-04-02.



Alex Weiner, Secretary



Brian Rhinehart, Chairman
Zoning Commission