I. Call To Order

With a quorum present the regular meeting of the San Marcos Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order by Chair Garber at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 28, 2019 in the City Council Chambers of the City of San Marcos, City Hall, 630 East Hopkins St., San Marcos, Texas.

II. Roll Call

Present  8 - Commissioner Maxfield Baker, Commissioner Mike Dillon, Commissioner Jim Garber, Commissioner Mark Gleason, Commissioner Kate McCarty, Commissioner Betseygail Rand, Commissioner Gabrielle Moore, and Commissioner Travis Kelsey

Absent  1 - Commissioner Matthew Haverland

III. Chairperson's Opening Remarks

IV. 30 Minute Citizen Comment Period

1. Thea Dake, 220 N. Johnson, asked the Commission to deny Item #3 on the agenda, CUP-19-11 (Purpose Built Student Housing). She mentioned a letter that another citizen had submitted that should be considered. She said it reinforces that developers are pouring money into San Marcos to make a fast buck now, leaving the City with unnecessary, empty and ugly buildings. She added many people would like the City to have a reputation for preserving history. She said if we cater to the alleged need for student housing, we are risking having an economically diverse and stable downtown. She said unique quality and character of historic buildings and neighborhoods will draw people to the city, not cookie cutter seven-story buildings. She said more information needs to be given to prove student housing is needed before we allow more development in end around historic areas. She said the Historic Survey can provide guidance on how we can develop our future with respect to the past.

2. Diana Baker, spoke about item #3 on the agenda, CUP-19-11 (Purpose Built Student Housing). She said years ago we made a bargain to put the highrises downtown, but it looks like the bargain may be broken. She said aesthetics are important, and asked the Commission to revisit the design standards so everything blends seamlessly.

3. Lisa Marie Coppoletta, 1322 Belvin, talked City staff showing up to citizen's residences at night, versus proper notification. She also talked about a friend who owes
money for taxes on her home, which is scheduled to be auctioned off. She said the City wants to buy it for affordable housing. She said affordable housing needs to give people a property tax base they can afford. She said we also need a tenants council that enforces the mold ordinances we have. She said there’s City staff at the end of her block in habitat houses that have a 4 ft. sidewalk, they’re not made to have a 5 ft. sidewalk. She said it looks like they are getting special benefits. She said the Code promised a Neighborhood Character Study, and a Historical Resources Survey, but those haven’t happened. She said instead the City is fast-tracking affordable housing, and stopping the Historical Resources Survey, and that’s about to be a death warrant for her block.

4. Sara Lee Underwood Myers, 1415 Harper Dr., spoke about the City being transparent with citizens. She said there were three recovery meetings about FEMA money no one was invited to. She said when we talk about the transportation issues, all rules should apply to the City first. She said the City Manager and the Transportation Committee should consider City employees who live within 10 miles ride their bikes to work so citizens can get a parking space. She said there should be 15 minute parking in front of every City building we get services from. She also said the City should follow the same rules developers follow.

5. Paula Hamilton said she never dreamed that City Council and the Planning & Zoning Commission would allow such drastic changes so that we don’t recognize the City. She said San Marcos has been recognized for its history, beauty and charm. She said history is disappearing daily, and you can’t bring it back. She said too many bars and bedrooms for dollars are doing nothing to improve the town. She said the downtown has had enough, and asked the Commission to preserve what we have now.

6. Roland Saucedo, 211 Ebony St., spoke about Item #5, the SMTX 4 All presentation. He said he is the only member on the Housing Taskforce that is a citizen at large. He said the Taskforce has done a good job, and they have come up with a valuable and much needed product to meet the needs of the diverse population. He asked the Commission to keep in mind that the presentation is not a final document, just an update on what they’ve accomplished so far, and what future plans are. He asked the Commission to postpone rezoning anything until the Historic Survey has been received in its completion, until the SMTX 4 All plan has been completed, and until the innovation district has said what their intentions are.

7. Patricia Quintero, said she was asked to come and speak because of a Facebook post she made that said what happened to our town. She said we are supposed to grow in a community, but people can’t afford what they’re building. She said they’re building for the college kids, but what about the families that can’t afford to live there. She said the apartments don’t benefit local family members who have raised their children in San Marcos. She said everything that was beautiful downtown is turning into chaos. She said she cares about giving back, and not taking away from the families. She said we need to give our children something to be proud of, not a big apartment complex downtown. She said the college students will leave, but her kids want to stay, and she would love to bring
them back to San Marcos because it is their home.

8. Rodrigo Amaya, 729 Gravel St., asked the Commission to deny the application for the Purpose Built Student Housing project on Guadalupe St. He read some points presented in a letter by Shannon Fitzpatrick. It said we are already overbuilt in terms of rent by the bed apartments in San Marcos, and that we do not need anymore. He also said the Commissioners do not reflect the population of the community, and that needs to be addressed and fixed.

9. Eric Hunter works in tourism and development. He previously lived in St. Petersburg, FL. and said there was pride in ownership there, and DIY mentality there, similar to San Marcos. He said a local tycoon bought out a local movie theatre, surrounded it with posh boutiques, and the town started to change. He said tenants started to move out. He said buildings started to pop up all over the town, and you didn't recognize it anymore. Once you say yes to brick and mortar, it's there to stay. He said we need to keep in mind moving forward who the growth is good for.

10. Linda Peterson, Broker for Remax Hill Country, does not understand the objection to Item #3 CUP-19-11 (Purpose Built Student Housing) on the agenda. She is involved in the selling of the property. She said we are a university town, and you cannot stop what's coming, but you can plan for it. She said the property is zoned MF-5 for this kind of project. She added that there is traffic no one has accounted for, and there has been no road growth. She said the downtown is not going to survive because of the Belvin St. folks, it will survive because of the university. She said the City wants the university kids downtown, bringing money in, and keeping traffic out.

11. Samantha Burdick works in property management in San Marcos and said she's familiar with what students and the City needs. She said we don't need more student housing because we have too much. She said if we keep adding more, we will hurt the student housing business, the Historic District, and downtown businesses. She said it is known that enrollment is down, so there's actually been less students in San Marcos in the past three years than there's ever been. She said we are pushing out the people who want to be here. She she we have too many beds, don't keep adding more.

12. Camille Phillips, PO Box 172, asked Commission to deny Item #3 on the agenda, CUP-19-11 (Purpose Built Student Housing). She said we need to preserve downtown, saying it gives us character and helps us to be an independent town. She added that Texas State enrollment has been flat for about three years, and we don't need more student complexes. She said San Marcos floods, and the dark side of density is disaster. She added the more people we have in a small area, the more people we have at risk, and the more people we have needing to be rescued when there is a disaster. She said the developer should go to an area that doesn't flood. She said we need to get out of the rent by the bedroom business, and college students are being extorted by these complexes.
CONSENT AGENDA

1. Consider approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of April 23, 2019.

2. PC-19-04_03 (Milbrook Park Phase 1A) Consider a request by Pricilla Flores, P.E., on behalf of McCarty SLF II, LP, for a Final Plat of approximately 17.18 acres, out of the Nathaniel Huishart Survey, Abstract No. 230, and the Cyrus Winkle Survey, Abstract No. 474, creating 40 residential lots, located at the intersection of East McCarty Drive and Wassar Boulevard. (W. Parrish)

A motion was made by Commissioner Baker, seconded by Commissioner Dillon, that the Consent Agenda be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

For:  8 - Commissioner Baker, Commissioner Dillon, Commissioner Garber, Commissioner Gleason, Commissioner McCarty, Commissioner Rand, Commissioner Moore and Commissioner Kelsey

Against:  0

Absent:  1 - Commissioner Haverland

PUBLIC HEARINGS

3. CUP-19-11 (Purpose Built Student Housing) Hold a public hearing and consider a request by 75 Sylvan Street for a Conditional Use Permit to allow a Purpose Built Student Housing development on located on Guadalupe Street between San Antonio Street and MLK Drive. (W. Parrish)

Chair Garber opened the Public Hearing.

Will Parrish, Planner, gave an overview of the project.

Christian Cerria, applicant, gave a presentation on the project.

1. Juan Miguel Arredondo, 112 Azolar St. spoke in favor of the item. He said he calls San Marcos home, and has seen the community change in the last 27 years, however the block in question has looked about the same. He asked that if the Commission approves the project that they direct City staff to work with the developers to make the facade of the building blend in so there is continuity in architectural standards downtown. He also asked the Commission to direct City staff to work with the developer and address any flooding concerns. He also said that when it's not university property, the tax base for student housing disproportionately benefits San Marcos CISD schools, and that has an affect on citizens who have called San Marcos home for decades. He said he would like to see money spent in our neighborhoods to make improvements, but if we use our tax
dollars to do that in place of developers, then we won’t be able to make those improvements.

2. Roland Saucedo, 211 Ebony St., said everything that is wrong with the project has been laid out in the presentation, and the Commission should deny it. He said the building will be like an Iconic Village situation. He said the Fire Department has said the building is too long, and there will be no way to evacuate or even get to people in a timely manner during an emergency. He added there’s not enough entrances to the alley. He added there’s already enough traffic on Guadalupe St. to deal with. He said it won’t be safe for students living there to access the building from the alley or Guadalupe St.

3. Rusty Cannaday spoke in opposition of the item. She said she moved to San Marcos because it was a small, charming City, and the University was an added bonus. She said the town is changing too fast, and its losing its character and history. She said the buildings are not historic, but the telephone building is, and she hopes the City is not letting it be torn down. She said that she’s not opposed to progress, but a building of this size so close to the square is the destruction of our downtown. She said we don’t need more student housing. She said the students will leave, and retirees and business people are who are making it grow. She said the building is a monstrosity and someone will make a movie and call it ‘The Monster that ate San Marcos.’

4. Lisa Marie Coppolatta, 1322 Blevin, spoke in opposition of the item. She said density means flooding. She said a sink hole will erupt downtown because we have multiple high rises being built over the Aquifer Recharge Zone. She said the City staff needs to finish what they started, and finish the Historical Preservation Survey, and Neighborhood Character Study. She said there were 16 bullet points on staff’s presentation because the project is a bad idea. She said traffic is so bad because of road construction, and the only reason we’re getting the project is because of financial interest. She said it’s an unsafe building, and taxpayers will pay for the infrastructure.

5. Marianne Moore, 2930 Summit Ridge Dr., spoke in opposition of the item. She said in the last five years she has watched our historic downtown become a playground for 20 year-olds. She said she comes downtown less now because there isn’t much retail targeted for her, or restaurants she can’t find parking for. She said any apartments built close to the university will become student housing, whether designated or not. She said Concho Commons isn’t even finished yet or occupied, and asked how another apartment complex could be needed. She said downtown San Marcos should reflect all of us in town.

6. Mike Scanio, spoke in opposition of the item. He practices law, and owns the building approximately one block from where this project would take place. He also spoke on behalf of Larry Murphy, who has the historic building next to his. He said they were the first two people who restored the buildings on the square in the 1970s when they moved their offices there. He said you can see what comes from good planning and ideas. He said the building he’s in now has been there for almost 130 years. He said the project will
change the downtown. He said he picks up the trash and cleans on Monday mornings, and an influx of people there will make that more difficult. He asked what the legacy of student housing would be, versus that of a building built 130 years ago.

7. John Hohn spoke in opposition of the item. He owns the building at 110 E. San Antonio St. He said he spent a lot of money restoring the tin building, so it complies with every historical requirement. He said it’s one of two buildings of which the historical area was based. He thinks the student housing project will destroy the character of the downtown.

8. Jay Hebert, Sierra Circle, spoke in opposition of the item. He said he doesn’t understand why the City continues to revise its Master Plan by granting rezoning exemptions to developers that are not residents of San Marcos. He said the City in years past regularly won awards for its charming square and Main St. development, but the construction of a block-long monolithic apartment complex will destroy this character. He said the character can be saved if the Commission says no. He added that these developers often pursue unscrupulous business practices, with over 11 code violations in the leases, exploiting students.

Chair Garber closed the Public Hearing.

Discussion ensued. Commissioner Kelsey asked for a study on Purpose Built Student Housing.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kelsey, seconded by Commissioner Rand, that CUP-19-11 (Purpose Built Student Housing) be recommended for denial. The motion carried by the following vote:

For: 7 - Commissioner Baker, Commissioner Dillon, Commissioner Garber, Commissioner Gleason, Commissioner McCarty, Commissioner Rand and Commissioner Kelsey

Against: 1 - Commissioner Moore

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Haverland

4. ZC-19-07 (Centerpoint: Road and Old Bastrop Highway) Hold a public hearing and consider a request by La Kings, LLC, for a zoning change from “SC” SmartCode to “LI” Light Industrial for approximately 398 acres, more or less, out of the J.H. Yearby Survey located at the intersection of Centerpoint Road and Old Bastrop Highway. (W. Parrish)

Chair Garber opened the Public Hearing.

Shannon Mattingly, Director of Planning & Development Services, gave an overview of the request.

1. John Meeks, 103 'W. Laurel Ln., spoke in favor of the item. He owns acreage across street from proposed property site. Spoke in favor of the item. He said he wasn’t excited about the Light Industrial use, but appreciated the clarification from staff. He said the
project under consideration is a large and interesting economic development opportunity. He said he has done a lot of research on the project to better understand the impact of data centers calling on people across the U.S. with data centers in their community to better understand what the impact is from data centers. He said Amazon Web Services is the largest operators of one of these centers. He said web services is a fast growing industry. He said from the work he’s done, he’s not sure if the data will increase the value of his property, but it will not decrease it. He said the construction of a data center will be an enormous benefit to our City and citizens.

Chair Garber closed the Public Hearing.

Chair Garber reopened the Public Hearing.

2. Marian Johnson (corner Old Bastrop Hwy, Centerpoint Rd.), She said she doesn’t want more truck traffic and warehouses like the Clovis Barker area is. She spoke in opposition. She said she hasn’t been informed about what the project is actually going to be, but would like to know what Light Industrial entails. She said it’s a good area for housing and shopping, and that’s what she would like to see it be.

Chair Garber reclosed the Public Hearing.

Discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gleason, seconded by Commissioner McCarty, that ZC-19-07 (Centerpoint Road and Old Bastrop Highway) be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

For: 7 - Commissioner Dillon, Commissioner Garber, Commissioner Gleason, Commissioner McCarty, Commissioner Rand, Commissioner Moore and Commissioner Kelsey

Against: 1 - Commissioner Baker

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Haverland

NON-CONSENT AGENDA

5. Receive a staff presentation and hold discussion regarding the SMTX 4 All Housing Initiative.

Abigail Gillfillan, Planning Manager, gave a presentation of the project.

V. Question and Answer Session with Press and Public.

There were no questions from the Press or Public.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m.
Notice of Assistance at the Public Meetings

I certify that the attached notice and agenda of items to be considered by the Planning and Zoning Commission was removed by me from the City Hall bulletin board on the __________________________ day of ________________________

______________________________________________ Title:

Jim Garber, Chair

ATTEST: ______________________

Cesly Burrell, Recording Secretary