

Monument Planning Commission, Dec. 10

# Plans approved for Service Street Automotive and Natural Grocers

By Nancy Wilkins

On Dec. 10, the Monument Planning Commission voted to approve the final Planned Development (PD) site plan for Service Street Automotive. The commissioners also voted to approve rezoning from Planned Industrial Development (PID) to PD, the final plat, and final PD site plan for Natural Grocers.

## Permits conditional upon Triview letter

All motions passed for both Natural Grocers and Service Street Automotive with the requirement that Triview Metropolitan District issues a "will serve" approval letter for both. Planning Director Mike Pesicka said the letters must be submitted to the Planning Department prior to issuing any permits.

## Service Street Automotive: overnight parking not permitted

Service Street Automotive plans to build a 4,480-square-foot facility in the Monument Ridge shopping center on the southeast corner of Struthers Road and Baptist Road, on the vacant 1.36-acre lot directly south of the Chase bank. The main entrance will face west on Struthers Road.

Although Pesicka said overnight parking, under the current PD zoning for this site, is not permitted, the commissioners unanimously approved the final PD zoning for Service Street Automotive.

This PD zone is currently intended for primarily commercial use, such as a grocery store. A PID is an industrial zone for manufacturing, processing, research facilities, outdoor storage, warehousing, and electrical substations.

## Natural Grocers relocating near I-25 and Baptist

Natural Grocers plans to construct a 15,000-square-foot store on the north side of Baptist Road, just east of I-25 and west of Jackson Creek Parkway on 1.69 acres. The new store is expected to have a kitchen for classes and demonstrations as well as a community room. The existing store on Highway 105 is expected to close in June or July.

## Left turn onto Baptist near I-25 exit problematic

Natural Grocers is requesting an expansion of the existing cut in the existing median to allow left turns onto eastbound Baptist Rd. from the store's stub access between Jackson Creek Parkway and the northern on-ramp for I-25 Exit 156. Outgoing traffic from the new store's location next to the former Foxworth-Galbraith hardware store lot, would turn left after crossing the existing three westbound Baptist Road traffic lanes, then merge with into the left eastbound lane with traffic coming from I-25. Pesicka said the Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority "okayed" the left turn, and the county also approved the left turn with a provision to review the turn in the future.

The county must review the left turn for any future development in the area. According to Pesicka, at some point the left turn will probably be closed due to the volume of traffic merging from the I-25 exit ramp. If the left turn from Baptist is closed, Pesicka said future developers will have to build an access road within the vacant property on the northwest corner of Jackson Creek Parkway and Baptist Road that may connect to the Blevins Buckle Trail entrance to the southeast corner of Monument Marketplace (by the O'Reilly Auto Parts store) at the expense of devel-

opers or the property owners.

## Equity Ventures pays fee instead of dedicating land

Equity Ventures, the applicant for Natural Grocers, indicated it will pay the \$7,068 fee as a "replacement" for dedicating .08 acre of land to the town. The report from Pesicka to the planning commissioners indicated the land was part of Regency Park, annexed in the mid-1980s. Either proceeds from the fee or new land is required to be given to Monument to replace open space or parkland being converted into development.

## No issue with Preble's mouse habitat

Because a portion of Natural Grocers' plat contains a mapped use of protected Preble's mouse habitat, the Planning Commission required Equity Ventures to submit a biological assessment to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The USFWS said the property does not contain critical Preble's mouse habitat that must be preserved.

## Store drawings elicit varied comments from commissioners

The commissioners and the public were able to view several architectural drawings of the proposed Natural Grocers store.

Commissioner Kathy Spence made several comments on the stores' aesthetics: "I'll be going past that every day and I'm going to have to look at this." "What can we do to make the sides [of the buildings] look better? ... I feel like I'm walking into a big box.... I really don't think it looks like what we've got out there. I don't think it's going to look that nice."

Commissioner John Dick comment-

ed: "Beauty is in the eye on the beholder, it looks fine to me." Spence continued, "You are an upscale grocery store.... I just don't see that you reflect what your store really is and what our community is combined." Commissioner David Gwisdalla said, "We want you to meet the same architectural style."

Chairman Ed Delaney suggested growing plants or vines on the sides of the building, saying, "Natural vegetation would be more in tune to what Natural Grocers is all about." Spence commented, "Add some elements on the outside to make it better." Spence suggested adding wood or breaking up the sides with some architectural features, and said, "Ramp it up a bit."

Commissioner Missy Wood asked about the expected performance of the new store, and received this response: "It's a location that we're excited about. We think it's an area that will perform."

All motions to accept the proposals for Natural Grocers passed, with Spence voting no on the final PD site plan. Commissioner Jim Fitzpatrick abstained from voting and refrained from participating in any discussion with Natural Grocers after announcing a personal conflict of interest early in the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at about 8 p.m.

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The Monument Planning Commission meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. on 645 Beacon Lite Road and makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees. Visit [www.townofmonument.org](http://www.townofmonument.org) for more information, or call 719-481-2954. Meetings are open to the public.

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Monument Board of Trustees, Dec. 15

# New trustee appointed

By Lisa Hatfield

At the Dec. 15 Monument Board of Trustees meeting, the trustees appointed a new trustee and heard monthly department reports from town staff. Lt. Steve Burk swore in a new police officer.

## Two trustee candidates interviewed; Jeff Smith appointed

Two candidates to replace Trustee Stan Gingrich, who resigned Dec. 1, spoke to the board about their experience and reasons for wanting to be appointed as the new trustee. Two other candidates had expressed interest in the position but did not attend the Dec. 15 meeting despite notification from Town Clerk Cynthia Si-rochman.

Jeff Smith, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel pilot, has lived in Monument

for over two years. His responses to trustees' questions included:

- I love this place. It's time for me to continue to serve the community.
- I hate change for change's sake the way they do it in the military.
- It is odd how the system of water distribution functions here. All the intertwined special districts. Hard for citizens to know which entity to approach with questions.
- Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District is a puzzle, an enigma wrapped inside a Russian babushka doll. Recently, unaccounted-for water was close to 25 percent of its total volume. I am paying for this?
- Taxation should be the last resort of the government and used to fulfill the

basic needs of the community such as fire, police, and other essential services.

- I don't believe in blank checks or open authority to increase taxes without accountability through authorized itemization.
- The quasi-judicial process requires that I can't impose personal opinions on matters that are legal. The past experience I bring to the table is "rational thought" not governed by emotion.

Trustee Jeff Kaiser made a motion to vote on Smith's appointment. Mayor

Rafael Dominguez then told the trustees that there was another candidate, Melissa Wood, whose name had not been listed on the agenda.

Missy Wood, with a career in telecommunications industry field operations, has lived in Monument for over four years and has been serving on the Monument Planning Commission for the last two years. Her responses to trustees' questions included:

- I want to serve the community, because I have had so much support along the way, it's time to give back and make sure community is a good

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