

December 11, 2002 Planning & Zoning Meeting

4 1/8/03 and
12/11/03

Powell United Methodist Church Expansion Preliminary Dev. Plan

Commentary for the Minutes:

The Commission was assured at the initial meeting reviewing this project that demographic data as to what percentage of Powell UMC members are Powell residents. At a subsequent meeting, not addressing this particular project, I asked staff if that information had been made available, and was told that there was no need to produce it until such time as this issue was brought back to the Commission...so, may we have it, please ?.

Staff has stated in today's Staff Report that it would be "easy to say to the church that they should only grow to the amount that can be handled by the site or, if you cannot, go find another site." Further, Staff states that "it is more difficult to say that the church is a vital and important member of the community that we should find solutions that allow for an expansion that will meet their needs...." and so on as presented to the Commission.

In my opinion, the opposite is true. I am relatively new to the Commission, and I've sat here and observed more than participated while going through the learning curve, but have noticed that Staff, over the time I've been on the Commission, appears to display a consistent effort to justify and accommodate acceptance of variances by the various applicants coming before us.

That said, I believe the "easy" route is to again try to accommodate an applicant in a project that Staff implies is growing beyond "the amount that can be handles by the site", Rather than taking what in my opinion is the "more difficult" stance of just saying NO! No because the project is too aggressive for the site; No because it oversteps too many of the boundries set by our zoning codes to protect the physical culture of our community, and the property ownership values of the adjacent neighborhood and residents, who should not be made to suffer should this commission fail to protect them by not making that "difficult decision"; No because we need to uphold the community standards currently in force that are there not only to protect our residents, but to protect us from ourselves when we find it difficult to withhold approval for something that seems noble, but in truth serves only a select few over the established rights and codified expectations of our legal residents; No because it will create havoc with traffic on the main road into and out of Powell on Sundays; and No because this expansion is just too big for the site...and we should not be afraid to say so and act accordingly. We should not refrain from making the "difficult decision" of saying No, rather than taking the easier path of accommodation...in my opinion.

Donald DePalma