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Office park plan approved

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Commissioners faced a city divided Monday night as they voted for the second and final time on what Commissioner Regina Smithson called “the most emotional issue” in memory, ultimately approving the rezoning the property on the corner of Virginia Way and Granny White Pike.

The 55-acre PLC tract, owned by John Cooper, is now committed to a split use. Twenty-six acres of the property will be developed into an office park while the remaining 29 acres are being gifted to the city to become a passive park. One of the numerous restrictions on development ensures that Cooper will also gift a monetary amount to the city of Brentwood, paying for park development.

Emotions were running high Monday as portions of the capacity crowd insisted traffic and safety concerns outweighed any good in the project.

“Mr. Cooper isn’t offering us a park, he’s offering us a park on land he would have had to use as a buffer any way,” said Jonathan Meadows, a Williamsburg Road resident. “I think Mr. Cooper is using this park to distract us from the reality. This is not good for Brentwood.”

Smithson echoed Meadows’ sentiments, calling Cooper “a star for playing it like this” saying he failed to follow her advice to bring his plans before the neighbors most affected in order to come to a more universally acceptable plan, pitting neighbor against neighbor, and putting a quick timeline on an item that she said “should have had a lot more time.”

Smithson also took issue with a traffic study by long-time city traffic analysis provider RPM, who’s study said the increase in traffic would not be significantly greater with the four office buildings than it would have been if the former zoning, allowing two office buildings and 33 houses.

Others disagreed. The main proponents for the commercial park included Brentwood Residents For Green Space and members of the Brentwood Cool Springs Chamber of Commerce.

“I view it as a win-win situation,” said Bert Bosse with the Chamber. “It will be zoned with restrictions. We’ll also retain a large corporate tenant.”

Three of the proposed buildings on the PLC tract have been mentioned as a possible future home for Tractor Supply Co. who currently operate out of another, smaller location in Maryland Farms.

Jim Peach is one of the property owners selling a portion of the PLC tract to Cooper. He said the Coopers were being “good stewards of the land” adding that 85 percent of the property he was selling them was being gifted to the city.

In the end Commissioners Anne Dunn and Smithson voted against the rezoning, with Commissioners Betsy Crossley, Bill Youree, Paul Webb, and Joe Sweeney, and Mayor Joe Reagan voting in favor and passing the proposal.

Two of the four buildings will have to wait for Brentwood’s sewer moratorium on the property to pass before they can begin construction, the other two could begin soon. Several provisions of the approval must be completed before construction can begin, like 10-foot berms with irrigation to help buffer noise

and views of the construction from neighboring properties.

Other restrictions include road improvements and special fixtures to avoid light pollution.

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