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ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD MOTION 081711 4b

Date: August 17, 2011

Subject: 311, 313, and 315 Bowie Street Permit #10617196

Motioned By: Mary Gay Maxwell

Seconded by: Mary Ann Neely

Recommendation

The Environmental Board provides **no recommendation** to the request to remove a heritage tree with a stem greater than 30 inches as allowed under Land Development Code 28-8-643 on the case listed as 311, 313 and 315 Bowie Street Permit #10671796. A no recommendation action by the Environmental Board will be forwarded to the Planning Commission.

Rationale

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This case is the first in a potentially large number of similar variance requests that will come before the Environmental Board for our consideration. The issue is larger than Heritage Trees, including the goal of a densely populated downtown with the associated zoning already in place from former council actions.

The Downtown Plan does not adequately address Heritage Trees in the downtown area, and we urge the Planning Commission to initiate a process to consider ways to include heritage trees in the planning for a dense downtown.

The canopy of the area is in danger of being lost, and there needs to be an effort made to retain the canopy of the downtown area in ways that both allow for dense development and retain the cultural, aesthetic and environmental qualities necessary for a livable environment downtown.

For these reasons, we urge the Planning Commission to initiate changes to the Downtown Plan that will incorporate Heritage Trees into the plan.

Regarding this case, the Planning Commission has authority to place additional mitigation on the variance request that the Environmental Board does not have the authority to do. Suggestions for possible action by the Planning Commission could include increased mitigation for this tract, such as:

- 1) A mitigation amount that exceeds the staff mitigation of \$19,200 for the Heritage Pecan tree because the formula from which the amount is derived is inadequate;
- 2) Significant contribution toward the restoration of Shoal Creek along the border of the property where a hike and bike trail will be constructed in the near future.

Vote 5-0-0-1-1

For: Gary, Maxwell, Neely, Schissler, and Walker

Against:

Abstain:

Recuse: Anderson

Vacancy: One

Absent:

Approved By:

Robin Gary
Environmental Board Vice Chair

Note: Board member Bob Anderson recused himself due to a potential conflict of interest.

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