

DICKSON

Dickson fuel terminal site plan denied in do-over vote

Chris Gadd Nashville Tennessean

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The Dickson fuel terminal site plan was denied Thursday in what was essentially a second-chance vote by the county planning commission after initially approving the plan in April.

The site plan was put back on the agenda for the special-called, YouTube-streamed meeting that took place Thursday night after a terminal opposition group and two citizens filed a “writ of certiorari” in Dickson County Chancery Court alleging that original vote should be “void and of no effect” due to inadequate meeting notice and refusing to allow residents to speak, among other issues.

The final plat for the fuel terminal, which was a new item on Thursday's agenda, was also denied by the planning commission vote.

While the meeting took place, a large crowd outside voiced their opposition.

“As county attorneys, while we disagree with those allegations and do not think there were procedural problems, approval of the site plan could cure some of those procedural problems,” said county attorney Tim Potter to the planning commission.

Potter said Titan Partners requested to have the site plan consideration put back on Thursday night’s agenda.

After commissioners questioned the company on their traffic plan, and shared concerns about the widening, straightening and extension of 2-Mile Road, a motion was made by planning commissioner David Brogdon to deny the site plan.

Brogdon based his motion on “insufficient information including but not limited to the access to Highway 46, the cooperation with the City of Dickson in accessing 2-Mile Road to (Highway) 46, and the impact on the water source...”

The motion passed by 6-4 vote.

Questions about traffic study

Planning Commissioner R.J. Comer questioned Titan Partners and local engineer Darrell James about the company's traffic study and revised traffic study.

Comer criticized the Titan team, stating he questioned the "methodology" used and added that "the data you provided to us can't be relied upon."

Comer said the planning commission's request in April was for an updated traffic study after school started, noting that school does not start until Aug. 3. He asked about how households were counted in the study, saying that would help determine the number of students and bus routes. Comer also questioned the use of the federal 2017 National Household Transportation Survey. He quoted a sentence from the survey's documents stating that users "should be cautious when computing estimates for smaller population groups such as specific geographies."

James explained that his Dickson-based firm hired a traffic engineer to conduct the traffic survey and had worked on it in order to continue providing the planning commission with information until school was back in session. James also noted that due to COVID-19, the school schedule has been uncertain.

"There is no rush," Comer said.

James said Titan Partners would conduct another study when school was back in session.

Robert Wetterau, who made the initial motion in April for the company to provide updated traffic figures when school returned, said his intention was not to delay the development.

Wetterau, who voted for approving the site plan at both meetings, said "My intention was for (Titan Partners) to go ahead and proceed."

2-Mile Road work concerns

Brogdon asked what assurances the planning commission has that 2-Mile Road will be improved from the proposed terminal site all the way to Highway 46.

The western portion of 2-Mile Road, closest to Highway 46, is in the city of Dickson while the rest is in the county.

Brogdon said he has “talked and met with city officials and my understanding is they have no intention to change 2-Mile Road in the city limits at all.”

City of Dickson staff said Titan Partners has not yet presented anything for approval by the city council as of Friday morning.

The county applied in May for State Industrial Access program funds to smooth out a curve on 2-Mile Road that currently makes a hard right turn behind Holiday Inn Express to run parallel with Interstate 40.

Brogdon was concerned that the road would only be partially improved, causing a bottleneck issue, if the city was opposed to improvements.

Tom White, the Nashville-based attorney representing Titan Partners, said the company is “willing to fund” the road improvements.

“We are willing to make a safe road. It needs to be improved. We recognize that,” said White, adding that he believed it was unlikely the City of Dickson would oppose road improvements.

Brogdon also asked about possible environmental issues in the area and communication with the Water Authority of Dickson County.

“There is a lot of regulatory oversight over this particular development. It can be TDEC. It can be a number of different issues,” White said. “We are aware that we need to comply and submit the requested information to every agency.”

Brogdon also asked about delaying the site plan vote.

“My client is not willing to delay or defer the matter because we have made a clear commitment to improve the road to the safe standards Mr. James has discussed with this group already,” White said.

Throughout the nearly two-hour meeting, chants of “No Fuel Depot” could be heard from the large crowd gathered outside on the Charlotte Square. The crowd included the opposition group as well as members of the Plumbers & Pipefitters Union who supported the project.

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