



City of Conway Arkansas  
Planning and Development

# **2016 Conway Planning and Development Department**

YEAR END REPORT

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## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT STAFF

Director - Bryan Patrick, AICP  
 Assistant Director of Planning - Jason Lyon  
 Planner - J. Scott Grummer  
 GIS Coordinator/Planner - Michael Sakinejad  
 Planning Technician - Beth Sketoe

## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

### Conway Planning Commission

Planning Department staff provided support for the Conway Planning Commission, including the coordination of monthly meetings. Planning Commission activities and reports were coordinated by Director of Planning, Bryan Patrick, Assistant Director of Planning, Jason Lyon, and Planning Technician, Beth Sketoe. Analyses were presented to the Planning Commission concerning:

### Rezoning

20 rezoning requests were reviewed by the Planning Commission and within the Planning Department. 17 were approved as requested, 1 was modified then approved, and 2 were denied. Bryan Patrick and Jason Lyon completed staff reviews of these rezoning requests.

REZONINGS			
Month	Zone Change	Acreage	Action
January	R-1 to C-3	0.8121	Approved
February	R-1 to S-1	1.6	Approved
March	R-2A to S-1	6.06	Denied
April	A-1 to O-2	4.26	Approved
May	A-1 to I-3	2.0	Approved
	R-2A to R-2	0.3	Approved
June	R-1 to O-2	1.4	Approved
	R-2A to PUD	5.87	Approved
July	R-2A to O-3	0.70	Approved
	R-1 to RU-1	3.0	Approved
August	R-1 and O-1 to MF-3	4.31	Approved
September	I-1 to R-1	2.66	Approved
	A-1 to O-2	1.01	Approved
	A-1 to PUD	14	Approved
October	I-3 to C-3 requested	24.47	Approved as C-2
	A-1 to I-1	1.81	Approved
November	A-1 to C-2	1.5	Approved
	R-1 to O-1	1.64	Denied
December	C-3 to I-3	3.15	Approved
	C-4 to O-1	5.61	Approved

**Conditional Use Permit Requests**

15 conditional use permit requests were reviewed by the Planning Commission and within the Planning Department. Of these, 13 were approved, 1 was modified then approved, and 1 was not considered by the Planning Commission as the applicant's circumstances changed. Bryan Patrick and Jason Lyon completed staff reviews of these conditional use permit requests.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS			
Month	Use	Acreage	Action
January	Bank	0.9756	Approved
February	Religious Activities	0.75	Approved
	Commercial Amusement & Restaurant	1.70	Approved
May	Automotive Paint & Bodywork, Vehicle Repair	2.0	Approved
	Adult Daycare	n/a	Approved
June	Amendment to Permit No. 1288 which allows General Retail & Hotel	4.12	Approved
	Amendment to Permit No. 1323 which allows a public stable, equestrian related events, an events center, and a restaurant.	5.45	Approved
	Religious Activities	1.4	Approved
July	Self-storage facility	3.0	Approved
	General Retail	6.0	Approved
August	Nursing Home	12.8	Approved
October	Amendment to Permit No. 1353 which allows a private mental health counseling practice	0.28	Approved
November	Non-residential uses in the Territorial Jurisdiction	22.94	Approved
	General Retail	8.17 <sup>1</sup>	Approved <sup>1</sup>
	Single-Family Residence in an O-1 Zoning District	1.64	N/A <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This request was approved, but only as allowing jewelry sales and fabrication at 655 Dave Ward Drive, Suite 102. Should the applicant wish to expand the permit limitations additional review by Planning and Development and consideration of possible rezoning will be required.

<sup>2</sup>The applicant's application for rezoning to O-1 which would have made the conditional use permit necessary was denied and therefore the conditional use permit request was not considered by the Planning Commission.

**Annexation/City Limit Square Mileage**

2016 saw two (2) annexation actions, both being 'islands' completely surrounded by the incorporated limits of the City, for a total of 4.48 acres which increased the square mileage of the city from 46.29 to **46.30** square miles.

ANNEXATIONS				
Month	Name	Incoming Zone	Acreage	Action
March	Island Annexations	A-1	4.48	n/a <sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> As the properties being annexed were completely surrounded by the incorporated limits of the City, Planning Commission approval was not required so the petition to annex these properties was forwarded directly to the City Council for consideration.

### Building Moving Permit Requests

1 building moving permit request was reviewed by the Planning Commission and within the Planning Department. Mr. Ed McNutt's request to move a single-family residence from 43 Mill Pond Road to 259 Mill Pond Road was approved in April. Bryan Patrick completed the staff review of this building moving permit request.

### Board of Zoning Adjustment

The Conway Planning Commission acts as the zoning variance review authority, the Board of Zoning Adjustment. Planning Department staff provided support for the Planning Commission/Board of Zoning Adjustment. Board of Zoning Adjustment activities and reports were coordinated by Bryan Patrick, Jason Lyon, and Beth Sketoe. Analyses were presented to the Planning Commission/Board of Zoning Adjustment concerning:

Month	Request	Action
July	King request to allow reduced front and interior side building setbacks, 1915 Arrowhead Lane	Denied
August	Hepner request to allowed reduced front and side building setbacks, Lots 2, 3, 5, and 6, Makenna Cove Subdivision	Approved

### Ordinance/Resolution Amendments

#### Zoning Ordinance

The Conway Zoning Ordinance was updated in December 2016 to include further definition to exterior architectural detail development review requirements, the elimination of the S-2 and C-4 zoning districts, and some minor changes to allowed uses, and development review fees.

### Subdivisions/Replats

#### Subdivision

11 subdivisions were reviewed by the Planning Commission and within the Planning Department. A total of 8 subdivisions were filed in 2016, of which 4 were submitted in 2015. Scott Grummer, completed staff reviews of these subdivisions.

#### Replat

22 replats were reviewed by the Planning Commission and within the Planning Department. 18 replats were filed in 2016, 2 of which were originally submitted in 2015. Scott Grummer, completed staff reviews of these replats.

#### Expired Subdivision/Replat

No subdivisions or replats expired in 2016 due to inactivity.

#### Withdrawn Subdivision/Replat

No subdivisions and/or replats were withdrawn in 2016 and no replat(s) were/was resubmitted in a different configuration.

#### Lot Creation

Including the 2 new PUDs that were created in 2016, there were a total of 100 new single-family lots and 18 new commercial lots created. Of the subdivisions submitted for review, but not filed in 2016, there are 3 which combined have 223 new residential lots. These are anticipated to be filed in 2017.

Year	Single-Family Lots Created	Commercial Lots Created
2007	483 (+140 County)	-
2008	80	-
2009	192	-
2010	91	-
2011	41	-
2012	162	-
2013	46	-
2014	97	-
2015	140	-
2016	100	18

## Planning Department Reviews for the Mayor and City Council

The Planning Department prepared reports and information for the City Council in 2016, including three (3) street right-of-way closing requests and two (2) easement closings.

### Development Review

The Development Review standards include requirements for additional trees and landscaping, buffering of adjacent properties, cross access, joint access, reduction of curb cuts, architectural materials, etc. 32 development reviews were conducted by Wes Craiglow and Jason Lyon, one of which was withdrawn following review completion. There were nineteen (19) development reviews in 2015.

Type	Number	Acreage	Square Footage	Fees
Institutional	5	27.06	115,713	\$7,212.34
Commercial	16 <sup>4</sup>	50.21	526,667	\$18,886.82
Multi-Family	3	7.85	115,969	\$7,190.26
Office	4	6.63	89,773	5,627.72
Industrial	4	22.12	191,449	7,991.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>113.87</b>	<b>1,039,571</b>	<b>\$46,908.14</b>

<sup>4</sup> Total includes Denny's project which was withdrawn following the completed development review.

### Development Review - Proposed Changes

In early 2017, Accela civic software will be implemented. This software package will help automate Planning and Permitting input, processes, and transactions, internal data management, and will be much more efficient. The public will be able to conduct planning transactions and apply for building permits online. The software will also make inter-department development review of multi-family, office, and commercial projects more timely and efficient.

## Grants

### EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant

A \$200,000 EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant Application, applied for in 2014, was successfully awarded in 2015 to fund environmental cleanup of the former Conway Scrap Metal site. Funding began in October of 2015 with the completion of the site Cleanup Plan. By the end of 2016, \$35,518.66 of total will have been expended. These expenditures include \$171.75 for grant administration related items, \$3,429.79 for travel and training, and \$31,917.12 for consulting costs related to developing the Cleanup Plan. Bids were submitted in November 2016, with final bid tabulations to be reported to the City Council in January 2017. Cleanup will begin in the spring of 2017, with anticipated project completion and closeout by summer 2017.

### Conway Scrap Yard Design Grant

An EPA Urban Waters Grant Application was submitted in collaboration with the University of Arkansas Community Design Center (UACDC) in December 2015 for \$60,000 to go towards schematic designs for the former Conway Scrap Metal Project. This grant application was unsuccessful. In addition, the City applied in collaboration with the UACDC to the National Endowment for Arts "Art Works" grant for \$100,000 for design. A preliminary approval of this grant in the amount of \$50,000 was given in November of 2016, with confirmation to be provided in the first quarter of 2017. Design work is expected to begin in late spring 2017, completing a year later in 2018. Deliverables from this design work will be utilized in 2017 to apply for additional grant funding for implementation of development of the site, in conjunction with Markham Street Road improvements in 2018

### **Arkansas Historic Preservation Program**

\$6,914 in Certified Local Government grant money was awarded to the Conway Historic District Commission, by the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, for the purpose of sending HDC representatives or staff to quarterly training meetings and the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions Forum in Mobile, Alabama. Staff and 3 Historic District Commission members attended the Forum.

### **Small Area Planning**

#### **Markham Street Neighborhood Specific Plan**

Funded by a \$200,000 grant from HUD, and facilitated by the regional planning agency, Metroplan this initiative began in 2013 by producing designs and updates to the regulating plan for the Markham Street corridor, creating designs and implementation strategies to achieve stronger connections between Downtown, Hendrix College and The Village at Hendrix, leading to revitalization of the area. Designs and plans were completed and transmitted to the City in late December 2014, which were further refined, and adopted by City Council as the MSN-SP in the Spring of 2015. In 2016, the Metroplan Board approved the funding of Markham Street improvements in support of this Jump Start Initiative. Estimated costs are approximately \$3.5 Million for street only improvements (not including utility and infrastructure) of which Metroplan will fund 80% with Conway matching 20%. Procurement for an engineering firm was completed in 2016, with contracts and design work to begin in 2017. Construction is anticipated to begin in early 2018.

#### **Pine Street Redevelopment**

With utility improvements finishing up in the beginning of 2016, work continued on the City's Public/Private half block development on Spruce and Factory Street, including the completion of drainage improvements, alley development, grading, and seeding. Final designs for marketing and promotion of units was completed at the end of 2016. Pre-sale will begin in January 2017 with construction beginning after a sufficient number of units have been contracted for sale. This 12-unit housing project, which has been in the design and development process since mid-2013, is being managed by Scott Grummer, who previously worked as the Program Manager of Community Development. This project is being funded through the Community Development Block Grant department, and is designed around a Pocket Neighborhood concept being utilized to facilitate revitalization of this neighborhood.

#### **Urban Watershed Planning**

Finished reports were received from the University of Arkansas Community Design Center (UACDC) in December 2015, which have been in process since late 2013 in conjunction with EPA grants and collaboration with the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality and Metroplan. As part of the Lake Conway Point Remove Watershed, the City of Conway's urban storm water runoff impacts the surrounding watershed. In early 2016, the City Council adopted this Urban Watershed Framework Plan, developed by the UACDC, for Conway as a guide to future planning and development around urban storm water migration. The Lake Conway Point Remove Watershed Alliance was formed as a requirement by the EPA in the development of a 9-element plan for the watershed, of which Scott Grummer is President of the Board, and acts as a liaison for the City.

## Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Jason Lyon served as the Conway GIS Coordinator and Addressing Administrator for part of 2016. Michael Sakinejad assumed the GIS Coordinator duties in June as Mr. Lyon was transitioning into the Assistant Director of Planning role. Mr. Sakinejad is a graduate of University of North Texas with a Master's Degree in Applied Geography. In the time he has been with the City, Mr. Sakinejad has developed a new look for the City of Conway webmaps. Updates to the city's interactive web maps have included increased functionality, and the deployment of a unified theme across all GIS web assets, making these online resources more intuitive for citizens and city officials. There are currently 8 interactive maps available to the public through the city's website, the most popular of which is the City Zoning map (<http://gis.cityofconway.org/zoning/>), that receives approximately 100 visitors per week. Another newly developed map tool is an application for viewing road surface conditions across the city (<http://gis.cityofconway.org/pmi/>).

GIS staff have increased internal 3D modeling capabilities by acquiring licenses for Esri (Environmental Systems Research Institute) CityEngine, an GIS/3D modeling software that allows for modeling development scenarios. In addition to increased web mapping and 3D capabilities, staff have implemented an open GIS portal, Conway OpenGIS (<http://data.conwayargis.opendata.arcgis.com/>). This portal is built on an Esri platform and leverages existing software licenses and infrastructure. Conway OpenGIS allows then public to view and download various spatial datasets as needed at no added cost to the city.

Mr. Lyon continues to be the Census contact for the City and County providing annual updates for new annexations to assist the Census in population calculations for the City and County. Mr. Lyon remains over the GIS functions for the County and provides updates to the Office of Emergency Management and Road Departments as requested. The agreement also allows the City and County continued collaboration while allowing a single GIS Dataset that may be used for the City and County operations. This cooperation provides the City Planning Department more funds to purchase software upgrades and upgrade equipment. The 2016, \$14,000 County Contract with the City was used to continue upgrades to the enterprise system used by the City and County

## Imagine Conway

The Imagine Conway website, [www.imagineconway.com](http://www.imagineconway.com), which began in 2013 as part of the Jump Start Initiative community outreach efforts, has been renewed each year as a continuation of the City's community outreach and public relations plan related to both the Jump Start grant and the EPA Brownfield grant. This site has been funded through November 2017 in order to continue these outreach efforts with the Brownfield cleanup of the former Scrap Metals Yard Project, as well as redevelopment efforts in the Markham Street and Pine Street neighborhoods.

## Workshops and Conferences

Bryan Patrick, Jason Lyon, Scott Grummer, and Wes Craiglow attended the March 2016 Arkansas Chapter of the American Planning Association Conference held in Conway. Mr. Patrick acted as a trainer at the Planning Commissioner training workshops held in Bentonville in August and Fort Smith in September.

Mr. Grummer attended the Arkansas Community Development Association annual meeting where he served on the Board as Vice-President.

Mr. Lyon attended the ESRI 2015 User Conference in San Diego and a 911 Seminar in Edmond, OK regarding Next-GEN 911 services and addressing. He also attended and graduated the URISA GIS Leadership Academy in Denver, CO.



## Memberships

Bryan Patrick and Jason Lyon retained membership in the American Planning Association and the Arkansas Chapter of the American Planning Association. Mr. Patrick and Wes Craiglow retained membership in the American Institute of Certified Planners. Mr. Patrick retained membership in the National Trust for Historic Preservation Forum, National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, and the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas. Jason Lyon retained membership in URISA (Urban and Regional Information Systems Association). Scott Grummer retained membership in the Arkansas Community Development Association, and the Lake Conway Point Remove Watershed Alliance. Michael Sakinejad retained membership in URISA and the American Association of Geographers (AAG).

## Internet/Website

In 2016, the Planning Department migrated the [www.conwayplanning.org](http://www.conwayplanning.org) website to a departmental page of [www.cityofconway.org](http://www.cityofconway.org). Prior to this time, the Planning Department maintained it's own internet presence. The [www.conwayplanning.org](http://www.conwayplanning.org) link now redirects users to the official City of Conway Planning Department webpage.

## Presentations

Bryan Patrick presented to the Faulkner County Leadership Institute in May. Mr. Patrick, along with Jason Lyon, spoke with the UCA Honors class led by Ellen Hostetter in October 2016. Scott Grummer presented to the Faulkner County Leadership Institute in October, to the 3rd year class of the University of Central Arkansas - Community Development Institute in August, and to EPA Brownfields workshops in Harrison and Little Rock in July.

## Conway Historic District Commission

The Planning Department acted as City staff for the Conway Historic District Commission (HDC). As HDC staff, Bryan Patrick and Beth Sketoe created monthly reports for the HDC which included 23 Old Conway Design Overlay District reviews. Mr. Patrick approved 3 minor projects in the Asa P. Robinson Historic District. These approvals were reported to the HDC.

The 2014 architectural survey, by Sandra Taylor Smith, of an area south of the existing Robinson Historic District was reviewed in 2016 by the Conway HDC and the Arkansas Historic Preservation program. It was determined that 2 possible National Register of Historic Places districts could possibly be created; a 22-structure district along College Avenue and a 2-structure district along Conway Boulevard. An explanatory mail-out was sent to area homeowners in December 2016 and a public information meeting was scheduled for January 2017. Based on the amount of public participation and 2017 grant funding, NRHP nominations could be created in 2017 for review by the State Historic Preservation Board. An RFP was also sent to AHPP listed preservation consultants in December soliciting quotes on nomination creation.

Mr. Patrick attended Historic District staff/commissioner training sessions held in February and April in Little Rock.

## Conway Tree Board

The Planning Department provided assistance to Kami Marsh, City Staff for the Conway Tree Board. The 2016 Arbor Day Celebration, held Saturday, November 5, 2016 at Laurel Park, hosted a crowd estimated at 500 participants and saw over 200 trees adopted. Also, the Conway Tree Board Tree Farm grew over 700 trees in 2016.

The Conway Tree Board postponed it's annual Trees in Celebration event for 2016 until February 2017. Trees in memory/honor are planted in the roundabout on Prince Street nearest Laurel Park as well as in the median. Funds for these trees are donated by families and friends. Each tree is accompanied by a 3"x5" plaque, installed at the base, noting whom the tree honors or memorializes. The Conway Tree Board will maintain these trees for their lifetime.

## **Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board**

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board (BPAB) hosted or supported multiple community events including Walk To School and Bike To School Days, EcoFest, and the Faulkner County Urban Farm Fest.

In late 2016, the City Council approved a bike share program that will place bike share stations in appropriate locations to provide internet/GPS enabled bike rentals.

## **Other Activities**

Planning staff have also worked with the Conway Public Art Committee in support of the ongoing City Hall arts display and ArtsFest. Staff also provided materials for Conway Ecofest.

Scott Grummer applied to the Clinton School of Public Service Practicum Program in February. His application was accepted, and a team of 5 students was chosen to work on a special police/community relations project for the City, which will conclude in spring 2017.

## **Personnel and Interns**

Wes Craiglow, Deputy Director of Development, resigned in June. Mr. Jason Lyon was selected to become the new Assistant Director of Planning and Development. Mr. Michael Sakinejad joined the Planning and Development department to assume the GIS Coordinator duties, the position previously held by Mr. Lyon. Makenzie Goff served an internship in the Planning Department during the summer of 2016.