

**CITY OF BILOXI
AGENDA ITEM
FACT SHEET**

Item No.:

4Q

Council Meeting Date:

January 20, 2026

ITEM TITLE: **RESOLUTION**

INTRODUCED BY: **Mayor Andrew "FoFo" Gilich**

CONTACT PERSON: **Rick Weaver, CAO**

Jerry Creel, Director of Community Development

SUMMARY EXPLANATION:

Resolution granting Conditional Use, to authorize a halfway house within an existing commercial building located within a NB Neighborhood Business zone, and identified by municipal address 2793 Fernwood Road.

Ward 5, Case No. 25-050-PC, Ronald Arant

Resolution

Ordinance _____

Public Hearing _____

Routine Agenda _____

Exhibits for Review

Contract _____

Minutes

Plans/Maps _____

Deed _____

Lease _____

Other (Specify): Application, Case Fact Sheet, floor plan

Submittal Authorization: **Council President** _____ **Mayor**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval

COUNCIL ACTION: **Motion By:** _____ **Second By:** _____

Vote:	Councilmember	Yes	No	AFR	ABST	Councilmember	Yes	No	AFR	ABST
	Gray	—	—	—	—	Tisdale	—	—	—	—
	Marshall	—	—	—	—	Glavan	—	—	—	—
	Nail	—	—	—	—	Shoemaker	—	—	—	—
	Creel	—	—	—	—					

ACTION TAKEN:

cdl/012026jpc

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**RESOLUTION GRANTING CONDITIONAL USE, TO AUTHORIZE A HALFWAY HOUSE
WITHIN AN EXISTING COMMERCIAL BUILDING LOCATED WITHIN A NB
NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS ZONE, AND IDENTIFIED BY MUNICIPAL ADDRESS
2793 FERNWOOD ROAD**

WHEREAS, on Thursday, December 18, 2025, the Biloxi Planning Commission held a public hearing in the Auditorium of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Municipal Building, 676 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, Biloxi, Mississippi, to hear Case No. 25-050-PC, Open Doors Homeless Coalition (owner) and Ronald Arant on behalf of Discipleship 33 (applicant), a request for **Conditional Use** approval, for the property identified 2793 Fernwood Road; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission members were apprised of the particulars of this case, being made cognizant of the fact that Open Doors Homeless Coalition (owner) and Ronald Arant on behalf of Discipleship 33 (applicant), had submitted this request, to authorize a Halfway House within an existing Commercial building located within a **NB Neighborhood Business** zone, and identified by municipal address 2793 Fernwood Road (i.e., Tax Parcel No. 1110L-01-036.000); and

WHEREAS, on December 18, 2025, the Biloxi Planning Commission, after listening to many neighbors and much discussion among themselves, voted 14-0-0, to recommend approval of the proposed **Conditional Use**, to authorize a Halfway House within an existing Commercial building located within a **NB Neighborhood Business** zone, and identified by municipal address 2793 Fernwood Road (i.e., Tax Parcel No. 1110L-01-036.000), having determined that said project, as presented, has been found to promote the public interest at this location; that said use has been designed, located, and proposed to be operated so that the public health, safety, and welfare will be protected; that said housing unit will not cause substantial injury to other

property(ies) in the neighborhood in which located; and

WHEREAS, the Biloxi City Council, after consideration of all facts presented, hereby adopts the report and findings of the Biloxi Planning Commission, and in so doing, determines that this Halfway House proposed for the property site identified as 2793 Fernwood Road is appropriate.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI, hereby approves the requested **Conditional Use**, to authorize a Halfway House within an existing Commercial building located within a **NB Neighborhood Business** zone, and identified by municipal address 2793 Fernwood Road (i.e., Tax Parcel No. 1110L-01-036.000), as related in Case No. 25-050-PC, Open Doors Homeless Coalition (owner) and Ronald Arant on behalf of Discipleship 33 (applicant), having determined that said project, as presented, has been found to promote the public interest at this location, that said use has been designed, located, and proposed to be operated so that the public health, safety, and welfare will be protected, that said use will not cause substantial injury(ies) to other property(ies) in the neighborhood in which located, and that this Half-Way House, conforms to all regulations for the **NB Neighborhood Business** zoning district.

.....A

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A PUBLIC HEARING WITH RESPECT TO A REQUEST FOR **CONDITIONAL USE**, TO AUTHORIZE A HALFWAY HOUSE WITHIN AN EXISTING COMMERCIAL BUILDING LOCATED WITHIN A **NB NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS** ZONE, AND IDENTIFIED BY MUNICIPAL ADDRESS 2793 FERNWOOD ROAD

WHEREAS, on Thursday, December 18, 2025, the Biloxi Planning Commission held a public hearing in the Auditorium of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Municipal Building, 676 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, Biloxi, Mississippi, to hear Case No. 25-050-PC, Open Doors Homeless Coalition (owner) and Ronald Arant on behalf of Discipleship 33 (applicant), a request for **Conditional Use** approval, for the property identified 2793 Fernwood Road; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission members were apprised of the particulars of this case, being made cognizant of the fact that Open Doors Homeless Coalition (owner) and Ronald Arant on behalf of Discipleship 33 (applicant), had submitted this request, to authorize a Halfway House within an existing Commercial building located within a **NB Neighborhood Business** zone, and identified by municipal address 2793 Fernwood Road (i.e., Tax Parcel No. 1110L-01-036.000); and

WHEREAS, on December 18, 2025, the Biloxi Planning Commission, after listening to many neighbors and much discussion among themselves, voted 14-0-0, to recommend approval of the proposed **Conditional Use**, to authorize a Halfway House within an existing Commercial building located within a **NB Neighborhood Business** zone, and identified by municipal address 2793 Fernwood Road (i.e., Tax Parcel No. 1110L-01-036.000), having determined that said project, as presented, has been found to promote the public interest at this location; that said use has been designed, located, and proposed to be operated so that the public health, safety, and

welfare will be protected; that said housing unit will not cause substantial injury to other property(ies) in the neighborhood in which located; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Biloxi, Mississippi, having given the Planning Commission's recommendation full consideration, has determined that this is a matter of general public concern, and being so, it is in the best interest of the community to hold a public hearing on this matter before the City Council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI, will conduct a public hearing in reference to Case No. 25-050-PC, Open Doors Homeless Coalition (owner) and Ronald Arant on behalf of Discipleship 33 (applicant), on a date to be set and in accordance with all requirements, as prescribed by the City of Biloxi Land Development Ordinance governing the conduct of public hearings.

..... B

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION TO DENY A REQUEST FOR **CONDITIONAL USE**, TO AUTHORIZE A HALFWAY HOUSE WITHIN AN EXISTING COMMERCIAL BUILDING LOCATED WITHIN A **NB NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS** ZONE, AND IDENTIFIED BY MUNICIPAL ADDRESS 2793 FERNWOOD ROAD

WHEREAS, on Thursday, December 18, 2025, the Biloxi Planning Commission held a public hearing in the Auditorium of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Municipal Building, 676 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, Biloxi, Mississippi, to hear Case No. 25-050-PC, Open Doors Homeless Coalition (owner) and Ronald Arant on behalf of Discipleship 33 (applicant), a request for **Conditional Use** approval, for the property identified 2793 Fernwood Road; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission members were apprised of the particulars of this case, being cognizant of the fact that Open Doors Homeless Coalition (owner) and Ronald Arant on behalf of Discipleship 33 (applicant), had submitted this request, to authorize a Halfway House within an existing Commercial building located within a **NB Neighborhood Business** zone, and identified by municipal address 2793 Fernwood Road (i.e., Tax Parcel No. 1110L-01-036.000); and

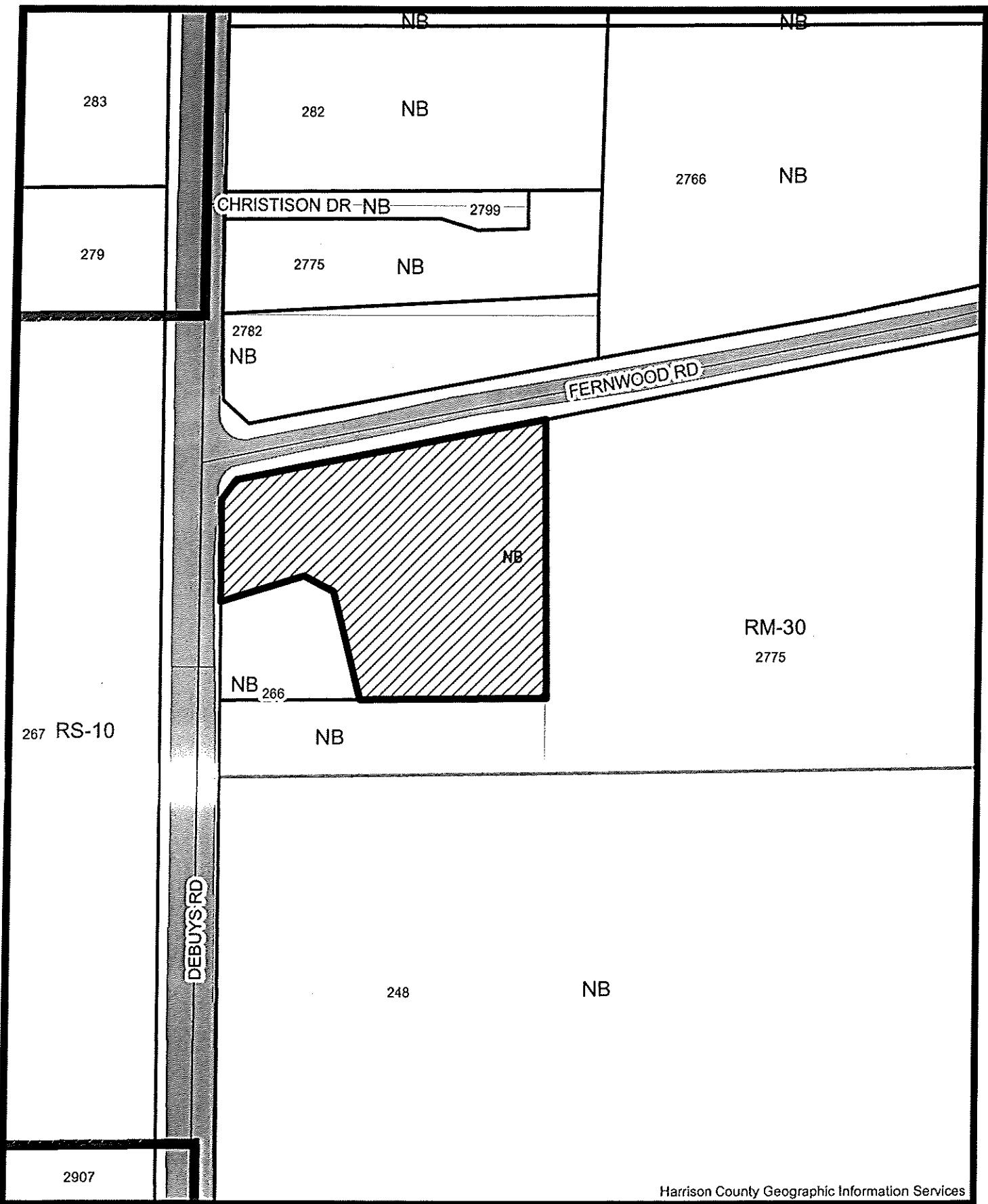
WHEREAS, on December 18, 2025, the Biloxi Planning Commission, after listening to many neighbors and much discussion among themselves, voted 14-0-0, to recommend approval of the proposed **Conditional Use**, to authorize a Halfway House within an existing Commercial building located within a **NB Neighborhood Business** zone, and identified by municipal address 2793 Fernwood Road (i.e., Tax Parcel No. 1110L-01-036.000), having determined that said project, as presented, has been found to promote the public interest at this location; that said use has been designed, located, and proposed to be operated so that the public health, safety, and

welfare will be protected; that said housing unit will not cause substantial injury to other property(ies) in the neighborhood in which located; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI, that having given the Planning Commission's recommendation full consideration, hereby rejects said recommendation and hereby denies the requested **Conditional Use** approval, to authorize a Halfway House to be located within an existing Commercial building situated within a **NB Neighborhood Business** zone, and identified by municipal address 2793 Fernwood Road, as related in Case No. 25-050-PC, for Open Doors Homeless Coalition (owner) and Ronald Arant on behalf of Discipleship 33 (applicant) based upon a determination that _____

..... C

Case No. 25-050-PC
Open Doors Homeless Coalition/Diciples 33
2793 Fernwood Rd
Conditional Use Half-Way House in NB



Scheduled for
December 18, 2025
PC Meeting

Open Doors Homeless Coalition (owner)
Ronald Arant on behalf of Discipleship 33 (applicant)
Case No. 25-050-PC
Conditional Use
Halfway House in a NB



**Planning Commission
Case Fact Sheet**

Case No.: 25-050-PC
Name of Owner/ Open Doors Homeless Coalition
Applicant: Ronald Arant on behalf of Discipleship 33
Address of Property: 2793 Fernwood Road
Tax Parcels/Ward: 1110L-01-036.000/Ward 5

Request: **Conditional Use**

Purpose of Request: To consider an application requesting **Conditional Use**, to authorize a Halfway House within an existing Commercial building located within an **NB Neighborhood Business** zone, and identified by municipal address 2793 Fernwood Road.

Size of Property: 1.1 acres (more or less)

Flood Zone: X

Present Zoning: **NB-Neighborhood Business**

Present Use: Commercial Building

Most Nearly Bounded By (streets): To the North of Mission Lane; to the South and fronting to Fernwood Road; to the West of Eisenhower Drive; and to the East and adjacent to Debuys Road.

Adverse Influences: Care must be exercised before granting any Conditional Use to ensure that the objectives of City regulations are fully followed.

Positive Influences: The requested **Conditional Use** will allow the applicant to establish a Halfway House.

Letters or Concerns: The Planning Division Office has received two letters in opposition, concerning this case as of December 11, 2025.

**Comments/
Recommendations:** Open Doors Homeless Coalition (owner) and Ronald Arant

on behalf of Discipleship 33 (applicant), submitted an application for a **Conditional Use**, to authorize a Halfway House within an existing Commercial building located within an **NB Neighborhood Business** zone, and identified by municipal address 2793 Fernwood Road (i.e., Tax Parcel No. 1110L-01-036.000).

As part of any Conditional Use application review, the Planning Commission must determine that the Conditional Use, as proposed, will provide for the public interest at this location, is compatible with the neighborhood, avoids adverse impacts on neighbors, maintains safe traffic flow, protects property values in the neighborhood, and complies with all relevant city, state and federal laws and regulations. The applicant/owner is proposing transitional housing to help people who are transitioning out of homelessness, incarceration, addiction, or other life crises. There will be faith-based mentorship and counseling. It will not be used as a shelter or rehabilitation center, but a structured next step for committed individuals.

The Development Review Committee (DRC) has reviewed this project, and authorized the applicant to make an application to the Planning Commission and City Council for Conditional Use approval.

Options:

1. Recommend approval of this request for **Conditional Use** to authorize the establishment of a **Halfway House**, situated within **NB Neighborhood Business** zone, having determined that the proposed use at this location promotes and protects the public health, safety, and welfare of the City, that said use will have no significant negative impact upon the surrounding area, and that said Conditional Use meets or exceeds all Conditional Use Standards, as prescribed by the Land Development Ordinance.
2. Recommend denial of the **Conditional Use**, having determined that said use does not promote the public interest at this location, and has not been found to meet all requirements for said use, as outlined in the Standards for Conditional Use approval contained within the Land Development Ordinance.



Planning Commission Application

City of Biloxi Planning Division

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 508, Biloxi, MS 39533

Office Location: 676 Dr. MLK Blvd.,

Building (228) 435-6270 Planning (228) 435-6266 Fax (228) 435-6188

Case No. 15-050-PC

To Be Completed by Owner/Applicant

Date:

Name of Rightful Owner(s):

Open Doorsthomeless Coalition

Name of Applicant: (if different than Owner)

Discipleship 33 - Ronald Arant

Property Address:

2793 Fernwood Rd, Biloxi, MS 39531

Ward Number
5

Tax Parcel Identification Number(s):

11101-01-0360000

Mailing Address of Property Owner:

P.O. Box 4716

Mailing Address of Applicant (if different than Owner): 119-75 Seaway Rd Suite A245

City: Biloxi

City: Gulfport

State: MS

State: MS

Zip: 39535

Zip: 39503

County: Harrison

County: Harrison

Telephone: 228-547-1585

Telephone: (228-382-4547

Property Size (please give in acres or by dimension): Approx 1700 sqft on 1 acre of land

Present Zoning Classification: NB

Is the property located within an AHRC District? Yes No If so, which District?

Is this property a Historic Landmark? Yes No

Flood Zone(s) of Property:

North

South

East

West

Property is most nearly bounded by what streets?

Fernwood Rd.

Mission Ln

Eisenhower

Debuys

If property directly fronts or is adjacent one of the streets above, please indicate with a ✓

✓

✓

REQUESTED ACTION BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION (A separate supplement form is required for each): ✓

Text Amendment

Zoning Map Amendment – must include zone classification change in narrative

Planned Development

Master Plan/Update

Preliminary Subdivision Review

Conditional Use

Public ROW Vacation

Street Name Change

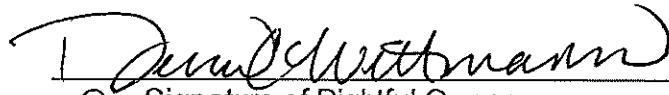
Variance

Appeal

Tree Removal

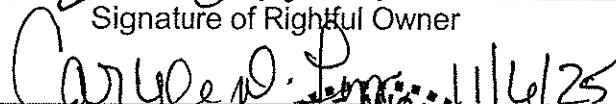
GENERAL INFORMATION, READ BEFORE EXECUTING. Attendance by the applicant(s) at the public hearing is mandatory; however, the applicant may designate a representative to attend the public hearing on his/her behalf, provided said representative has been properly designated to speak on the applicant's behalf either by written permission or oral designation by the applicant at the Public Hearing. If a continuance is to be granted, the applicant must request same in writing a minimum of seven (7) days in advance of the scheduled public hearing. The applicant acknowledges that, in signing this application, all conditions and requirements inherent in the application process have been fully explained and understood, including the timetable for processing of the application; the applicant has further received the following appropriate handouts: Application Processing Timetable; Instructions for Application Completion, Procedures for a Conditional Use or Community Unit Plan; and Variance Procedures. The completed application must be returned to the Planning Office not later than the first or third Thursday of any month in order that a public hearing may be held on the first or third Thursday of the following month. Receipt of fee(s) does not constitute receipt of a completed application.

The Planning Commission (PC) is a recommendation board, all cases will go to the Biloxi City Council for a final determination. If any case is denied by the Biloxi City Council, you will have ten (10) days to appeal their decision.



Signature of Rightful Owner

Signature of Rightful Owner



Notary Signature
(Seal) **NOTARY PUBLIC STATE OF MISSISSIPPI**
ID# 106663

Signature of Rightful Owner
Commission Expires Sept. 12, 2029

Notary Signature
(Seal) **HARRISON COUNTY**

Notary Signature
(Seal) **NOTARY PUBLIC STATE OF MISSISSIPPI**
ID# 106663

Date

Signature of Applicant



Date

Notary Signature
(Seal) **NOTARY PUBLIC STATE OF MISSISSIPPI**
ID# 106663

CARYLE D. LENA

Commission Expires

Sept. 12, 2029

HARRISON COUNTY

If someone other than the applicant needs to be notified concerning this case, please note name(s) and address(es) below:

NOTES:

NOTE: Please see attached instructions for details on documents required for a complete application.



PLANNING COMMISSION SUPPLEMENT

Conditional Use

City of Biloxi, Planning Division

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 508, Biloxi, MS 39530

Office Location: 676 Dr. MLK Blvd.,

Building (228) 435-6270 Planning (228) 435-6266 Fax (228)

TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT

DATE: 11/5/25

Shaded Areas for Staff Only

Conditional Use – The purpose of the Conditional Use is to provide for certain uses that, because of their unique characteristics, can be allowed with special consideration in each case of the impact of those uses upon neighboring land and of the public need for the particular use at the particular location. Because of their unique characteristics, however, each of these requires the exercise of planning judgment on a case-by-case basis.

PLEASE ATTACH A SEPARATE STATEMENT OF SUPPORT - The narrative must set forth proposed use and justification for the change, utilizing criteria set forth in Section 23-6-1(e) of the Biloxi Code of Ordinances and including all proposed and existing structures as well as the uses planned for the site in question. Be specific as to development proposals, sale of property, or other transactions/plans proposed or scheduled for preparation subject to this rezoning request being granted approval.

Detailed Site Plan Attached (If no site plan is attached, this application is considered incomplete and will not be accepted.)

Criteria:

✓

1. Is the use necessary to promote the public interest at that location?

Yes

No

Please explain: *Approving Conditional Use for a halfway house at this location will enhance the community's response to housing instability among individuals with a history of housing instability.*

✓

2. Is the use designed, located, and proposed to be operated so that the public health, safety, and welfare will be protected?

✓

Yes

No

Please explain: *Protocols will be in place, on-site, to protect public health, safety, and to promote the general welfare of the house's tenants and surrounding neighborhood.*

✓

3. Will the use cause substantial injury to other property in the Neighborhood in which it is located?

Please explain: *This conditional use will in noway cause injury to the surrounding properties or community at large. It will provide a safe living environment to individuals whom might otherwise lack*

✓

4. Does the use conform to all district regulations of the applicable zoning district in which it is to be located, unless other provisions are specifically set forth in the requirements governing specific Conditional Uses?

Yes

No

housing resources and supports

Please explain: *This approval of halfway house conditional use from purely NB Zoning would conform with all regulations for its district.*

5. Have satisfactory provisions and arrangements been made concerning the following, where applicable:
Please explain.

Conditional Use Supplement	N/A	Yes	No
1. Ingress and egress?		✓	
2. Off-street parking and loading areas, where required, with particular attention to the economic, noise, glare or odor effects of the Conditional Use on adjoining properties and properties generally in the zoning district?		✓	
3. Refuse and service areas?		✓	
4. Utilities, with reference to location, availability, and compatibility?		✓	
5. Screening and buffering, with reference to type, dimensions, and character?		✓	
6. Signs, if any, and proposed exterior lighting, with reference to glare, traffic safety, economic effect and compatibility and harmony with properties in the zoning district?		✓	
7. Required yards and other open spaces?		✓	
8. General compatibility with adjacent properties and other property in the Zoning district?		✓	
Comments:			

Narrative Proposal for Transitional Living Housing
Submitted to: Biloxi Planning Commission
Submitted by: Discipleship 33 Ministries
Date: 11/5/2025

Introduction

Discipleship 33 Ministries respectfully submits this proposal to the Biloxi Planning Commission requesting approval to operate a transitional living home within the City of Biloxi. Our goal is to provide a safe, stable, and faith-based environment for individuals who are transitioning out of homelessness, incarceration, addiction recovery programs, or other life crises, and who are committed to rebuilding their lives as productive members of the community.

Organizational Background

Discipleship 33 Ministries is a nonprofit, faith-based organization founded on the principle of offering second chances through Christ-centered recovery, mentorship, and life skills development. Our ministry has served the Gulf Coast community through outreach, discipleship programs, and partnerships with local churches, law enforcement, and community organizations.

Our mission is to empower men and women to overcome barriers to stability—including substance abuse, unemployment, and lack of housing—by providing structure, accountability, and holistic support.

Purpose of the Transitional Living Home

The proposed transitional living house will serve as a structured residential program for adults who are actively pursuing personal transformation. Residents will participate in a daily schedule that includes:

- Faith-based mentorship and counseling
- Life skills and job readiness training
- Community service participation
- Recovery support meetings
- Accountability and case management

This program is not a shelter or rehabilitation center but a structured next step for individuals who have completed initial recovery or crisis programs and are ready to transition toward independent living.

Proposed Location and Operations

The proposed home will accommodate up to five residents and one live-in house manager to ensure 24-hour supervision and support.

- Daily Operations: Residents are required to maintain employment, attend program activities, and adhere to a curfew and behavioral code of conduct.
- Transportation: Residents will use shared transportation or public transit, minimizing parking and traffic impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

- **Community Standards:** The home will maintain cleanliness, quiet hours, and positive relationships with neighbors. Regular check-ins and program oversight will ensure accountability and compliance.

Community Benefits

The establishment of this transitional living house will directly contribute to Biloxi's broader goals of community safety, rehabilitation, and homelessness reduction by:

- Reducing recidivism and relapse rates through structured support.
- Providing a pathway from dependency to stability.
- Partnering with local employers to build the workforce.
- Relieving strain on emergency shelters, law enforcement, and social services.

Safety and Compliance

Discipleship 33 Ministries is committed to meeting all city codes, zoning requirements, and safety standards. The property will be maintained in accordance with all local housing ordinances. Staff will ensure compliance with occupancy limits, fire safety regulations, and community guidelines. Background checks and intake assessments will be conducted for all residents to ensure program suitability and neighborhood safety.

Conclusion

Discipleship 33 Ministries seeks to work in partnership with the City of Biloxi to bring lasting change to individuals and the community at large. By offering this transitional living program, we hope to be a bridge between crisis and stability—transforming lives, strengthening families, and contributing to a healthier, safer Biloxi.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to working together to make a positive impact in our city.

Respectfully submitted,
Ronnie Arant
Executive Director
Discipleship 33 Ministries
(228)-382-4547
rarant@homeofgrace.org



GROSS INTERNAL AREA

FLOOR 1: 1413 sq. ft.

TOTAL: 1413 sq. ft.

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 Matterport

Community Development Director
Jerry Creel

676 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
P.O. Box 508
Biloxi, Mississippi 39533
Office: 228.435.6280
Fax: 228.435.6188
www.biloxi.ms.us



To: Biloxi Planning Commission

From: Jerry Creel, Development Review Committee Chair

Date: December 10, 2025

Re: Open Doors Homeless Coalition (Owner)
Discipleship 33 – Ronald Arant (applicant)
2793 Fernwood Road
Parcel: 1110L-01-036.000
DRC Case No. 2025-083

The Development Review Committee (DRC) has reviewed the above-referenced project and has authorized the applicant to apply to Planning Commission and Biloxi City Council for a conditional use allowing a halfway house there.

The DRC will require further review and approval prior to permitting because of the nature of this project. Building Permits shall be issued when construction documents are approved by the Building Division.

Yours truly,

Jerry Creel

Jerry Creel, Chair

cc: file

Felicia Serpas

From: Amy Tabor <amyatabor01@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 10, 2025 7:43 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Call it what you will but asking for a halfway house conditional use

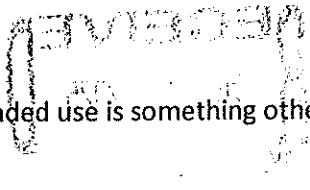
The e-mail below is from an external source. Please do not open attachments or click links from an unknown or suspicious origin.

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

I'm writing y'all today to share my firm opposition to the application for a conditional use permit to establish a halfway house in the Neighborhood Business zone at 2793 Fernwood Road (tax parcel no. 110L-01-036.000).

While I surely understand and respect the importance of rehabilitation programs in our community, this particular location just doesn't fit with the purpose or the planning goals of this district. I have several serious concerns:

- **Zoning Integrity:** The Neighborhood Business designation was created to support and protect commercial activity. Allowing a non-commercial use like a halfway house would go against the intent of the zoning code and open the door to other uses that simply don't belong in this district.
- **Economic Impact:** The businesses in this area depend on consistent commercial traffic. Bringing in a residential facility could discourage customers, lower property values, and make future investment less likely — all of which would weaken the economic health of the district.
- **Public Safety and Compatibility:** The day-to-day needs of a halfway house — such as supervision, extra traffic, and possible safety issues — don't line up with the surrounding business environment. This could affect both employees and customers who rely on this area being predictable and business-friendly.
- **Community Character:** The Neighborhood Business zone was carefully planned to encourage commerce, convenience, and growth. A halfway house doesn't match those goals and could upset the balance that the city has worked hard to establish.


If intended use is something other than a halfway house, don't approve a halfway house designation.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask the Planning Commission to deny the conditional use permit. It's important that we uphold our zoning laws and protect the strength and vitality of our business community for the long-term well-being of our city.

Thank y'all for your time, your thoughtful consideration, and your continued service to our community.

Amy Krohn Tabor

Opposition
RECEIVED
DEC 11 2025
BY: lspad

Case no: 25-050-PC

Felicia Serpas

From: Cat Bublik <kacoome228@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 15, 2025 12:44 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Opposition to Case no. 25-050-PC

The e-mail below is from an external source. Please do not open attachments or click links from an unknown or suspicious origin.

I respectfully oppose the establishment of a Halfway House at this location. By definition, a Halfway House in the City of Biloxi serves individuals on release from custodial confinement or placed in lieu of confinement, which introduces a level of risk and instability that is not compatible with the surrounding residential environment.

As a resident of this city, I am concerned about the broader impacts this facility would have on the neighborhood:
Safety and security concerns: A facility serving individuals transitioning out of confinement increases the likelihood of disturbances, loitering, and police activity, affecting the overall sense of safety for nearby families.

Negative impact on neighborhood stability: Correctional-related facilities can change how an area is perceived, discouraging investment and reducing long-term confidence in the neighborhood.

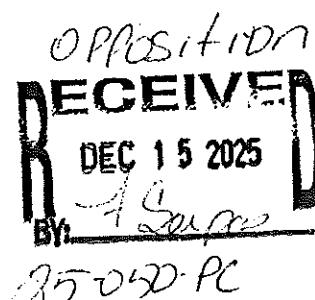
Increased traffic and activity: Staff, volunteers, service providers, and visitors create traffic patterns and noise levels that are not typical for a residential area.

Incompatibility with residential zoning: A Halfway House is an institutional use placed within a residential setting, disrupting the predictability and character that zoning is intended to protect.

Loss of quiet enjoyment for nearby residents: Group meetings, outdoor activities, and increased foot traffic diminish the peaceful environment that residents expect in their homes.

Approving a Halfway House at this location would fundamentally alter the character of the neighborhood and impose disproportionate burdens on the surrounding community. For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Commission deny the Conditional Use Permit.

Catherine Bublik
2291 Club Moss Cir, Biloxi, MS 39532



Felicia Serpas

From: Jennifer Noble <jenniferanoble918@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 12, 2025 5:49 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Fwd: Objection to Conditional Use Permit – Case #25-050-PC

The e-mail below is from an external source. Please do not open attachments or click links from an unknown or suspicious origin.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: JNobleCakes <jennifer@jnoblecakes.com>
Date: Tue, Dec 9, 2025 at 8:28 PM
Subject: Objection to Conditional Use Permit – Case #25-050-PC
To: <planning@biloxi.ms.us>
CC: <jenniferanoble918@gmail.com>

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

I am writing to respectfully oppose the application for a conditional use permit to establish what the applicant has described as a halfway house (tax parcel 110L-01-036.000 located at 2793 Fernwood Drive) in the Neighborhood Business zone, directly adjacent to my commercial property (tax parcel 110L-01-035.000 located at 266 DeBuys Road).

After reviewing the organizations involved, it is clear that the applicant and possible venture does not meet the definition of a halfway house. Instead, the description and operational model align with a sober living house. This distinction is critical: under the City of Biloxi's zoning code, sober living houses are classified as social service agencies and are expressly prohibited in the Neighborhood Business zone.

Allowing this application to move forward under the label of a halfway house would misapply the zoning ordinance and set a troubling precedent for permitting uses that are explicitly disallowed. Additionally, any form of a halfway house, sober living center, social services agency or any similar derivative would negatively impact the economic viability of surrounding properties. In fact, the various impacts would be considerable:

- **Zoning Integrity:** The Neighborhood Business zone was created to protect and promote commercial activity. Introducing a prohibited residential use undermines the intent of the zoning code and weakens confidence in its enforcement.
- **Economic Impact:** Businesses in this district rely on consistent commercial traffic. A prohibited use could deter customers, reduce property values, and discourage future investment.

- **Public Safety and Compatibility:** The operational needs of a sober living house are not compatible with surrounding businesses, creating potential conflicts for employees and patrons.
- **Community Character:** The Neighborhood Business zone was carefully planned to foster commerce and accessibility. A sober living house does not align with these goals and risks disrupting the balance established by city planning.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Planning Commission to deny the conditional use permit. Upholding the zoning code and safeguarding the vitality of our business community is essential to the long-term health and prosperity of Biloxi.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and for your continued service to our community.

Jennifer Noble, lifelong Biloxi resident (Ward 4)

Owner/Lead Cake Artist

Custom Cakes by Jennifer Noble
formerly Cheeky Monkey Cake Company
228-220-4985
228-243-3352
jnoblecakes.com

Opposition
RECEIVE
R DEC 15 2025
BY: L. Saylor
25-050-PC

Felicia Serpas

From: KROHN MANDY <yask17@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 9, 2025 7:04 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Something funny is going on here

The e-mail below is from an external source. Please do not open attachments or click links from an unknown or suspicious origin.

I'm writing to share my concerns about the request for a conditional use permit to put what the applicant calls a "halfway house" right next to my commercial property in the Neighborhood Business zone.

After looking over the information, it doesn't seem like what they're proposing is actually a halfway house. It sounds much more like a sober living home. That's an important difference, because sober living homes are not allowed in the Neighborhood Business zone under the City of Biloxi's zoning rules. They fall under social services, not halfway houses.

If this permit is approved under the wrong label, it not only goes against the zoning rules but could open the door for other uses that aren't allowed here. This could cause some real problems:

- **Zoning:** This area was set up to support businesses. Allowing a residential use that isn't permitted goes against what the zoning was created for.
- **Business Impact:** The businesses here rely on steady customer traffic. A use that isn't allowed could hurt property values and make it harder to attract new businesses.
- **Fit for the Area:** The way a sober living home operates doesn't really match the needs of the surrounding businesses and could create issues for both customers and employees.
- **Community Feel:** This zone was planned to help local businesses grow. A use like this doesn't fit with that purpose and could disrupt the balance the city worked to create.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask the Planning Commission to deny this permit. It's important that we follow the zoning rules and protect the business community that helps keep Biloxi strong.

Thank you for your time and for everything you do for our community.

Mandy Krohn

6311 Herbie Rd

Biloxi, MS

39532

Opposition
RECEIVE
R DEC 10 2025
By [Signature]
25-050-PC

Felicia Serpas

From: christopher noble <chrisnoble405@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 9, 2025 8:29 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Objection to Conditional Use Permit – Case #25-050-PC

The e-mail below is from an external source. Please do not open attachments or click links from an unknown or suspicious origin.

Dear Planning Commission Members,

I am writing to formally object to the proposed Conditional Use permit that seeks to authorize the establishment of a "Halfway House," as outlined in the commission's agenda, within an existing commercial building at 2793 Fernwood Road, Biloxi(i.e., Tax Parcel No. 1110L-01-036.000). This property is situated in an NB Neighborhood Business Zone and is located next to my commercial property.

Upon review of entities involved, it is clear that the proposed facility does not align with the definition of a "Halfway House" as outlined in the City of Biloxi's Land Development Ordinance (LDO). A "Halfway House" under Article 23-10 of the LDO is defined as a facility for individuals transitioning from custodial confinement under court order, not for individuals entering a substance or alcohol treatment facility. In fact, the facility described in the application more closely resembles a social services organization rather than a facility meeting the definition of a "Halfway House."

According to the applicant's own website (www.dissepship33.org/rules), Discipleship 33 operates like a social service agency, imposing strict requirements on participants, including mandatory sobriety, three (3) weekly attendances at Alcoholics/Narcotics Anonymous meetings, program fees, drug and alcohol testing fees, rent payments, and more. The facility also requires a House Manager on-site to oversee the distribution of all medications, including over-the-counter ones, to prevent theft and abuse by residents, further underscoring that the facility's operations do not align with the definition of a "Halfway House" under the LDO. See definition of Social Service Agency in the LDO under Article 23-10 also.

Additionally, the co-applicant, Open Doors Homeless Coalition, has demonstrated non-compliance with city regulations. This organization has current violations of code enforcement laws, failed to respond to complaints, and was granted a 30-day extension by Councilman Tisdale to resolve the issue—an extension that was predicated on the hope of establishing communication, which has yet to occur. This history of non-compliance raises concerns about the applicant's ability to be a responsible community partner.

For these reasons, I oppose the granting of this Conditional Use permit. Allowing such a facility, in contrast to the LDO in this location would be inconsistent with the character of the surrounding area, which is primarily comprised of businesses engaged in retail sales and commercial services. It is likely that this facility would deter potential customers and negatively impact property values, hindering future growth and development in the area. Furthermore, the proposed facility does not align with the needs or interests of the nearby businesses and residents, who are unlikely to be the target clientele for a drug and alcohol treatment or sober living facility.

I respectfully urge the planning commission to uphold the zoning regulations for the area, protect the interests of existing property owners, and prevent the imposition of undue burdens on nearby properties and public safety services. Additionally, I ask that the commission adhere to the definitions and guidelines established in the current edition of the City of Biloxi's Land Development Ordinance.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

1 25-050-PC
Opposition

RECEIVED
DEC 10 2025
By: *Felicia Serpas*

Sincerely,
Christopher Noble
Biloxi Resident
228-669-3688

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher Noble".



December 22, 2025

City of Biloxi - Community Development
ATTN: Mr. Jerry Creel
676 Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd,
Biloxi, MS 39530

Re: Open Doors/Discipleship 33 CUP Case for City Council

Dear Mr. Creel:

Thank you and the Biloxi Planning Commission for hearing our Conditional Use Permit case on December 18, 2025 and for the unanimous recommendation to the Biloxi City Council. As is the usual protocol, I imagine the case would be heard by the City Council at the next scheduled meeting, which would fall on January 6, 2026. The primary applicant for the CUP is Mr. Ronnie Arant with Discipleship 33, who will be out of the country on that date.

We respectfully ask that the CUP be considered by the Council on the following Council date of January 20, 2026.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns. I may be reached at 228-205-7047 or 228-547-1585 (cell) or by email at dwittmann@opendoorshc.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dena Wittmann". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Dena" on the top line and "Wittmann" on the line below it.

Dena Wittmann, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Open Doors Homeless Coalition



1 BILOXI PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
 2 DECEMBER 18, 2025
 3 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT,
 4 DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. MUNICIPAL BUILDING,
 5 676 DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BOULEVARD,
 6 BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI,
 7 BEGINNING AT 2:00 P.M.

10 PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

11 Charlie Dellenger, Chairman
 12 Ronnie Bogard
 13 Kyle Carron
 14 Steve Delahousey
 15 Dr. Larry Drawdy
 16 Joe King
 17 Gary Lechner
 18 Debora Magee
 19 August Parker
 20 Jimmy Poulos
 21 Shante' Shaw
 22 John Snow
 23 David Stanovich
 24 Michael Todaro

19 ALSO PRESENT:

20 Jerry Creel, Director of Community Development
 21 Felicia Serpas, Senior Planner
 22 Carlye Lena, Planner I

23 REPORTED BY:

24 Simpson Burdine & Migue
 25

Simpson Burdine & Migue 228.388.3130

1 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 2 Call the Planning Commission meeting to
 3 order.
 4 Record the members present.
 5 Mr. Lechner, Mr. Parker, Mr. Todaro, Ms. Magee,
 6 Ms. Shaw, Mr. Stanovich, Mr. Bogard,
 7 Mr. Delahousey, Dr. Drawdy, Mr. Carron, Mr. King,
 8 Mr. Snow, Mr. Poulos; myself, Dr. Dellenger.
 9 We also have Felicia Serpas, Senior
 10 Planner; Jerry Creel, Director of Community
 11 Development; Carlye Lena, Planner. I don't see
 12 any councilmen in the audience. And Melissa
 13 Rodolfich, court reporter.
 14 Steve, if you would, please lead us in a
 15 prayer.
 16 MR. DELAHOUSEY:
 17 Yes.
 18 (Moment of prayer.)
 19 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 20 Mr. Poulos, will you lead us in the
 21 pledge, please?
 22 (Pledge of Allegiance.)
 23 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 24 I would like to welcome everyone to the
 25 Planning Commission meeting and remind you that if

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1 C-O-N-T-E-N-T-S

2 CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING(S) : PAGE:

3 25-046-PC 5
 4
 5 NEW PUBLIC HEARING(S) :
 6 25-047-PC 11
 7 25-048-PC 33
 8 25-049-PC 36
 9 25-050-PC 51
 10 25-051-PC 100
 11
 12 TREE HEARING(S) :
 13 (None) --

1 you come up to speak that you please write your
 2 name and address in the book and state your name
 3 and address for the record.

4 Please silence all your cell phones.
 5 And we are going to have a time of four minutes
 6 when you come up and speak, so please be
 7 respectful if your four minutes is up that you
 8 don't keep going and take up everybody else's
 9 time, please.

10 If everyone has had a chance to review
 11 the Planning Commission minutes from the last
 12 meeting, can I have a motion?

13 MR. DELAHOUSEY:
 14 Move to approve motion.

15 MR. POULOS:

16 Second.

17 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 18 Motion by Mr. Delahousey; second by
 19 Mr. Poulos.

20 All those in favor, please signify by
 21 raising your hand.

22 (Unanimous vote.)

23 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 24 All opposed?
 25 (None opposed.)

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1 Okay. Thank you, Jerry.
 2 MR. FOUNTAIN:
 3 And then I wanted to address the
 4 gentleman's comments that he came up to discuss.
 5 Mr. Jerry covered the easement question.
 6 But as far as the flood zone is
 7 concerned, there is a small flood zone area in the
 8 southeast corner of the property, but the property
 9 will be required to be developed in accordance
 10 with flood zone requirements.
 11 And also, he was really asking about
 12 flooding in general and I don't know if he knows
 13 this, but I will just explain it for the crowd.
 14 We will be required to perform a pre- and
 15 post-development hundred-year drainage analysis,
 16 which will ensure no drainage leaves the site
 17 post-development versus pre-development. So in a
 18 technical standpoint, there shouldn't be any more
 19 flooding there after the fact than there was
 20 before the fact.
 21 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 22 Okay. Thank you.
 23 MR. FOUNTAIN:
 24 Any other questions?
 25 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

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1 MR. PARKER:
 2 Second.
 3 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 4 Motion by Mr. Todaro to approve;
 5 seconded by Mr. Parker.
 6 Is there any discussion?
 7 There being no discussion, please vote
 8 by raising your hands, please. Mr. Lechner,
 9 Mr. Parker, Mr. Todaro, Ms. Magee, Ms. Shaw,
 10 Mr. Stanovich, Mr. Bogard, Mr. Delahousey,
 11 Dr. Drawdy, Mr. Carron, Mr. King, Mr. Snow,
 12 Mr. Poulos; and myself, Mr. Dellenger. Let the
 13 record show that's unanimous.
 14 Next case we have is Case Number
 15 25-050-PC, Open Doors Homeless Coalition, owner,
 16 and Ronald Arant on behalf of Discipleship 33, the
 17 applicant, which is a request for conditional use
 18 approval to authorize a halfway house within an
 19 existing commercial building located in an NB,
 20 Neighborhood Business, zone, identified by
 21 municipal address 2793 Fernwood Road, Tax Parcel
 22 Number 1110L-01-036.00. This was advertised on
 23 12/5 and 12/12.
 24 Felicia, do you have the video, please?
 25 MS. SERPAS:

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1 No other questions.
 2 MR. FOUNTAIN:
 3 Thank you all.
 4 MR. CREEL:
 5 Well, the issue before you today is to
 6 approve this subdivision preliminary plat. The
 7 question before you is, have they designed it to
 8 comply with the subdivision requirements for a
 9 RS-7.5 zoning.
 10 This property has gone through the
 11 Development Review Committee. It has been
 12 approved subject to your approval today, and the
 13 road width, the lot widths -- you know, the lots
 14 are almost double what's required by RS-7.5.
 15 If there are concerns about changes
 16 being made to this, if there are changes made to
 17 the lot size or whatever, it would have to come
 18 back and go back through the DRC and the Planning
 19 Commission again.
 20 So based on -- based on our review at
 21 DRC, the subdivision does meet all the
 22 requirements of RS-7.5. Staff has no objection
 23 and would recommend approval.
 24 MR. TODARO:
 25 Move to approve.

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1 That's Debuys Road. Okay.
 2 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 3 Thank you.
 4 Is Mr. Arant or their representative
 5 here to present or from the Coalition?
 6 Please state your name and address for
 7 the record.
 8 MS. WITTMANN:
 9 Good afternoon. My name is Dena
 10 Wittmann. 2793 Fernwood Road, Biloxi is the
 11 address of our business.
 12 I'm the executive director of Open Doors
 13 Homeless Coalition. We have owned this property
 14 since 2021, and we have operated our business out
 15 of it. At least part of our staff were located
 16 there, nine staff members there from 2021 until
 17 August of 2025 at which time, in order to reduce
 18 costs, we moved our staff members back to the
 19 Knight Nonprofit Center.
 20 We were considering listing the
 21 property. Not quite sure what we were going to do
 22 with it at that point, but we were having a
 23 discussion with our colleagues at Discipleship 33
 24 about the property and we discussed potentially
 25 creating a transitional living facility as they

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1 operate in Jackson County and bringing those
 2 services to the citizens of Biloxi.
 3 In the work that we do across the lower
 4 six counties, Biloxi is one of the hardest places
 5 for us to locate affordable housing for those who
 6 have been experiencing homelessness, who have been
 7 released from jail, who are suffering from,
 8 recovering from addiction, and so we thought it
 9 was a perfect opportunity to put our heads
 10 together and create a project that would meet the
 11 needs of our citizens of Biloxi that we work with.

12 And so I'll pass it over to Mr. Arant
 13 who can tell you some details about the project.

14 MR. ARANT:

15 Yes. So good afternoon. So my name is
 16 Ronnie Arant. I'm the executive director of
 17 Discipleship 33. I'm also the program director
 18 for the Home of Grace.

19 To tell you a little bit about what
 20 we're trying to do is -- so we are established. I
 21 have four properties in the Jackson County area
 22 already. These aren't individuals -- sometimes
 23 when people think about the transitional living,
 24 they talk about coming straight out of prison and
 25 we're taking people off the street. These are

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1 I said, we're not putting any kind of violent
 2 offenders -- sex offenders or anything like that
 3 will not be in the residence.

4 I know there have been some concerns
 5 over traffic issues. You can see at the property,
 6 there is an 11-space parking lot and two handicap
 7 on the other side. There's only going to be five
 8 individuals, at most, living at the house at one
 9 time. I don't see this creating much of a traffic
 10 issue.

11 Also, we will have random drug testing.
 12 There will be direct oversight by myself, and
 13 again, you know, I have a proven track record.

14 If there is any questions or anything I
 15 can answer, I would love to.

16 MR. DELAHOUSEY:

17 I have got a couple of questions.

18 I have done some research on what you're
 19 proposing here, and please allow me to go through
 20 a couple of points here and you comment on if you
 21 approve.

22 MR. ARANT:

23 Yes, sir.

24 MR. DELAHOUSEY:

25 My research has indicated that efforts

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1 individuals that have went through a long-term
 2 recovery program such as the Home of Grace or
 3 something like the Home of Grace.

4 In the Jackson County area, you know, we
 5 have -- in two years, we haven't had one incident
 6 with the police, anyone called. These are
 7 individuals -- we have men and women houses in
 8 Jackson County. This will be a men's house in
 9 Biloxi.

10 Employers, their first call is -- in the
 11 Pascagoula, Jackson County area, when they need
 12 workers, they call me because these men and women,
 13 you know, they transition into society after
 14 long-term recovery.

15 We are 100 percent Christ-centered.
 16 That being said, we offer direct services such as
 17 licensed outpatient counseling. They go to
 18 different groups and different things like that.

19 These are not just people that's just
 20 going to be living in the house doing nothing.
 21 They're going to be in the workforce in Biloxi.
 22 It can actually be an asset to the City of Biloxi.

23 Also, too, we have 24/7 staff, a live-in
 24 houseman that will be living on the property.

25 We do background checks, so, again, like

1 like you're doing here, Number 1, reduces
 2 re-offenders, a lot of people having been previous
 3 offenders and it reduces re-offenders.

4 Number 2, accountability and support,
 5 you know where the people are, so that seems like
 6 a good thing.

7 Number 3, it's cost effective, in that,
 8 I assume they mean that it's cheaper than
 9 incarceration, which frequently happens if you
 10 don't have some type of transitional situation.

11 And the fourth thing is it affords
 12 community re-integration by helping people relearn
 13 everyday responsibilities, so I'm sure you've had
 14 way more experience than I have had with this.

15 Would you like to comment on any of
 16 those or add to or --

17 MR. ARANT:

18 Yes, sir. And just to tell you a little
 19 bit of a back story, so that's how it all come
 20 about. Like I said, I've been the program
 21 director for the Home of Grace and I've been with
 22 the Home of Grace for over 10 years, and Home of
 23 Grace is a great foundation. Any long-time
 24 recovery support is. But what happens next, you
 25 know? When people go back to the same

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1 environments and the same situation, they'll more
 2 likely re-offend, relapse and all different things
 3 like this.

4 Coming in to a structured environment --
 5 and, too, there is sober living houses in Biloxi
 6 now, you know, with no structure, no sanctions,
 7 anything like this. This is a structured
 8 environment in every sense. Like I said, there is
 9 outpatient counseling. It is 100 percent
 10 Christ-centered, as well as there is going to be
 11 tons of accountability with live-in staff, as well
 12 as myself with direct oversight with these
 13 individuals.

14 And in the two years, I would say
 15 75 percent of all participants have not only
 16 completed the program but went on to be -- have a
 17 permanent residence, have permanent employment and
 18 also pay taxes in Jackson County, you know,
 19 because they -- you know, whatever they set up,
 20 they can be with us for six months to two years.
 21 Within that time frame, they build lives within
 22 these communities. So where do they go back to?
 23 Where do they pay taxes to? Those communities.

24 MR. DELAHOUSEY:

25 Thank you.

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1 of six months. I feel like, you know, after going
 2 to long-term recovery -- long-term recovery is
 3 anywhere from three months to six months. The
 4 next step would be six months in transitional
 5 living.

6 But some individuals, you know, they
 7 come with nothing. They have to save up money and
 8 build things, so we cut it off at two years
 9 because I feel like after two years, if someone
 10 isn't progressing at that point, we need to find
 11 something else for them.

12 DR. DRAWDY:

13 How would this proposed halfway house be
 14 in coordination with the Gulf Coast Rescue Mission
 15 that's right down the road?

16 MR. ARANT:

17 So we wouldn't have any affiliation with
 18 them.

19 DR. DRAWDY:

20 I understand that, but they house
 21 people. They house men just like you're talking
 22 about, and they can house many more than what
 23 you're talking about. And would this be any
 24 competition with them?

25 MR. ARANT:

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1 MR. TODARO:

2 Mr. Arant, they have already graduated
 3 from the Home of Grace program and this is the
 4 next move up?

5 MR. ARANT:

6 Yes, sir.

7 MR. TODARO:

8 And there is five residents -- or room
 9 for five residents there?

10 MR. ARANT:

11 Yes, sir.

12 MR. TODARO:

13 As an average or a guess, how long would
 14 they be there before they're actually to the next
 15 step?

16 MR. ARANT:

17 Till they get their own place?

18 MR. TODARO:

19 Yes.

20 MR. ARANT:

21 So we -- it varies.

22 MR. TODARO:

23 Just a ball park?

24 MR. ARANT:

25 We range -- yes, sir. So it's a minimum

1 No, sir. You know, in the Jackson
 2 County area right now -- this is one reason why
 3 we're trying to expand into Harrison County,
 4 Biloxi -- I have a waiting list right now. Like I
 5 said, I have four residents and most of my people
 6 come from the Home of Grace. I have relationships
 7 with treatment places all over the State of
 8 Mississippi.

9 DR. DRAWDY:

10 Second question: If this is approved,
 11 would this be on the tax rolls in any way, Jerry?

12 MR. CREEL:

13 Are y'all tax exempt? Are y'all
 14 considered tax exempt?

15 MR. ARANT:

16 Yes. We're a nonprofit.

17 MR. CREEL:

18 You're nonprofit. Okay.

19 DR. DRAWDY:

20 So they would not, right?

21 MS. WITTMANN:

22 And Open Doors Homeless Coalition is the
 23 owner and so we're a nonprofit as well.

24 DR. DRAWDY:

25 Okay.

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1 MR. TODARO:
 2 Mr. Arant, I would like to just clarify.
 3 So you'll have five residents there for, at the
 4 most, two years?
 5 MR. ARANT:
 6 Yes, sir.
 7 MR. TODARO:
 8 And there won't be like hang-around
 9 people? I'm sure that may be a concern for the
 10 neighbors.
 11 MR. ARANT:
 12 What do you mean "hang-around people"?
 13 MR. TODARO:
 14 As some missions where --
 15 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 16 People hanging around.
 17 MR. ARANT:
 18 Oh, no, sir.
 19 MR. TODARO:
 20 So you're going to have people who are
 21 living there, and your goal is to get them jobs
 22 and moving on?
 23 MR. ARANT:
 24 Yes, sir.
 25 MR. TODARO:

1 rescue mission, is we're not just taking people
 2 off the street. They have to actually go through
 3 another program before they come to us, such as
 4 the Home --
 5 DR. DRAWDY:
 6 Another question, then. Would there be
 7 a head resident there or a person that lives there
 8 with them all the time?
 9 MR. ARANT:
 10 Yes, sir. 24/7, we will have a peer
 11 support specialist. I don't know if you're
 12 familiar with that, but that's kind of like a peer
 13 support, someone that has been trained in helping
 14 residents and stuff like that.
 15 DR. DRAWDY:
 16 So there would be there -- someone there
 17 24 hours a day?
 18 MR. ARANT:
 19 Yes, sir, and we already have a security
 20 system in place. There is cameras all over the
 21 property, stuff like that.
 22 MR. CARRON:
 23 Okay. That answered one of my questions
 24 as far as having someone there 24/7.
 25 You show where you have five bedrooms,

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1 Five residents?
 2 MR. ARANT:
 3 Five residents. And no one is -- they
 4 are not allowed visitors to the house. That's a
 5 good question. I'm glad you brought that up.
 6 From time to time, if they have kids --
 7 one of the things that we're big believers in is
 8 restoring relationships with their kids, so we do
 9 want to create opportunities -- and the house kind
 10 of -- you can't see it from there, but it's a
 11 bigger house than it looks. That thing goes back.
 12 There's probably -- like an area for their kids to
 13 come stay the night, different stuff like that.
 14 But outside of -- having guests or
 15 somebody that can just show up and say, hey, I
 16 need a room, no, sir.
 17 MR. TODARO:
 18 So y'all will definitely control as to
 19 who's in and who's visiting, family members?
 20 MR. ARANT:
 21 Yes, sir.
 22 And you have to complete a long-term
 23 recovery program to even be considered to be
 24 accepted in here, and that's the difference in,
 25 sir, I think the place you're talking about, the

1 so are you going to have a bedroom for that
 2 person?
 3 MR. ARANT:
 4 That would count as one of the five.
 5 MR. CARRON:
 6 Okay. So are you going to limit it to
 7 four residents?
 8 MR. ARANT:
 9 It would be four residents, so the fifth
 10 bedroom right there would be where the live-in
 11 person stays.
 12 And just so you know, all of my houses
 13 now, just the way it's worked out, is people that
 14 actually currently work for the Home of Grace.
 15 They're also a peer support specialist for the
 16 Home of Grace.
 17 MR. CARRON:
 18 So you'll actually only have four people
 19 there that are doing the program?
 20 MR. ARANT:
 21 Yes, sir.
 22 MR. CARRON:
 23 All right. Thank you.
 24 MS. WITTMANN:
 25 Mr. Todaro, you had a question about

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1 hanging around.

2 MR. TOTARO:

3 Right. I'm sure that may be a concern
4 by neighbors and I'm just speaking to that.

5 MS. WITTMANN:

6 Right. In any neighborhood, I think
7 that would be a concern. But one of the things
8 that -- when we were discussing this that was
9 really important for this property is that it's
10 right there on a bus line, and so it is -- a
11 requirement, from what I understand, for his other
12 transitional living houses is employment.

13 And so most of them do not have
14 vehicles, as they're coming out of long-term
15 recovery, and so being on this bus line would
16 facilitate getting to and from work. There are
17 also a lot of nearby businesses where they could
18 secure employment. So that was another benefit to
19 not being out in the country somewhere, for
20 instance.

21 DR. DRAWDY:

22 Another question, please. In the event
23 that a person is in here -- and you said a minimum
24 of six months. Am I correct?

25 MR. ARANT:

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1 If a person doesn't complete the program
2 and they -- like this, then you just issue them
3 out and they would go someplace else?

4 MR. ARANT:

5 Yes, sir. So if someone -- typically in
6 transitional living, if someone doesn't complete
7 that, it's because they're ready to move out and
8 find their own place. They can choose to do that
9 at any time.

10 But if there is an issue, you know,
11 let's say, with breaking the rules or something
12 like that, they will be offered the opportunity to
13 go to an inpatient program that we will help them
14 get in to. If they don't choose to do that, then
15 their family or someone would have to pick them up
16 and they would have to go somewhere else out of
17 the residence.

18 MR. STANOVICH:

19 Okay. A couple of questions. Did you
20 say none of those people are coming directly from
21 prison?

22 MR. ARANT:

23 No, sir. Even if they come -- if
24 they're in prison, they would have to complete an
25 inpatient long-term program before they come to

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1 Yes, sir.

2 DR. DRAWDY:

3 All right. What happens to the person
4 if they don't complete the program? Say, they
5 have a problem and they're in their fourth month,
6 what happens to them?

7 MR. ARANT:

8 So if someone is with us and they have
9 an issue, they will be offered the opportunity --
10 like I said, I have multiple relationships with
11 the other inpatient programs that will give them
12 the options and try to get them help in that way.
13 If not, then they will, you know, be escorted off
14 the property and out of Biloxi and wherever they
15 choose to go after that.

16 But I have not had that in two years
17 happen in Jackson County. I'm not going to say --
18 we've had a couple of issues where people, you
19 know, did relapse, but all of them have agreed to
20 go back to the Home of Grace inpatient program.

21 DR. DRAWDY:

22 So you -- all right. I'm going to
23 repeat the question. I'm not picking at it. I
24 just want to make sure I clearly understand what
25 we're talking about.

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1 us.

2 MR. STANOVICH:

3 People that do that program, are these
4 violent offenders?

5 MR. ARANT:

6 No, sir. So I'm glad you asked that one
7 too. So background checks, so we will not be
8 accepting violent offenders or sex offenders,
9 period, no matter if they go through a long-term
10 program or not.

11 MR. STANOVICH:

12 Most of these people will be coming from
13 the Home of Grace or Pascagoula or Jackson County?

14 MR. ARANT:

15 The majority. Yes, sir, the majority.

16 MR. STANOVICH:

17 So directly, this is not really helping
18 the homeless situation that we have in Biloxi,
19 correct?

20 MS. WITTMANN:

21 And that's a really important question,
22 and so that's something we have discussed a lot.
23 What we want to ensure with this particular
24 property is that the ones that would be the
25 residents have come from the City of Biloxi. They

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1 are people that, through our outreach efforts --
 2 we have extensive outreach with Biloxi Police
 3 Department and with Mobile Crisis. And when we
 4 identify persons who -- our partnership is
 5 longstanding because when we identify persons who
 6 are experiencing homelessness here in the City of
 7 Biloxi and they are willing -- they are in active
 8 addiction and they are willing to go through
 9 treatment, we connect them with a variety -- we
 10 have had quite a few businesspersons create a fund
 11 to pay for some of these beds at Home of Grace.

12 So we get them connected. They go
 13 through treatment at Home of Grace, and then the
 14 issue is if they're from Biloxi, we have nowhere
 15 to house them after completion of that program
 16 back in the city where they came from.

17 MR. STANOVICH:

18 Thank you. Could you tell us a little
 19 bit more about your organization? I'm not
 20 familiar with it.

21 MS. WITTMANN:

22 Oh, well, certainly.

23 MR. STANOVICH:

24 Just a short version.

25 MR. ARANT:

1 We have a good mix of federal funding
 2 and state funding. We have funding through the
 3 State of Mississippi directly from the Legislature
 4 that goes to Mississippi Home Corp for us to
 5 provide housing for people with serious mental
 6 illness and who have state psychiatric hospital --
 7 a period of time where they do that. We provide
 8 housing.

9 If they are experiencing homelessness
 10 with a serious mental illness or a co-occurring
 11 disorder, we are able to connect with mental
 12 health treatment and/or substance abuse treatment
 13 and then house them in their own permanent housing
 14 after completion of those programs.

15 MR. STANOVICH:

16 So your organization has worked with his
 17 organization for quite a while?

18 MS. WITTMANN:

19 Absolutely. We have MOUs in place.

20 MR. STANOVICH:

21 A couple of last questions and I will be
 22 done. Are the majority of your people that are
 23 staying there just drug, alcohol problems? Is
 24 that it?

25 MR. ARANT:

1 I would like to speak on this too.

2 MS. WITTMANN:

3 Okay. So we have been a nonprofit since
 4 2005. We've actually been around since 2001.
 5 We -- Open Doors Homeless Coalition is -- I'm
 6 going to say a whole bunch of words and I'm trying
 7 to tell you what they mean, but we're the
 8 collaborative applicant, the HMIS lead and the
 9 coordinated entry lead for our HUD continuum of
 10 care, which is in the lower -- the designated
 11 geography is the lower six counties of the State
 12 of Mississippi. So we apply for all of the HUD
 13 funds that come to our geographic area.

14 When I say all those words, that means
 15 we apply for them. We hold the data for all of
 16 the agencies that are funded through our
 17 continuum, and that's quite a few that I'm sure
 18 you are familiar with: Center for Nonviolence,
 19 Back Bay Mission, Community Care Network, Mental
 20 Health Association of South Mississippi, et
 21 cetera. So a lot of work we do is behind the
 22 scenes and creating the conditions.

23 MR. STANOVICH:

24 Most of your funding is federal funding.
 25 MS. WITTMANN:

1 Yes, sir. Mental illness, as well.
 2 Like, you know, drug and alcohol addiction is
 3 considered mental illness.

4 But can I speak real quick about your
 5 question? So directly, my point I'm trying to get
 6 across about this is we're not taking someone
 7 right off the street. What we have, Home of Grace
 8 has four beds that we have dedicated to Open
 9 Doors, the homeless coalition, for a year, so they
 10 have those spots. When those individuals come
 11 from them off the street and go through treatment,
 12 then they're eligible to come to our house,
 13 Discipleship 33.

14 So it will be affecting -- it will be
 15 helping the homeless population in Biloxi. It
 16 just won't be right away because, again, we don't
 17 take in -- in my opinion, taking someone straight
 18 off the street and throwing them in a house,
 19 that's not the answer. I mean, that's not going
 20 to work. We're going to get them the help they
 21 need and then put them in the house.

22 MR. STANOVICH:

23 Last question. All these occupants,
 24 will they be expected to have -- seek some type of
 25 employment?

1 MR. BRANT:
 2 Yes, sir. That is a requirement. If
 3 they -- so that's one of the things -- we talked
 4 about rules. I run a real structured environment,
 5 so drugs and alcohol isn't the only thing. You
 6 have a certain amount of time. If you don't find
 7 a job within the first few weeks, then we find you
 8 somewhere else to go because that's not what we're
 9 about.

10 You know, in the Bible it talks about
 11 work, and that's what we're trying to do, is not
 12 only get these individuals off the drugs but
 13 create them into, you know, viable citizens, you
 14 know what I mean, giving them employment and stuff
 15 that like.

16 Typically, just on average, I haven't
 17 had anyone in any of the houses that I currently
 18 operate that had a problem that hadn't found
 19 employment within the first two to three weeks.

20 And right now -- I'm sure y'all are all
 21 aware -- if somebody wants to work, there is a job
 22 out there. It might not be one you want, but
 23 there is plenty of jobs out there. And, again,
 24 that's why certain employers call me because I
 25 have individuals that are willing -- they're just

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1 The City calls me Pickleball Tom.
 2 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 3 What's your address, Pickleball Tom?

4 MR. LINENBERGER:
 5 I live at 2584 Rue Palafox in Biloxi,
 6 Ward 5.

7 I have had a lot of experience with
 8 these guys, not one of the patients, but I also
 9 have a lot of experience with the VA. The VA
 10 has -- we have six other transitional houses here
 11 in the City of Biloxi. Two of them are up in the
 12 Sunkist area. One is off of Rodenberg and another
 13 is on the Alicia Street. I don't know the other
 14 two. They are for both women and men and it's
 15 very similar. They come out of treatment. Most
 16 of them are mental health because of PTSD or drug
 17 and alcohol, but it's been very successful. And I
 18 would like you to approve it.

19 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

20 Thank you.

21 Anyone else to speak in favor?

22 Mr. Lyons.

23 MR. LYONS:

24 Barry Lyons, formerly at 642 Hopkins
 25 Boulevard, but I'm here on behalf of Discipleship

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1 looking for a job.

2 MR. STAKOVICH:

3 Thank you.

4 MR. CARRON:

5 Do they pay some form of rent?

6 MR. BRANT:

7 Yes, sir. So they pay \$150 a week.

8 Now, we do -- I do have a lot of supporters, a lot
 9 of people that will -- you know, when someone
 10 first gets out of treatment, they don't have -- it
 11 might take a couple of weeks to get a job. They
 12 will help them until they get a job. But within
 13 the first couple of weeks, they are paying rent,
 14 \$150 a week.

15 MR. CARRON:

16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

18 Any other questions?

19 (No response.)

20 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

21 Okay. Thank you.

22 Is there anyone in the audience to speak
 23 in favor of the applicant's request? Anyone
 24 speaking in favor?

25 MR. LINENBERGER:

1 33 as a board member and also as a graduate and
 2 former board member of the Home of Grace.

3 I know firsthand all of the good that
 4 goes on through this amazing ministry called the
 5 Home of Grace. And Ronnie has been the director
 6 for 10 years. Local guy from Biloxi. Parents are
 7 good Biloxi people that I grew up with. I didn't
 8 know that until just a little while ago. But
 9 we've worked together for a while trying to help
 10 people to overcome addiction.

11 And these homes that we're here to -- or
 12 this particular home, everything they've told you
 13 I certainly vouch for, and these people are --
 14 have gone through a 90-day or longer program
 15 before they ever get to this house. So,
 16 obviously, there is no guarantees in life, but I
 17 just feel like this would be a great opportunity,
 18 the house and the setup of the house.

19 And being in Biloxi -- they've certainly
 20 not saturated Jackson County, but the goal of Home
 21 of Grace, we want to reach as many people as we
 22 can all over the country, and I've been an
 23 advocate for them, and personally, you all know
 24 some of the people that I have helped get into
 25 that program. So, you know, this is a very worthy

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1 project and I hope he gets approved. Thank you.
 2 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 3 Thank you.
 4 Is there anyone else to speak in favor?
 5 MS. KING:
 6 I will be brief. My name is Charlotte
 7 Sidaway King. I'm a former chairman of the board
 8 for Open Doors Homeless Coalition, and just in my
 9 term -- it was almost eight, ten years' tenure
 10 with the board -- one of the biggest things that
 11 we had with the transitional housing -- because as
 12 y'all can all see, we know the problem is there.
 13 We see it, but homelessness is just not a
 14 broad-brush solution. Otherwise, we wouldn't be
 15 dealing with it for multiple generations.

16 But the biggest thing that we have
 17 learned is the customization and really working
 18 with those individuals and the ones that we have
 19 seen that get committed and go through the
 20 treatments like the Home of Grace -- and there is
 21 other ones out there -- they just need a chance.
 22 Being able to give them an ability to step up in a
 23 community that has rallied behind them to help
 24 ensure that all the lives in our city can be as
 25 best off as possible is huge. And not having the

1 Actually, right next to that is my lot,
 2 which I'm planning on next week breaking ground on
 3 my million-dollar health clinic. Right next to
 4 that is Will's Way, okay, which is a facility that
 5 specializes in children with psychiatric and
 6 behavioral problems.

7 So I don't think it's -- the halfway
 8 home is a great program and I'm sure it's very
 9 effective. Nothing against them. The proximity,
 10 the location is the problem that I have. It's not
 11 suited for where it is located for what
 12 development is happening in that area.

13 If you drive down Debuys, there are
 14 hundreds of million of dollars being filtered into
 15 Debuys right now with the Marriott, with the Great
 16 Southern project, with the big gas station, the
 17 townhomes. It's moving more north. And over the
 18 railroad tracks, we're starting to kind of see the
 19 development happen in a good way.

20 Nothing against the halfway home. I
 21 hope the best for them. I just don't like the
 22 location.

23 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

24 Thank you.

25 Anyone else in opposition?

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1 housing, especially for this niche of citizens, is
 2 extremely important, so I do hope everybody will
 3 consider that as y'all decide to move forward.
 4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

6 Okay. Anyone else to speak in favor?
 7 Anyone in favor?

8 (No response.)

9 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

10 Okay. Is there anyone to speak in
 11 opposition?

12 If you can, just state your name and
 13 address, please.

14 MR. MCCARTY:

15 Kendrick McCarty. I own the lot, 279,
 16 right across the street on Debuys.

17 I don't think it's a question whether or
 18 not it's a good program. That's not the question.
 19 The question is the proximity to all the
 20 businesses around it.

21 If you show that screen again with that
 22 video, you know, right across that big area that
 23 used to be the skate park is now slated to become
 24 a recreational center for youth programming. You
 25 know, that's coming up. That's Harrison County's.

1 MR. NOBLE:

2 Christopher Noble, 2304 Merry Lane,
 3 Biloxi.

4 The -- I don't see anyone having a
 5 problem with what Discipleship 33 can accomplish
 6 and what they've been accomplishing.

7 The problem is the area and that
 8 application. What they told you today, you can
 9 believe it, and that's that they are a social
 10 services organization. That is expressly denied
 11 for a neighborhood business zone. Changing it and
 12 calling ourselves a halfway house or anything
 13 else, they guaranteed -- they meet the definition
 14 of social services agency by their own website
 15 description, how they filed with the Secretary of
 16 State's office, their NAICS codes. They're a
 17 social services organization, and it's just not
 18 allowed in a neighborhood zone.

19 As far as the co-applicant, Open Doors
 20 Homeless Coalition, again, they've done great
 21 work, but recently they found themselves in front
 22 of City Council for code enforcement hearings,
 23 which they didn't show up for. Paul Tisdale, the
 24 councilman there, offered a 30-day extension for
 25 them to see it if he could get in touch with them

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1 because the code enforcement office couldn't.
 2 In addition to all that, the
 3 noncompatibility with the surrounding area, safety
 4 concerns of all the other nearby property owners,
 5 the reduced economic concerns of retail sales and
 6 the property value reductions, I urge you to
 7 follow the Land Development Ordinance, which is
 8 our land development law.

9 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

10 Thank you.

11 Anyone else in opposition?

12 MRS. NOBLE:

13 Hi. I'm Jennifer Noble. I live at 2304
 14 Merry Road, Biloxi, but I own the property at 266
 15 Debuys Road, which is adjacent to that property on
 16 two sides. They envelop me on two sides.

17 I respectfully oppose the establishment
 18 of a halfway house at this location due to the
 19 direct and significant impacts it would have on my
 20 adjacent property. A halfway house, by
 21 definition, houses individuals on release from
 22 custodial confinement or placed in lieu of
 23 confinement, which introduces a level of risk and
 24 instability that is incompatible with the
 25 surrounding environment.

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1 burden on the adjacent property owners.

2 Additionally, the program described by
 3 the applicant does not meet the City of Biloxi's
 4 definition of a halfway house, which is
 5 specifically limited to licensed homes for
 6 individuals on release from custodial confinement
 7 or placed in lieu of confinement.

8 The applicant has stated that this will
 9 be a transitional living home program for adults
 10 voluntarily pursuing personal transformation, with
 11 services including faith-based mentorship,
 12 counseling, life skills training, job readiness
 13 program, community service, recovery meetings and
 14 case management. These activities clearly align
 15 with the City's definition of a social services
 16 agency and not that of a halfway house.

17 A social services agency is not
 18 permitted at this location. Reclassifying this
 19 program as a halfway house would undermine the
 20 integrity of the zoning code and set a harmful
 21 precedent for future misclassifications.

22 And for these reasons, I respectfully
 23 request that the Commission deny the conditional
 24 use permit. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

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1 The presence of this facility next door
 2 would negatively affect my property in several
 3 ways: Safety and security concerns. Facilities
 4 serving individuals transitioning out of
 5 confinement increases the likelihood of
 6 disturbances, loitering and police activity.

7 Reduced property value. Real estate
 8 data consistently shows that proximity to
 9 correctional-related facilities depresses property
 10 values, making it harder to sell or refinance that
 11 property.

12 Increased traffic and activity with
 13 staff, volunteers and service providers.

14 Incompatibility with existing use. A
 15 halfway house is an institutional use placed
 16 directly beside private property. This disrupts
 17 the stability and predictability that zoning is
 18 designed to protect.

19 Loss of privacy and quiet enjoyment.
 20 Outdoor programming, group meetings and increased
 21 foot traffic diminish the privacy and peaceful use
 22 of my property.

23 Approving a halfway house at this
 24 location would fundamentally alter the character
 25 of the neighborhood and impose a disproportionate

1 Anyone else to speak in opposition?

2 Yes, sir. Come up and state your name
 3 and address.

4 MR. MARKOVITS:

5 My name is Rod Markovits. I live at
 6 2668 Beach Boulevard, Biloxi. I own property that
 7 is adjacent to that at 2702 Fernwood Road.

8 And I do want to thank the Commission
 9 for posting signs, sending letters, which allowed
 10 me to be informed of this hearing today or of this
 11 discussion.

12 Like, when you follow these other three
 13 people ahead of me, I don't have to say the same
 14 thing, so I save my time, but I concur with
 15 everything they have said.

16 When I bought that property in August of
 17 '23, I spent a lot of money to improve it because
 18 of the commercial zoning and what was intended for
 19 it to be.

20 As the gentleman said earlier, there is
 21 a lot of investment going down that little road
 22 from the corner of the gas station, the new hotel,
 23 the old Sun Herald property. Everything along
 24 that is moving toward the commercial use and to a
 25 better business environment where there will be

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1 the tax implications and, obviously, revenue. I
2 made the investment and have that property for the
3 same reason.

4 Currently, I have struggled with areas
5 around me with homelessness. I drive from my
6 condo, which I live on Beach Boulevard, to that
7 building every day. I can tell you that I have to
8 probably cross two or three people that are
9 homeless every day. I am disappointed to see
10 that.

11 And I do appreciate what you guys do,
12 you know, in your group and faith-based
13 organizations who focus on improving that. This
14 is just not the property for a five-bedroom home.
15 That's where I stand.

16 I just want to focus on -- it's a
17 commercial property. Let's keep Debuys where it
18 needs to be commercially and continue to develop
19 it that way as you have planned in your zoning.

20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

22 Thank you.

23 Is there anyone else speaking in
24 opposition? Anyone speaking in opposition?

25 I will state for the record that we did

1 checking that mailbox. Our business address with
2 the State and Federal government is at the Knight
3 Nonprofit Center, so it went unnoticed until we
4 heard from Paul Tisdale when it was lifted up.

5 That tree has now been removed. The
6 issue has been resolved. We appreciate it being
7 brought to your attention and I appreciate the
8 ability to tell you that it's been taken care of.

9 I would also just like to point out that
10 we were the fiscal agent for South Mississippi
11 AIDS Task Force in the conditional use that was
12 granted in, I believe, 2018 or '19 for the
13 property just right down the street, so I just
14 wanted to make everyone aware that there was a
15 conditional use granted right there in the same
16 neighborhood. Let's see.

17 MS. KING:

18 It's the white building, if I'm not
19 mistaken.

20 MS. WITTMANN:

21 It sure is. So it's right there. So
22 that, I believe, has got seven units of
23 transitional housing where people do sleep there
24 overnight, and they are -- you know, it's set to
25 serve a very specific population and that's been

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1 receive five letters in opposition of this as well
2 via e-mail. I won't read all of those. Some of
3 those are pretty lengthy, but we did receive five,
4 with some of those being adjacent property owners
5 on Debuys Road.

6 With there being no other people in
7 opposition, is there anything you guys would like
8 to address that you heard in opposition?

9 MS. WITTMANN:

10 Yes. Thank you.

11 I would just like to address the code
12 violation, and I had read that in the e-mail that
13 was submitted from the person who spoke. I'd just
14 like to explain just a little bit about it. It
15 was a fallen limb that had fallen on our property
16 and it occurred after we had moved our staff in
17 August with one of those storms that came through.
18 We didn't even realize it for a period of time,
19 but when the -- and we have some nonprofit
20 partners who do our yard work and things like
21 that. We had asked them to try to -- to cut it
22 down and remove it.

23 But the violation came to our actual
24 property address at 2793 Fernwood and no one is
25 there on a regular basis anymore. We had not been

1 in operation, as I said, since those renovations
2 have been completed since about 2019.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. CARRON:

5 I have a question for you. These people
6 that are going to be residents there will be
7 working, so they will not be loitering around all
8 day long?

9 MS. WITTMANN:

10 No, sir. That's absolutely correct.

11 MR. APANT:

12 And there will be no direct social
13 services on-site. So when I talk about counseling
14 groups, that's all off-site stuff, whether through
15 the Home of Grace or our new counseling program
16 called Crown Joy, which is in Gulfport, so there
17 will be no direct services on-site. All these
18 individuals will be working and coming back and
19 living here just like it's their residence.

20 MR. CARRON:

21 And if you had some of the homeless
22 people starting to hang around there, you would
23 have them removed, wouldn't you?

24 MR. APANT:

25 Yes, sir. I have a great relationship

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1 with the police chief of Biloxi, the major, all
 2 that as well, so any kind of complaints or
 3 anything like that would be taken care of. But I
 4 don't foresee that being a problem because this
 5 isn't advertised or isn't going to be known as
 6 like a homeless shelter. This is, you know,
 7 housing.

8 Also, too, just to say, you know, the
 9 thing about the tree, the guys in our program are
 10 the ones that cut the tree and cleaned up the
 11 property that was the complaint before.

12 Anyway, thank you.

13 MR. CARRON:

14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

16 Jerry.

17 MR. CREEL:

18 Let me address this from two
 19 standpoints. Number 1, we have worked with Home
 20 of Grace before. I can tell you they are no
 21 nonsense. They run a great operation.

22 Many of you may be familiar with what's
 23 now called the Country Living Mobile Home Park up
 24 on Old 67. It's just past Hudson Krohn Road. For
 25 years, that was a code enforcement nightmare that

1 It is a conditional use. If you look
 2 specifically at the property and you look around
 3 it, everything around it is commercial, except on
 4 the east side of it. There is about a 10- or
 5 12-foot wooded buffer strip there, and on the
 6 other side of that is Fernwood Apartments and
 7 those buildings actually face -- that building
 8 actually faces the opposite direction. It faces
 9 east. Everything else is commercial.

10 The staff has looked at this and based
 11 on our reputation with Home of Grace, staff has no
 12 objection and recommends approval.

13 MR. DELAHOUSEY:

14 I would like to make a motion. I move
 15 to approve the applicant's request.

16 MR. CARRON:

17 Second.

18 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

19 Motion by Mr. Delahousey; second by
 20 Mr. Carron.

21 Discussion. Jerry, with this
 22 conditional use, what would revoke a conditional
 23 use? I mean, what -- would it have to be a number
 24 of items? Would it have to -- I mean, you know,
 25 what would be able to revoke this conditional use

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1 we had to deal with all the time.

2 Maybe five years ago, Home of Grace took
 3 that over. They went in. They cleaned it up.
 4 We've had absolutely no calls there. It's
 5 actually a showpiece for mobile homes now. The
 6 grass is never overgrown. You don't see trash and
 7 litter around. Everything is maintained. They've
 8 done a really great job with that, so our working
 9 relationship with them has been absolutely great.

10 The question of whether or not this is a
 11 halfway house or social services, whenever this
 12 case came in, we had to look through the
 13 definitions to see which one it most closely
 14 identified with. And the definition of a halfway
 15 house is a licensed home for juveniles or adult
 16 persons on release from a more restrictive
 17 confinement or initially placed in lieu of a much
 18 more restrictive custodial confinement, wherein
 19 supervision, rehabilitation and counseling is
 20 provided to assist residents back into society
 21 enabling them to live independently. And I think
 22 that's exactly what we just heard that this group
 23 does, so the title of halfway house is exactly
 24 what our definition calls it, you know, based on
 25 what we've heard.

1 if --

2 MR. CREEL:

3 Well, there are the nine conditions
 4 there, or in addition to that, if it becomes a
 5 public nuisance, something that we could classify
 6 as a public nuisance, which encompasses a number
 7 of different things.

8 But if, for whatever reason, we receive
 9 complaints about it, that they're not being a good
 10 neighbor, we give them a chance. We always give
 11 them a chance to correct whatever the issue is.
 12 If, for whatever reason, that issue is not
 13 corrected, then it could be brought back to the
 14 Planning Commission and the City Council to revoke
 15 that conditional use permit, so there is
 16 safeguards on this in the event that we do have
 17 problems.

18 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

19 Thank you.

20 Any other discussion?

21 MR. DELAHOUSEY:

22 Just before my fellow commissioners vote
 23 on this, I would just like to make a couple of
 24 comments.

25 I live in this ward. Mr. Linenberger is

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1 my neighbor. I have no objections to this coming
 2 into Ward 5. Few people want to have a
 3 transitional house shelter -- not shelter,
 4 transitional home or halfway house in their
 5 neighborhood, but then where? Everybody that has
 6 spoken in opposition today has said, well, we
 7 favor it, but just not in our neighborhood. Whose
 8 neighborhood is --

9 MR. MCCARTY:

10 Somewhere else.

11 MR. DELAHOUSEY:

12 Please. I have the floor.. Okay?

13 We've tried to send them to Woolmarket.
 14 Woolmarket is getting a little bit fed up because
 15 we're trying to move them there.

16 We had a tremendous problem when a
 17 private property owner on Iris Street in Biloxi
 18 chopped down all that wooded area. There were
 19 hundreds of homeless camps in that area. Okay?
 20 Homelessness is a problem in Biloxi.

21 So I would take exception to say that a
 22 transitional home like this is going to attract
 23 homeless people to hang around there. Where are
 24 the homeless people supposed to go? This is a
 25 partial solution at least for five of the people

1 Yes, sir. So all the residents --
 2 that's a good question too -- are required to buy
 3 their own food and cook their own meals just like
 4 they are anywhere. So there's nobody coming from
 5 outside for meals or anything like that?

6 MS. WITTMANN:

7 Not a soup kitchen.

8 MR. ARANT:

9 Yeah. No. They take --

10 MR. STANOVICH:

11 That's what I wanted to get to.

12 MS. WITTMANN:

13 I knew that's where you were going.

14 MR. ARANT:

15 Essentially, they are renting a room.
 16 It's their house. They have to buy their own
 17 food. They have to cook their own food. No
 18 outside people coming in.

19 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:

20 Dr. Drawdy.

21 DR. DRAWDY:

22 Jerry, one thing that they mentioned, to
 23 the north of it, they said that there are already
 24 some people living and having residents at night
 25 over there.

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1 that may have been living in a camp in the woods
 2 that were torn down.

3 Mississippi has abandoned pretty much
 4 the homeless situation. Our state hospital,
 5 that's no longer a solution. You can't send
 6 people to Whitfield anymore, and so it's just --
 7 we've been forced to deal with it.

8 It's not the ideal situation perhaps,
 9 but it does address the problem, I think, with the
 10 right monitoring. And I have done some background
 11 on this company. The right monitoring and people
 12 overseeing it, I think it's -- I have no problems
 13 with it.

14 People say, well, you know, Debuys Road
 15 doesn't want this type of business. Well, there's
 16 a cannabis dispensary on Debuys Road also. I
 17 don't know that that's caused any problems since
 18 it's been there. So I would just like to say that
 19 I'm in favor of this.

20 MR. STANOVICH:

21 I've got one more question I forgot to
 22 ask. I think I know the answer to it. But the
 23 only meals served there will be for the residents,
 24 correct?

25 MR. ARANT:

1 MS. WITTMANN:

2 Sir, could you ask it again? I didn't
 3 hear.

4 DR. DRAWDY:

5 Just to the north going up Debuys Road,
 6 you said that there was some other people -- that
 7 you had a home there, that people were living
 8 there and they had been there and it was a
 9 conditional use and it was granted three or four
 10 years ago.

11 MS. WITTMANN:

12 Oh, it's on Fernwood. It's just a
 13 little further east on Fernwood, about a block and
 14 a half at most. I think she could show you on the
 15 map again.

16 DR. DRAWDY:

17 Who, again, is living there now?

18 MS. WITTMANN:

19 So that building is owned by South
 20 Mississippi AIDS Task Force, and so it -- we were
 21 the fiscal agent for the funds that they received
 22 through Mississippi Home Corporation in 2018. It
 23 was completed by 2019. We had to -- we had to
 24 request conditional use for the renovation at that
 25 time because it is in that same NB zoning area,

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1 and it was granted and it's been operating -- and
 2 it's been operating since that time.
 3 DR. DRAWDY:
 4 There are people living in it today?
 5 MS. WITTMANN:
 6 Yes, sir.
 7 DR. DRAWDY:
 8 How many?
 9 MS. WITTMANN:
 10 I think there's seven different units
 11 within that facility.
 12 DR. DRAWDY:
 13 Okay. Thank you.
 14 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 15 Jerry, I think they mentioned another
 16 facility just to the south of there, is that
 17 correct, that houses --
 18 MR. CREEL:
 19 No. That's east. It's east of there on
 20 Fernwood, yes. That's what she just described.
 21 No. There is a cannabis dispensary
 22 south of here.
 23 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 24 No, not that. I thought they were
 25 saying there was another home.

1 MR. STANOVICH:
 2 Jerry, how many people do you think are
 3 at Gulf Coast Rescue Mission?
 4 MR. CREEL:
 5 It varies from time to time. The most I
 6 have ever seen down there at one time was probably
 7 10. It could be more than that. It could be less
 8 than that at different times.
 9 But Tom, he has a regimen down there.
 10 You either comply with it or you don't. And they
 11 work. He puts them to work when they go down
 12 there.
 13 DR. DRAWDY:
 14 It's been in operation probably in
 15 excess of 35, 40 years.
 16 MS. WITTMANN:
 17 Yes, a long time.
 18 MS. MAGEE:
 19 Do y'all have a food pantry? Are you
 20 going to have a food pantry?
 21 MR. ARANT:
 22 Not at this -- no. That's not what we
 23 are about.
 24 MS. MAGEE:
 25 You said they will cook for themselves?

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1 MS. WITTMANN:
 2 Mr. Dellenger, I think you're talking
 3 about Gulf Coast Rescue Mission.
 4 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 5 Yes.
 6 MS. WITTMANN:
 7 Yes. So I would call that facility a
 8 homeless shelter.
 9 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 10 Yes. But that's south of -- just south
 11 of this?
 12 DR. DRAWDY:
 13 It's on Mission Lane.
 14 MR. CREEL:
 15 It's on Mission Lane, at the very end of
 16 Mission Lane.
 17 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 18 Okay. But that's just south of this?
 19 MR. CREEL:
 20 Yes.
 21 And I can tell you, too, that Tom Mims
 22 doesn't put up with foolishness either. Those
 23 guys either work or they get out. He doesn't
 24 spend time up there -- I have witnessed it
 25 firsthand the way he runs that place.

1 MR. ARANT:
 2 Yeah. So they all will have jobs.
 3 MS. MAGEE:
 4 And go buy their food?
 5 MR. ARANT:
 6 Yes, ma'am.
 7 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 8 Is there any other discussion?
 9 (No response.)
 10 CHAIRMAN DELLENGER:
 11 We have a motion and a second for
 12 approval.
 13 All those in favor, please raise your
 14 hand. Mr. Lechner, Mr. Parker, Mr. Todaro,
 15 Ms. Magee, Ms. Shaw, Mr. Stanovich, Mr. Bogard,
 16 Mr. Delahousey, Dr. Drawdy, Mr. Carron, Mr. King,
 17 Mr. Snow, Mr. Poulos; myself, Mr. Dellenger.
 18 We'll let the record show that's unanimous.
 19 The next case that we have is Case
 20 Number 25-051-PC, John P. Foster, which is a
 21 request for two conditional use approvals to
 22 authorize the establishment of two single-family
 23 residences on a single lot and also to allow those
 24 single-family residences to be used as short-term
 25 rentals upon a parcel of land .23 of an acre, more

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