

PRELIMINARY REPORT

B: Baethe Road and Kermier Road

APPLICANT: META Planning

JURISDICTION: City of Houston ETJ

PRECINCT: Harris County Pct. 3

DISTRICT: None

PROPOSAL:

META Planning + Design LLC – on behalf of Emptor Hockley LLC and Hillcroft Medstar JV – is requesting:

B-1 the realignment of proposed Major Thoroughfare Baethe Road running east-west from Warren Ranch Road to Kickapoo Road.

B-2 the realignment and reclassification of Kermier Road running north-south from Betka Road to Mound Road.

APPLICANT'S JUSTIFICATION and HISTORY:

B-1: Baethe Road

Baethe Road is a proposed east-west major thoroughfare that runs through the subject property and along part of the northern tract boundary. A street alignment for Baethe Road first appeared in this vicinity on the 1976 MTFP Map, shown as a thoroughfare, and has been on all subsequent MTFP Maps since. No portions of Baethe Road exist today within Harris County, although a 3.2-mile portion of the roadway exists in Waller County, approximately 3.25 miles west of the proposed realignment.

The alignment of Baethe Road, as it currently is shown on the 2019 MTFP, is split along the common property boundaries of multiple large acreage tracts in the area, including the subject site. The requested amendment is to realign Baethe Road to slightly swing the right-of-way south approximately 385' for a stretch of 3,770 linear feet, or just less than three-quarters of a mile, before swinging back up to the common property line. The proposed deviation is less than a 500' shift from the current alignment, but the realignment will remove some of the frontage from the adjacent tracts owned by the Hewlett Packard Company and the Story Lindsey Family Limited Partnership. Both tracts have alternate access to Betka Road on the north.

The realignment is proposed for two primary reasons: to encourage passive traffic-calming, and to accommodate off-site drainage. The current alignment of Baethe Road is part of a grid network within a region that has yet to see substantial development. As development begins to occur, these straight thoroughfares will encourage high-speed travel across the region. Introducing a curve into the alignment will encourage through-traffic to slow down and maintain safer travel speeds through the future residential community. Additionally, since the surrounding development is contemplated as primarily single-family residential, the aesthetic of a curvilinear thoroughfare would better suit the future suburban community.

Additionally, the subject tract experiences sheet flow from the northwest and will need to divert this water toward Rock Hollow Creek and further south across the property. The drainage will need to be located along the current Baethe Road alignment in order to strategically capture and mitigate excess

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stormwater. The proposed amendment to the thoroughfare alignment will allow the landowner to incorporate a channel for drainage and linear detention inside the property boundary, before crossing under the thoroughfare to continue flowing to the south. Without this realignment, the subject site would need to coordinate off-site drainage and detention improvements and a means of taking the water underground on the tracts to the north, in order to cross under the thoroughfare at the property line before continuing south.

If granted, the proposed amendment will not affect the proposed regional circulation, but instead will enable the developer of the subject site to begin establishing the thoroughfare network set forth by the MTFP. There will be no change to the physical or environmental conditions of the area other than allowing the drainage and detention to be designed appropriately. Furthermore, the amendment will not have an impact on the existing thoroughfares as no thoroughfares exist within the bounds of the amendment, and the proposed amendment will not alter or cause a burden on the surrounding proposed street network.

In summary, the proposed amendment is to realign a small portion of a Major Thoroughfare. The proposed realignment will enable drainage to be put into place that will aid surrounding landowners, will improve aesthetics along the thoroughfare, and will improve safety by introducing passive traffic calming measures. Approval of this amendment during the 2020 MTFP Amendment will enable the owner to continue with plans to design and develop the tract.

B-2: Kermier Road

A street alignment for Kermier Road first appeared in this vicinity on the 1983 MTFP Map, shown as a thoroughfare, and has been on all subsequent MTFP Maps since. Kermier Road currently only exists north of Betka Road and terminates just north of FM 2920, south of Waller Spring Creek Road. Kermier Road as it is shown on the 2019 MTFP is classified as a Major Thoroughfare (T-4-100). The purpose of the request is to both downgrade Kermier Road from a T-4-100 to a MN-2-60 within the subject site, and to realign a portion of the roadway from its current proposed connection with Mound Road on the south to intersect with Warren Ranch Road on the east.

Kermier Road - downgrade

The current MTFP alignment of Kermier Road extends from the existing intersection with Betka Road, south into the subject site, where it crosses Baethe Road and continues south until it ultimately terminates with a T-intersection at Mound Road. South of Mound Road is the Katy Prairie Conservancy, a strongly supported nature preserve with long-lasting conservation protections, where development cannot occur. From the existing intersection at Betka Rd, the traffic demand on the roadway will lessen as it approaches the Conservancy, with very little regional traffic. The subject site is proposed for single-family residential purposes on both sides of Kermier Drive, which will not impose the same traffic demands as might be seen by a denser mix of commercial or multi-family users. Incorporating a collector street in place of Kermier Road would better serve the community as it would eliminate the large, higher speed corridor with a slower, pedestrian friendly collector street within the neighborhood.

The proposed downgrade will not be damaging to the surrounding area. The proposed collector will actively serve as a connection from local streets to multiple Major Thoroughfares, thus maintaining the hierarchy of the street pattern that is being proposed by the MTFP. The elimination of the Major

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Thoroughfare will not have a measurable impact to the overall street network as the proposed collector will fall within 2600' of major thoroughfare Warren Ranch Road which parallels Kermier Road to the east. The smaller street corridor will also be a benefit to the immediate surroundings by increasing safety for both pedestrians and vehicles along the roadway as it traverses a residential community, with the associated walking trails and other outdoor amenities.

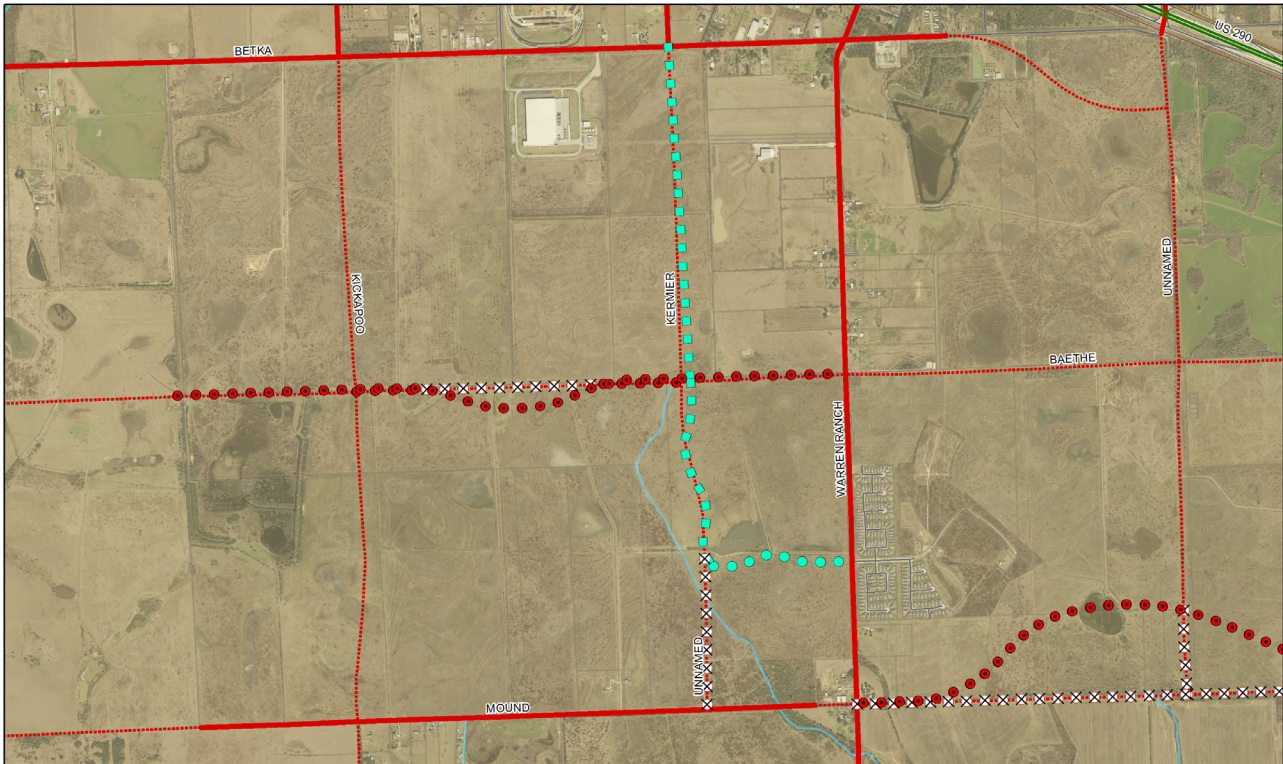
Kermier Road - realignment

The current alignment of Kermier Road on the 2019 MTFP within the subject site will be required to cross Rock Hollow Creek before meeting its destination at Mound Road. There is already an existing 160' drainage easement in place along this portion of the creek. South of the creek, Kermier Road is currently expected to dead-end into Mound Road before the Katy Prairie Conservancy. The requested amendment is to realign Kermier Road so that it swings eastward before the creek to intersect with Warren Ranch Road instead. The requested realignment will connect to the existing intersection with Mallard Crossing Drive, an existing collector street not on the MTFP that also extends further east into the Warren Ranch Road Tract GP and connects to the collector network proposed with that development.

The proposed realignment will not have a negative effect on the existing surrounding area, nor the proposed future development, and will in fact minimize impacts to the existing natural environment by removing the requirement for a major road to cross the creek. If creek crossings are proposed or required in the course of development of the subject site for single-family purposes, those crossings could be with smaller streets that would not be as substantial in terms of impact to the environment. The proposed realignment to match Mallard Crossing Drive will preserve Kermier Road's terminus to a major thoroughfare and will also incorporate an existing collector street network, thus maintaining and improving the hierarchical street pattern proposed by the MTFP. This connection will improve the ability of interlocal trips to avoid the Major Thoroughfare in order to access local streets east and west of Warren Ranch Road. Additionally, the realignment of Kermier Road will not negatively impact the overall street network as the proposed alignment falls within 2600' of Warren Ranch Road, which is a Major Thoroughfare located parallel to the east, thus establishing the grid pattern within the correct spacing window.

In summary, the proposed amendments are to downgrade the classification of Kermier Road to a Minor Collector and to realign to intersect with Warren Ranch Road instead of Mound Road. The proposed downgrade and realignment will enable the community to still utilize the roadway to make connections from residential streets to Major Thoroughfares, while improving safety and reducing speeds.

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