

# Knapp To Build Art Deco Offices Off Bullard

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TEMPLE TERRACE - A weakness in the city's development code and the exercising of property rights have cleared the way for an art deco-style building along Bullard Parkway.

Knapp & Sons General Contractors will build the 7,324-square-foot facility on the south side of Bullard Parkway between Sunnyside Road and Greenfield Avenue, just outside the city's community redevelopment area.

If the construction site were inside the CRA, the building's design would be governed by guidelines recently implemented by the Temple Terrace City Council. The guidelines require new commercial structures to utilize Spanish Revival or Mediterranean architecture and limit exterior colors, fencing and lighting styles and driveway and parking lot placement.

Former City Councilman Mark Knapp said he didn't want to go along with the city's architectural preferences when he had the complex designed.

"I believe in property owners' rights; that is the reason you see an art deco-style building rather than the traditional Mediterranean buildings," he told the council during a meeting Tuesday. "I am a fan of Mediterranean style, when it's done right."

The city is interviewing consultants to rewrite building codes and has considered extending the design guidelines throughout the city. In the meantime, residents must live with what the current code allows, Community Services Director Ralph Bosek said Tuesday.

"Our code is weak, and it doesn't really address where buildings can be built and what style they can be built in," he said. "Not that this building won't be a quality building, but it will be art deco in an area where we would have liked here to have seen another style."

The sleek two-story design, with its flat roof and linear accents, will be in stark contrast to the surrounding houses. The office complex will be the city's first commercial building adjacent to the Temple Terrace Golf Course, Bosek said.

"It's right next to the third tee," he said.

In May, the city council voted to pay Knapp \$119,100 to buy out his lease in La Beacon Plaza at the end of December. That plaza is about a block away from where the office complex will be built. It wasn't revealed as to whether Knapp plans to use the new building as his office. He did not return calls seeking comment.

Prior to Tuesday's meeting, Knapp had been battling the city over a traffic issue relating to the project. He continued standing his ground in front of the council.

The project will have entrances off Sunnyside and Greenfield, but city staff expressed concerns about drivers using the property as a cut-through to avoid Bullard Parkway traffic. The staff recommended the Greenfield entrance be limited to incoming motorists, if a traffic signal is installed at Sunnyside or once the redevelopment project is completed near Bullard Parkway and 56th Street.

Knapp objected to limiting the entrance. He eventually persuaded the council to unanimously approve the project, with the condition that the issue be revisited if problems arise. Construction on the complex must begin within six months or Knapp will have to seek an extension of his site plan approval.

"If people are cutting through my property, don't you think that's my problem?"