

MINUTES
GREATER LOWNDES PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
LOWNDES COUNTY SOUTH HEALTH DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
325 WEST SAVANNAH AVENUE
Tuesday, May 31, 2016
5:30 P.M.

Members Present:

Johnny Ball, III
Brad Folsom
Gerald McClendon
Jody Hall, Acting Chairman
Ted Raker
W. Keith Sandlin
Chip Wildes

Members Absent:

Franklin Bailey, Chairman
Tommy Willis
~Dasher representative~
Celine Gladwin

Staff:

Jason Davenport, County Planner
Matt Martin, City's Planning & Zoning Admin.
Carmella Braswell, Recording Secre.

VISITORS PRESENT:

(See Attached Sign-In Sheet)

AGENDA ITEM #1:

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Hall called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Chairman Hall welcomed everyone to the GLPC meeting, and thanked staff for their efforts for arranging the special called meeting. Chairman Hall explained that the Planning Commission serves as an advisory body to the local member governments regarding land use requests. Chairman Hall explained that the Planning Commission is a recommending body only, and the final determination of the requests presented will be made by the applicable local governments. Chairman Hall explained the meeting procedures and stated that handouts were available for review by the public for the conducting of the public hearing, to include the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Powers that will be used as part of their determination for the cases on the agenda. Chairman Hall announced the date of the public hearing for the member governments as listed on the agenda.

Chairman Hall asked Commissioner McClendon to lead the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ITEM #2:

Approval of the Meeting Minutes: April 25, 2016

Chairman Hall called for questions, corrections, and approval of the April 25, 2016, GLPC meeting minutes.

There being none, Commissioner Folsom made a motion that the minutes be approved. Commissioner Ball seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Hall called the motion and it was carried unanimously. (Vote 6-0)

CITY OF HAHIRA CASES:

AGENDA ITEM #3:

HA-2016-02

Cheryl Godfrey – W Park Avenue, Hahira, Georgia

Nature of Request: Mr. Martin stated this is two (2) Variance requests – a Variance to the minimum front yard building setback and a Variance to the minimum rear yard building setback requirements in Single-Family Residential (R-10) zoning. The subject property is an encapped lot with 3 street frontages. The applicant is proposing to construct a new single-family home on the western portion of the property and demolish the existing single-family home on the eastern portion of the property. The subject property has a depth of only 80' of depth between the north and south property lines. The applicant is proposing to honor the intent of satisfying the minimum front yard setback line and shift the proposed home into the rear yard. The property that is immediately adjacent to the south has 1 street frontage, and the shared property line is considered the adjacent property's side yard that only requires a building setback of 10 feet from the property line. The applicant desires an eighteen (18') feet setback from the rear property line setback – a variance of twelve (12') feet. Staff finds the Variance request consistent with the Variance Review Criteria and recommend approval subject to 2 conditions: 1) Variances shall be approved for a reduced front yard setback of 30' from the north property line, and a reduced rear yard setback of 16' from the south property line; 2) The existing home on the subject property shall be vacated and demolished by the applicant within 30 days of completion and successful final inspection of the new home by the City.

Chairman Hall asked if there were any questions to staff from the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Raker asked staff to clarify the statement “pre-dates Hahira’s zoning regulations” and does this apply to the entire neighborhood?

Mr. Martin stated there are many homes that are nonconforming and pre-dates the adoption of the Hahira’s Zoning Ordinance, particularly the residences to the south. The existing dwelling is about 10' from the rear property line.

There being no further questions, Chairman Hall asked if there were anyone present wishing to speak in favor of the request.

Mrs. Cheryl Godfrey stated she is the property owner requesting the variance.

There being no questions for the speaker, Chairman Hall asked if there were anyone present wishing to speak in opposition to the request.

There being none, the public participation portion was closed.

Chairman Hall called for further discussion. There being none, a motion was called.

Commissioner Raker stated due to the existing hardships he would like to make a motion to recommend approval of the Variance requests with two (2) conditions as presented by staff and outlined in the staff report. Commissioner Folsom seconded the motion.

Chairman Hall called for discussion concerning the motion. There being none, the motion was called. (Vote 6-0, Unanimous).

AGENDA ITEM #4:

HA-2016-03

Josh Thomason, between West Main Street and West Park Street, Hahira, Georgia

Nature of Request: Mr. Martin stated the next agenda items are 3 separate requests for the same project. The subject property consists of 1.54 acres – the applicant is requesting to rezone from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Residential-Professional (R-P). The subject property is currently vacant and is part of a larger multi-family development. The submitted site plan includes the subject property and the property immediately to the west – the property to west will be the subject to the next agenda item. The subject property is bordered by a Community Activity Center (CAC) and located within an Established Residential (ER) character area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The northern portion of the property facing West Main Street is also located within the Hahira Gateway Corridor Overlay District.

Chairman Hall asked if there were any questions to staff from the Planning Commission. There being none, a call was made to those wishing to speak in favor of the request.

Mr. Josh Tomason, stated he is the applicant and developer of the proposed project, The Village on Park. The proposed multi-family development will be a 64-unit apartment facility consisting of 1, 2, and 3 bedroom apartment homes. Residents will have access to the park, community center, fitness center, business and computer center, covered pavilion and playground. The exterior of the buildings will be constructed of brick and concrete siding. Efficiency appliances will be included in each apartment unit. There will be a full time property manager and maintenance staff person on site, and they will employ a 3rd party landscape company to maintain the grounds. The proposed project fits well with the surrounding uses consisting of single and multi-family.

Chairman Hall asked if there were any questions to the speaker.

Commissioner Raker asked if the development is government subsidized or are the rents regulated.

Mr. Thomason stated that is correct, the rents are regulated. The development will apply for Georgia Tax Credits through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The community will restrict the rents to citizens who earn 60% of the area's median income. This development will not consist of rental assistance. Some of the units will be market based rentals.

Chairman Hall asked how are the rents determined.

Mr. Thomason stated there are a total of 64 dwelling units – approximately 20 of the units will be market rental units. This development will be a mixed income community.

Chairman Hall asked if there were anyone else present wishing to speak in favor of the request.

There being none, Chairman Hall asked if there was anyone present wishing to speak in opposition to the request.

There being none, the public participation portion was closed and further discussion and questions were entertained by the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Folsom asked if there were any changes to the site plan.

Mr. Martin stated yes, since the work session. A revised site plan was sent via email and also placed at each station (black and white version). The revision was primarily with the revision of the parking area connected to W. Park Street and the density increased to 64 units.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Hall entertained a motion.

Commissioner Folsom made a motion to recommend approval of the request as presented – finding the rezoning request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion.

Chairman Hall called for questions and discussion concerning the motion. There being none, Chairman Hall called the motion and it was carried. (Vote 6-0, Unanimous to Approve)

AGENDA ITEM #5:

HA-2016-04

Josh Thomason, East side of Union Road, between West Main Street and West Park Street, Hahira, Georgia

Nature of Request: Mr. Martin stated the next 2 agenda items will be a rezoning request followed by an annexation request which will be a part of larger multi-family development. The subject property consists of 4.9 acres and is currently zoned CH (Highway Commercial) in the unincorporated areas of Lowndes County. The applicant is requesting Residential-Professional (R-P) zoning for multi-family development. There are supplemental regulations for multi-family developments, as well as supplemental standards for development with the Gateway Corridor Overlay District. The applicants are demonstrating compliance as per their submitted site plan. The overlay district brings the buildings closer to W. Main Street; however, site plan needs revising to reflect the requirement of sidewalks. Staff is recommending approval and finds the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power.

Chairman Hall asked if there were any questions to staff from the Planning Commission. There being none, Chairman Hall asked if anyone was present wishing to speak in favor of the request.

There being none, Chairman Hall asked if anyone was present wishing to speak in opposition to the request.

There being none, Chairman Hall closed the public participation portion of the request and entertained further discussion from the Planning Commission.

There being none, Chairman Hall called for a motion for the rezoning only.

Commissioner Wildes made a motion to recommend approval of the rezoning request as presented by staff. Commissioner Folsom seconded the motion.

Chairman Hall called for discussion concerning the motion.

There being none, Chairman Hall called the motion and it was carried unanimously. (Vote 6-0)

AGENDA ITEM #6:

HA-2016-05 Josh Thomason, East side of Union Road, between West Main Street and West Park Street, Hahira, Georgia

Nature of Request: Mr. Martin stated this agenda item is for the annexation of previous rezoning request into city limits of Hahira. Staff is recommending approval and finds the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power.

Chairman Hall asked if there were any questions to staff concerning the annexation.

Commissioner Folsom stated he had concerns with the property being partially in the overlay district.

Mr. Martin stated the vast majority of the property is within the overlay district and will be developed to meet the standards.

There being no further questions, Chairman Hall called for those wishing to speak in favor of the annexation request.

There being none, Chairman Hall called for those wishing to speak in opposition to the request.

There being none, Chairman Hall closed the public participation portion of the request and entertained further discussion.

There being none, Chairman Hall called for a motion.

Commissioner Wildes made a motion to recommend approval of the annexation as presented, as the request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Folsom seconded the motion.

There being no discussion, Chairman Hall called the motion and it was carried unanimously. (Vote 6-0)

CITY OF VALDOSTA CASES

AGENDA ITEM #7

VA-2016-08 Matt King, 2107 N. Oak Street, 200 & 210 W. Cranford Avenue

Nature of Request: Mr. Martin stated this request is a Planned Development request on property that is split-zoned. The proposed development is an expansion of an existing multi-family development. The aerial of the subject property shows an existing apartment complex on the east. In 2011, the subject property was constructed as a townhouse style apartment complex called "The Timbers" that consisted of 18 units. The subject property shown as Phase 1 on the site plan was not built to its maximum density. Phase 2 shown on the site plan will be a completely renovated multi-family development on the east side called "The Woodlands". The units on the east side are all 1 bedroom units and exceed the density requirement – staff is unsure if a Variance were granted to the maximum density requirement. Ultimately, the applicant would like to combine the subject properties and maximize their density at 18 units per acre by adding a 10-unit building with amenities to the Phase 2 area. The Planned Development request is one option to expedite this request. The subject properties are located within the historic district and will be subject to review by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). Staff is recommending approval of the request, as it is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Planned Development Review Criteria with the following conditions: (1) Approval shall be granted for a mixed-residential Planned Development in accordance with the submitted master plan and architectural renderings. The development shall contain no more than 57 total dwelling units with only residential uses being allowed, including Home Occupations, but no Home Businesses or any non-residential uses; 2) The DR-10 portion of the development may be occupied by only one dwelling unit (existing single-family residence) and also the existing overflow parking area in the rear yard. There shall be no driveways

connecting the parking areas through this property to North Oak Street; 3) Modification to building exteriors or existing site improvements shall remain subject to the city's historic district Design Guidelines and any Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) approvals; 4) The development shall adhere to agreements with the City Engineering department relating to management of offsite stormwater entering the site from the north; 5) Existing fences and landscaped buffers shall be maintained around the perimeter of the overall development adjacent to private property; 6) The 3 existing parcels shall be combined together into a single tract of land within 1 year, and the proposed 10-unit apartment building shall begin construction within 2 years of the approval date. Otherwise, Planned Development approval shall automatically expire.

Chairman Hall asked if there were any questions for staff from the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Folsom asked what is the use of the DR-10 portion and will it remain unpaved.

Mr. Martin stated the rear yard is fenced and will be used for extra parking that can remain unpaved; however, if the City Engineer has concerns, it will be addressed.

Commissioner Wildes asked if the proposed conditions were discussed with the applicant.

Mr. Martin stated yes – the conditions were discussed at a pre-application meeting with the applicant. Condition #4 that addresses stormwater concerns will be addressed at a plan review meeting and discussed with the applicant.

There being no further questions, Chairman Hall called for those wishing to speak in favor of the request.

Mr. Jimmy Cone, 1806 Plum Street, stated he is the architect for the project. The stormwater concerns have been addressed by their engineer via a catch basin in the corner. The storm water is an underground detention facility. The appearance of the current huge asphalt parking lot will be done away. The property owner is currently under construction with the existing 28-units. The building renderings were submitted in the staff packets for your review.

Mr. Matt King, Lake Laurie Drive, stated he is there to answer questions regarding the project.

There being no questions for the speakers, Chairman Hall asked if anyone was present wishing to speak in opposition to the request.

There being none, the public participation portion was closed.

Chairman Hall called for further discussion from the Planning Commission.

There being none, Chairman Hall called for a motion.

Commissioner Wildes made a motion to recommend approval of the request as presented, finding the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan with 6 conditions as outlined in the staff report. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion.

Chairman Hall called for questions regarding the motion – there being none, Chairman Hall called the motion and it was carried unanimously. (Vote 6-0)

AGENDA ITEM #8

VA-2016-09 City of Valdosta LDR Text Amendments

Nature of Request: Mr. Martin stated the City of Valdosta is proposing text amendments to the Land Development Regulations (LDR), most of which pertaining to Chapter 230 (sign regulations). In 2010, the City amended its sign regulations to relax the standards for portable signs - allowing them with a permit for an extended period time. In 2012, there was a sunset date. In 2012, the sunset date was extended to 2015, and again extended for 6 months for recommendations. The recommendation for temporary signs is to roll back to what it was before - portable signs being allowed with a permit in lieu of a permanent signs up to 90 days or until the permanent sign is constructed. Furthermore, banners will be allowed temporarily with a permit 4 times a year – a period of 30 days consecutive term; additionally, the text amendment will add provisions for adding wall sign regulations – the wall sign will be determined by the wall area (height and width). Banners will be allowed with a permit at a minimum of 24 square feet. The third amendment is to the overlay districts regarding the use of metal siding outside industrial zoning districts – the intent is to clarify the language on the fronts of buildings that face a street or parking lot. The last text amendment is from the City’s Arborist – to define the terms “transitional buffer” and “calendar quarter”.

Commissioner Raker asked if there were any objections to metal siding.

Mr. Martin stated primarily to keep the use of metal buildings from appearing in residential and commercial districts - trim work that is decorative in nature is permissible.

Commissioner Folsom stated his concerns for a continuous permit for portable signs and suggested adding language to clarify staff’s intent – suggested language is to add to subsection “a” the language “only for 1 continuous 3-month period per calendar year”; Commissioner Folsom also suggested that staff recheck for grammatical errors.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Hall asked if anyone was present wishing to speak in favor of the request.

There being none, Chairman Hall asked if anyone was present wishing to speak in opposition to the request.

There being none, the public participation portion was closed.

Chairman Hall called for a motion.

Commissioner Wildes made a motion to recommend approval to the proposed text amendments as presented and with adding the language as presented by Commissioner Folsom. Commissioner Ball seconded the motion.

Chairman Hall called for questions and discussion concerning the motion. There being none, Chairman Hall called the motion and it was carried. (Vote 5-1)

Other Business

Chairman Hall asked if there were any other business to discuss.

Mr. Davenport stated he was working on information concerning different types of Planned Developments, as requested by the Planning Commission.

There being no further business, Chairman Hall adjourned the meeting 6:29 p.m.

Jody Hall, Acting Chairman
Greater Lowndes Planning Commission

Date