

**MINUTES**  
**GREATER LOWNDES PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
LOWNDES COUNTY SOUTH HEALTH DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
325 WEST SAVANNAH AVENUE  
Monday, June 27, 2016  
5:30 P.M.

**Members Present:**

Johnny Ball, III  
Brad Folsom  
Gerald McClendon  
Jody Hall, Acting Chairman  
Ted Raker  
Tommy Willis  
Celine Gladwin

**Members Absent:**

Franklin Bailey, Chairman  
W. Keith Sandlin  
Chip Wildes  
~Dasher representative~

**Staff:**

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

**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: May 31, 2016**

Chairman Hall called for questions, corrections, and approval of the May 31, 2016, GLPC meeting minutes.

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

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

## **LOWNDES COUNTY CASES:**

### **AGENDA ITEM #3:**

**REZ-2016-12**

**Roy Rhodes – 3320 Bemiss Road, Valdosta, Georgia**

**Nature of Request:** Mr. Davenport stated this is a request by Mr. Roy Rhodes, the real estate agent, and Mr. Tolulope Salami, the proposed buyer, for a change in zoning along the Bemiss Road corridor from residential to commercial. The subject property is one of the last piece of property within the Thompson Subdivision that fronts Bemiss Road that is not commercial. Staff was approached about the development of this property which is currently vacant for an educational/recreation facility. Staff met with the applicant and is recommending approval. Staff has attempted to respond to questions that were raised at the work session – the applicants are present to answer questions as well. Regarding hosting groups overnight, the answer is no. Regarding the sufficiency of parking spaces, the minimum number of parking spaces based on the proposed 3,000 square feet of building is twenty (20) spaces. The applicant do plan to accommodate for school buses – the facility will have a drop off zone, and there is an ongoing verbal arrangement with an adjacent property owner further north that owns the night club. The applicants are also planning to widen the current driveway and sharing the driveway with the property owner to the south. The applicants do not plan on any outdoor events or exhibits. The ingress/egress/traffic pattern will be to enter into the southern driveway and exit onto the driveway to the north – in a circular pattern. Staff is proposing no conditions at this time.

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

Commissioner Gladwin asked what were the proposed hours of operation.

Mr. Davenport stated there were none identified on the applicant’s letter of intent; however, the applicants should be able to address the question.

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

Mr. Salami, 3829 Old Vine Way, stated the name of the facility/project will be “Creative Zone”. He and his wife propose that the development will cater to South Georgia’s school children in the interest of scientific technologies, engineering, and mathematics. The goal is to provide hands-on activities to include educational exhibits and displays, as well as host various workshops – writing and computer science. The activity center meets the Greater Lowndes Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies. The center will create new jobs, increase knowledge and understanding in science, promote science programs in general, and enhance knowledge. They are planning to collaborate and create partnerships with the local K through 12 school systems to promote technology, and provide a positive impact to students, parents, teachers, and educators in Lowndes County and beyond. The proposed structure will be constructed to the required building standards.

Chairman Hall asked if there were any questions from the Planning Commissioner for the speaker.

Commissioner McClendon asked how many people will be employed by this project.

Mr. Salami stated 6 right now including his wife; they are working with the small business development organization of the Chamber of Commerce. Their goal is to expand in the next 2-3 years.

Commissioner Raker asked if any of the clients were interested in coding.

Mr. Salami stated coding refers to computer language – they will take the kids to coding and programming workshops in Orlando, Florida.

Commissioner Gladwin asked what is the proposed building size and the hours of operation.

Mr. Salami stated 3,000 square feet; their hours are proposed for Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and on Saturday and Sunday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; and, longer hours during the summer.

Commissioner Gladwin asked if they were currently providing this service.

Mr. Salami stated no.

There being no further questions, Chairman Hall asked if there was anyone else 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.

Commissioner Gladwin asked staff to clarify the County's parking standards.

Mr. Davenport stated the calculation for this use is 1 space per 150 square feet; that equals a minimum of 20 spaces and the parking spaces do not accommodate for buses.

There being no further questions, Chairman Hall called for a motion.

Commissioner Raker made a motion to recommend approval of the rezoning request from R-21 to C-G as presented by staff. Commissioner Folsom seconded the motion.

Chairman Hall called for questions and discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was called and carried. (Vote 6-0)

#### **AGENDA ITEM #4**

#### **REZ-2016-13, Evelyn Lund, Knights Ferry Road**

**Nature of Request:** Mr. Davenport stated this request is for an updated masterplan for Highgrove Farms planned development. The rezoning request was approved in 2014. At this time, the applicant thought there was an opportunity to have a site plan ready but was unable. Staff is recommending tabling to the GLPC's July 25<sup>th</sup> meeting. The submitted site plan depicts what is currently in place; however, it does not depict any future expansions. Staff has asked the applicant to be present for questions.

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

Mr. Lund, 4701 Knights Ferry Road, thanked the Planning Commission for the opportunity to speak. Mr. Lund stated High Grove Farms is and always will be a venue to matrimonies. The site plan is forthcoming and will be submitted to depict details which were not shown on submitted site plan. The architect has been very busy with other projects. Mr. Lund stated he will be present for the next meeting. High Grove Farms was developed and intended for neighbors in mind, and to be enjoyed by all.

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

Commissioner Willis stated this is a nice facility with increased development – will the site plan depict future growth.

Mr. Lund stated yes, the forthcoming site plan will be updated to show 3-4 future buildings/venues by his architect, Mr. Jimmy Cone. The buildings are already in place; there will be a ceiling and floor added to create a glass solarium to help conceal music. The buildings will not be drastic – High Grove Farms will be in harmony with the neighbors. As a policy, their intent is to host 1 wedding per week at the farm, for use on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Commissioner Gladwin asked staff if there were an expiration date on a planned development.

Mr. Davenport stated none at this time – square footages and impervious surface maximums are used as the ceiling for planned developments.

Mr. Lund stated they are very careful about how the subject property is developed – their desire is beauty and balance of buildings. The property is beautiful and they do not want to overbuild.

Chairman Hall stated the property is very beautiful as he was a guest at a function hosted at the subject property.

There being no further questions, 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.

There being none, Chairman Hall called for a motion

Commissioner Willis made a motion to recommend tabling the request until such time an updated site plan is submitted or until the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting. Commissioner Gladwin seconded the motion.

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

## Other Business

Chairman Hall called for other business.

Mr. Davenport stated the agenda depicts the 2016 Greater Lowndes Comprehensive Plan Draft. Staff has a substantial draft for which the County Commission and the Mayor-Council will consider in the next few weeks. The document is about 60 days away from a final draft.

Mr. Martin added there was a kick-off public hearing held for the 2016 Greater Lowndes Comprehensive Plan draft document. The public hearing to transmit the draft is tomorrow, then each member government has to transmit by letter to the region and the state (mid July), followed by submission to DCA which starts a 30-day process (mid Aug). One option is to place the document on the August agenda for discussion, followed by submission to the local governments. Each local government has to hold their own public hearings to adopt the document by resolution.

With the consensus of the Planning Commission, Chairman Hall asked staff to add the Comprehensive Plan document to the agenda for their regular meeting in August.

There being no further business, Chairman Hall adjourned the meeting 6:01 p.m.

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Jody Hall, Chairman  
Greater Lowndes Planning Commission

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Date