

MINUTES
GREATER LOWNDES PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
 LOWNDES COUNTY SOUTH HEALTH DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
 325 WEST SAVANNAH AVENUE
 Monday, April 30, 2018
 5:30 P.M.

Members Present	Members Absent	Staff
Franklin Bailey, Chairman	Lou McClendon	Jason Davenport, County Planner
Keith Sandlin	~Dasher Representative~	Matt Martin, City Planning & Zoning Admin.
Ed Hightower	Tommy Willis	Carmella Braswell, Recording Sec.
Vicki Rountree		
Jody Hall		
Chip Wildes		
Celine Gladwin		
Johnny Ball, III		

VISITORS PRESENT:

(See Sign-In Sheet)

AGENDA ITEM #1:

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Bailey called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Chairman Bailey welcomed everyone to the GLPC meeting. Chairman Bailey explained that the Planning Commission serves as an advisory body to the local member governments regarding land use requests. Chairman Bailey 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 Bailey 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 listed on the agenda. Chairman Bailey announced the dates of the public hearing for the local member governments as listed on the agenda.

Chairman Bailey asked Commissioner Sandlin to lead the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ITEM #2:

Approval of the Meeting Minutes: March 26, 2018

Chairman Bailey called for questions, corrections, and approval of the March 26, 2018, GLPC meeting minutes. There being none, Chairman Bailey called for a motion.

Commissioner Wildes made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Ball seconded the motion. (Vote 7-0)

City of Valdosta

Agenda Item #3 and Agenda Item #4

VA-2018-06 (Integrity Development Partners LLP)

Nature of Request: Mr. Martin stated the first 2 agenda items are separate requests by the same applicant for almost the same project. Staff will present both cases together as both cases will require separate motions. The first request is a rezoning request to rezone 2 parcels of land totaling 2.49 acres to Community Commercial (C-C). The subject properties are the former China Garden Restaurant facility and an adjacent residential duplex property that faces Emory Street. This request is also related to a third parcel to be presented as a Planned Development. The subject property is located within a Community Activity Center (CAC) Character Area and an Institutional Activity Center (IAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The aerial imagery depicts commercial development along Ashley Street. The subject properties are part of the North Ashley Street corridor which is dominated by mostly commercial uses. To the east is a blighted but older well-established residential neighborhood. To the west is lands owned by VSU's North campus, athletic fields, and the SGMC. Regarding the request for Planned Development, the development will consist of two (2) parcels for a multi-family residential complex. The subject property has sat empty for the past 8-9 years. The property contains a commercial building of about ~14k square feet in addition to a separate warehouse. The conceptual site plan depicts total demolishing of all structures and new construction of a 4-story apartment building. The proposed building will be ~350'-400' in length. All of the properties within the Planned Development are also located with the Ashley-Bemiss "Enterprise/Opportunity Zone" in the City's designated Urban Redevelopment Area, as well as the two (2) properties being located within the Urban Commercial Corridor Overlay District of the LDR. The proposed development will required three (3) deviations from the LDR as it relates to 30% reduction in required parking due to housing being for seniors, and the other 2 items are deviations from the Supplemental Standards as it relates to multi-family. The applicant is present for questions. Staff is recommending approval for both the rezoning and planned development requests with conditions.

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

There being none, Chairman Bailey asked if anyone was present wishing to speak in favor of the request.

Mr. Steve Brooks, 6048 Johnson Road NW, Hahira, Georgia, stated he works with Integrity Development Partners. They would like to build a multi-family complex for seniors (ages 55 and older). They are present to answer any questions. Their firm has experienced the development of multi-family housing across the southeast. The rules are to rent at least 80% of the units to seniors. Their intent is to lease all the units to seniors. The project is set for a minimum of 15 years. This site was chosen because of the location to medical services, drug stores, city parks, and recreational facilities. The project will contain lots of amenities to include a community garden, community center, and a healthcare clinic. Regarding parking, the project will provide enough parking to accommodate the residents.

Commissioner Hall stated the proximity of the proposed development to the college is a concern, after the project's 15-year period has expired.

Chairman Bailey asked if there were any checks and balances in place to alleviate the concern for collegiate students.

Mr. Brooks stated yes. The project will be a DCA affordable housing program that will prohibit full time students as the primary tenants. All tenants will be listed on the leases and must qualify with the required income restrictions.

Commission Rountree asked if they were comfortable with the proposed number of parking spaces.

Mr. Brooks stated yes – they are proposing 1 parking space per dwelling unit. Additionally, they have acquired an additional lot off of University Drive for more parking and to accommodate their need for green space.

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

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

There being none, the public participation was closed.

Commissioner Gladwin asked if the proposed conditions for the planned development run with the life of the project.

Mr. Martin stated that is correct and the conditions are in the name of the applicant - any changes will require an amendment hence a new public hearing process, or development a project under C-C zoning.

There being no further questions or discussion from the Planning Commission, Chairman Bailey called for a motion.

Regarding case VA-2018-06 (rezoning), Commissioner Hall motion to recommend approval as presented. Commissioner Wildes seconded the motion.

There being no questions or discussion, Chairman Bailey called the motion and it was carried. (Vote 7-0)

Chairman Bailey called for a motion on the planned development request.

Regarding case VA-2018-07 (planned development), Commissioner Rountree made a motion to recommend approval of the request as presented by staff. Commissioner Hightower seconded the motion.

There being no questions or discussion, Chairman Bailey called the motion and it was carried. (Vote 7-0)

Agenda Item #5

VA-2018-08, Proficient Pool & Landscape

Nature of Request: Mr. Martin stated this is a Planned Development request with no rezoning associated with it. The subject properties consist of 4 landlocked parcels totaling 3.44 acres located at 1420 Gornto Road. In 2014, a planned development approval was granted for a retail complex. The applicant is planning to purchase and redevelop the subject property as a pool and landscape retail center with retail services in association with the use. The subject property is located within a Parks/Recreation/Conservation (PRC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The applicant is proposing no changes to the buildings and plans to reuse the buildings and add a display area. The applicant plans to continue to use the existing

access easement that has been in place since the 1970s. The applicant is proposing to pave the parking spaces for their customers. The applicant is planning to redevelop and reorganize the property. Staff is recommending approval of the Planned Development with eight (8) conditions similar to the conditions in 2014 in a condensed form.

Chairman Bailey asked if the fire truck turnaround meet the requirements for the existing use.

Mr. Martin stated the applicants did not fully comply with the Fire Department's request and the planned development approval has expired. The proposed turnaround will be required as per the current Fire Marshall, additionally, the condition regarding foliage was satisfied as per the last set of conditions and the City's Arborist.

Commissioner Gladwin asked if the applicants will upgrade the existing driveway from Gornto Road and is there a system whereby conditions are monitored i.e. combining parcels, etc.

Mr. Martin stated the city would like improvements at Gornto – the subject properties do not have direct access onto Gornto Road, however, the applicants have permission to access their property through the property that has direct access and are conversing with the property owner to improve the property from which the access will occur. The parcel still needs combining as per the conditions. There is a tracking system in GIS software for conditions and other zoning related information pertaining to a specific property.

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

Mr. Brett Moore, 805 Smithbriar Drive, stated he is the potential owner of the subject property. He has been in this business for 7 years. This project would be an opportunity he has never had to have a retail location as part of the pool business – this business will be a one stop shop and offer full range of plants, fertilizers, irrigation, rakes, pools, etc. Regarding the outside grill, it will be a functional grill but more for customer display. The existing building is 4,000 square feet - there will be approximately 2,000 square feet of retail, 2,000 square feet for offices, and 6,000 square feet for storage of lawnmowers and overflow of furniture and bulk supplies.

Commissioner Rountree stated the area has a tendency to flood – what plans are in place for chlorine in the case of floods.

Mr. Moore stated he was raised in the area and understands the flood waters – this does not present a concern for them as he staffs 15-20+ employees who can take care of problems in the case of an emergency.

Commissioner Rountree asked if they were comfortable with the current ingress/egress easement arrangement.

Mr. Moore stated he had spoken with the property owner and have considered purchasing the real estate adjacent to the subject property. He has also received verbal approval from the owner, as well as from the owner of the liquor store to access the subject properties.

Commissioner Gladwin asked they were familiar with the proposed conditions.

Mr. Moore stated yes.

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

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

There being none, the public participation portion was closed.

There being no further questions or discussion from the Planning Commission, Chairman Bailey called for a motion.

Commissioner Hightower made a motion to recommend approval of the request as presented by staff with conditions. Commissioner Gladwin seconded the motion.

There being no questions or discussion on the motion, Chairman Bailey called the motion and it was carried. (Vote 7-0)

City of Hahira

Agenda Item #6

HA-2018-01 (City of Hahira-Text Amendment)

Nature of Request: Mr. Martin stated this is a text amendment proposed by the City of Hahira to add provisions in their Zoning Ordinance for temporary commercial uses. This discussion has been ongoing for some time, the public hearing is necessary, and staff is present to answer any questions.

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

Commissioner Gladwin asked staff to clarify the provisions for length of time uses are allowed.

Mr. Martin stated there is nothing currently in the Zoning Ordinance that addresses the use. Temporary retail uses can be food vending or other things. In general, it is for 30 days per calendar year; however, for food trucks, it is 7 consecutive days, parked on private property. This will not apply to other types of vending. Consideration is given to whether the use is temporary or permanent.

Commissioner Hightower asked how does the timeframe provisions compare to the City of Valdosta.

Mr. Martin stated the provisions in Valdosta are 60 days – the proposed timeframes are shorter in Hahira.

Commissioner Hall asked if the barbeque and/or produce stand have to stop operating.

Mr. Martin stated the city officials will have to consider whether to make the provisions retroactive. The dynamics between the City of Valdosta and Hahira are very different.

Commissioner Wildes inquired about the food truck at Home Depot and stated the proposed amendments appear to be too restrictive as a means to make a living.

Commissioner Rountree stated she understands the idea for food trucks to operate a few hours at a location and the desire to move from one location to another. While she understands the concerns of the restaurant, it was their choice to have the overhead that they have. The responsibilities for both uses are very different. She is concerned about the perception and the precedent the proposed amendments may cause i.e. a gateway to other unwanted businesses in Hahira.

After lengthy discussion and questions to staff, Chairman Bailey asked if anyone was present wishing to speak in favor of the request.

Mr. Barry Robinson, 6083 Quarterman Road, stated he operates the Huddle House in Hahira and has shared his thoughts with their council members. The amendment gives opportunities for public meetings. He is not present to represent restaurant businesses or their owners. He would like to see order in the community. While overhead is a choice, complying with the regulations isn't a choice. He would like to see all businesses participate in the economic pot as their presence in the community is a responsibility and a commitment. Right now, there is disorder with the food trucks in Hahira as they circumvent the process while participating in the same economic pot. The amendments will bring order back to the community. He chose to open a business in the Hahira community and participate in the economic pot. Some of his employees live day-to-day and would be affected. He would like existing businesses to put back into the community.

There being no questions for the speaker, Chairman Bailey asked if anyone else was present wishing to speak in favor of the request.

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

Gretchen Quarterman, 6565 Quarterman Road, stated an idea would be for different food trucks to come on different days. She is concerned with a business buying license to operate during the year and using up their maximum time allotment. Hahira is poised to change with up and coming uses i.e. soccer families. Food trucks should be welcomed. The proposed time limits appear to be a bad idea.

There being no questions for the speaker, Chairman Bailey asked if anyone else was present wishing to speak in opposition of the request.

Mr. Garrett Giddens, 2356 Old Union Road, stated he is the owner of hibachi food truck. Ordinances should be designed to protect the City of Hahira in lieu of protecting the business and restaurant owners, and that does not seem fair. The proposed timeframes is not a smart business decision and does not appear that it will work. He is concerned and fear that other surrounding cities and counties would follow what Hahira is doing and keep the food truck business out of their city. The chaos mentioned by the speaker is speculation and is opinionated. He is respectful to any business owner. He has come to an agreement with an adjacent business owner for days the food truck can operate. Changes are needed to the proposed amendments that are fair.

Chairman Bailey asked if there were any questions for the speaker.

Commissioner Gladwin asked what other towns he operated the food truck.

Mr. Giddens stated Nashville, Adel, and Hahira – there are no ordinances to restrict his food truck business. There should be ordinances to prevent chaos, but not to restrict. It should not be the city's business to see that new businesses are profitable, but to ensure that the business is lawful.

Commissioner Rountree asked the speaker to share his oversight as a food truck operator - how much was it to set up?

Mr. Giddens stated it is not as easy as people think – they have some of the same hurdles to jump and same inspections as any brick and mortar business. They have to pay business license and permit fees in addition to rents and taxes like everyone else. It took close to 6 figures to start and operate a food truck business.

There being no further questions for the speaker, Chairman Bailey asked if anyone else was present wishing to speak in opposition to the request.

There being none, Chairman Bailey closed the public participation and entertained further discussion and questions from the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Hall stated while he appreciates the statements from the business owner, the city has got to address and proposed an amendment that will help Hahira. The proposed amendment seems very restrictive and there needs to be a provision to “grandfather in” the barbeque and produce stand that is operating currently.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Bailey called for a motion.

Commissioner Rountree made a motion to recommend denial of the text amendment. Commissioner Hightower seconded the motion.

Chairman Bailey called for discussion on the motion.

Commissioner Sandlin requested that the council amend the proposed text amendment for consideration by the Planning Commission.

There being no further discussion on the motion, Chairman Bailey called the motion and it was carried. (Vote 7-0)

OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other business, Chairman Bailey adjourned the meeting. (6:52 p.m.)

Franklin S. Bailey, Chairman
Greater Lowndes Planning Commission

Date