

GREATER LOWNDES PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
1901 N. Forrest St.  
Monday, July 27, 2020 – 5:30 PM

**GLPC Commission Members Present:** Franklin Bailey, Vicky Biles, Calvin Graham, Ed Hightower, Steve Miller, Vicki Rountree (Chairperson), Debbie Sauls, Chris Webb, Chip Wildes

**GLPC Commission Members Absent:** Tommy Willis

**Staff:** JD Dillard, Planning & Zoning Director; Trinni Amiot, Lowndes County Planner (Recorder); Matt Martin, City of Valdosta/Hahira Planning & Zoning Administrator

**VISITORS PRESENT:**

(Sign-In sheet available in file)

**CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairperson Rountree called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the GLPC meeting. Chairperson Rountree explained that the Planning Commission serves as an advisory (recommending) body to the local member governments regarding land use requests, and the final determination of the requests presented at this meeting will be made by the applicable local governments. Chairperson Rountree explained the meeting procedures and announced the dates of the public hearing for the local member government, as listed on the agenda.

Chairperson Rountree asked Commissioner McClendon to lead the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the Invocation.

**Agenda Item #2**

**Approval of the Meeting Minutes: June 30, 2020**

Chairperson Rountree called for additions, questions, and corrections of the June 30, 2020, GLPC meeting minutes. There being none, Chairperson Rountree called for a motion. Commissioner Hightower made a motion to approve the June 30, 2020, meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Wildes second. All voted in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item #3**

**CU-2020-04, Ricky Weeks** for a Conditional Use Permit for a Personal Service Shop in an R-P zoning district, 2418 Bemiss Road, (all or part of Tax Map 0112C – Parcel 171)

**Nature of Request:** Mr. Ricky Weeks is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Personal Service Shop (waxing salon) in an R-P zoning district. The subject property consists of 0.55 acres located at 2418 Bemiss Road. This is along the west side of the

street about 300 feet south of the intersection with University Drive. The property contains a professional office building (2,454-sf). The applicant's prospective tenant (Brazil's Waxing Center) is proposing interior renovations and to simply occupy the building as the sole tenant, with no changes to the building exterior or the site.

The subject property is located within a Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The existing R-P zoning is compliant with the Character Area.

This portion of Bemiss Road was first developed many decades ago and was dominated by scattered residences and a few businesses. However, after the road was widened to 4 lanes and the traffic began increasing, commercial and office used became more prevalent and many of the existing residences were converted to office type uses. This particular portion of Bemiss Road, between Castle Park and the Northside Drive intersection, continues with a pattern that is dominated by multi-family residential, offices, and a few light commercial uses. The subject property and its existing R-P zoning fits in very well with this pattern. Although the proposed use is a little more commercial in nature, the existing building and site have more a of residential appearance and have always been used for office purposes.

Surprisingly, the subject is actually located within the official FEMA 100-year floodplain, due to the headwaters channel of "Two Mile Branch" being located along the property's south property line. This channel is very small and is controlled by the upstream piping and weir associated with Bemiss Road, and there is no known flooding history on the subject property. Because there are no proposed changes to the existing building or to the overall site, there will be no change to the existing drainage patterns and none of the floodplain regulations are triggered. Therefore, this is considered a non-issue with regard to this proposed CUP. Any future redevelopment on the site would still be subject to floodplain regulations at that time – if applicable. The only other potential issues with this proposed change of use is that of parking (of which the site has more than the minimum requirement), and hours of operation (which are deemed to be acceptable along the Bemis Road corridor).

Staff Recommendation: Find consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Conditional Use Review Criteria, and recommend approval to the City Council, subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Approval shall be granted for a Personal Services Shop in the form of a waxing salon or esthetician services only.
- (2) Conditional Use approval shall expire after 2 years from the date of approval if no Business License for the approved use has been requested by that date.

Speaking in favor of the request: Ricky Weeks. Mr. Weeks expanded on the proposed use and offered to answer any questions the commissioners may have.

Speaking against the request: no one.

Commissioner Bailey had questions for Mr. Martin regarding the parking spaces.

There being no further discussion, Chairperson Rountree called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Wildes to recommend approval of the request as presented including the two staff recommended conditions, Commissioner Webb second. All in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

#### **Agenda Item #4**

**VA-2020-06, Stoker Development LLC** to rezone 1.80 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-15) to Single-Family Residential (R-6), 310 Eager Road, (all or part of Tax Map 0111D, Parcel 164)

**Nature of Request:** Stoker Development LLC is requesting to rezone 1.80 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-15) to Single-Family Residential (R-6). The subject property is located at 310 Eager Road which is along the north side of the street, about half way between Jadan Place and Walmar Place. This is directly across the street from the Langdale Place retirement community. The property contains an existing single-family residence (1,453-sf) and the applicant is proposing to redevelop this property into a mixed-residential development that contains 15 dwelling units. The applicant is also seeking Planned Development approval for this proposed development, and that request is being reviewed concurrently under file # VA-2020-07.

The subject property is located within an Established Residential (ER) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan, which allows the possibility of R-6 zoning.

The subject property is a classic example of a proposal for infill development. Under R-15 zoning, the property has enough land area (78,500 square feet) for up to 5 single-family lots. However, it does not have enough road frontage along Eager Road for more than one lot (each lot must be at least 100' wide and contain at least 15,000 s.f. of land area). The only solution for subdividing this property conventionally under R-15 zoning is to construct a new street (50' right-of-way) along the eastern property line with a cul-de-sac approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the distance into the lot, and then subdivide lots off of the new street. The main problem here is that the new street right-of-way would consume nearly  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the total land area and therefore the new subdivision would yield a total of only 3 lots under R-15. A very similar kind of scenario would apply under R-10 zoning. The property is still not wide enough along Eager Road to have more than one lot (each lot must be at least 80' wide and contain at least 10,000 s.f.), and it must use the same kind of street design to subdivide and develop the property with more than one lot. Because of the smaller lot widths allowed in R-10 zoning, this scenario would instead allow a

subdivision with 4 lots along the new internal street. Ironically, in this scenario each lot would average approximately 13,000 s.f. due to irregular lot shapes and net buildable areas caused by the cul-de-sac. Under the proposed R-6 zoning, this scenario dramatically increases to perhaps 8 lots – depending on actual lot design – but probably more comfortably at 7 lots maximum. However, it should also be noted that R-6 zoning allows the additional possibility of duplexes if the lots are at least 9,000-sf in area. All of these scenarios are intended to illustrate a main point, which is that conventional development which includes a new standard internal street is “cost-prohibitive” and is wasteful of land, when considering the net result of only a few lots and unimaginative design. Given the property’s characteristics, it is truly a prime candidate for some type of “Planned Development” approach, and this is discussed more fully with the next Agenda Item. The main purpose of this rezoning request is simply to set the guidance for overall development “density” of the property.

The existing land use pattern along Eager Road is dominated by single-family residential subdivisions of various shapes and sizes. There is no question that the residential land use pattern should continue. In terms of zoning pattern, most all of the properties along the north side of Eager Road are zoned R-15. However, it should be pointed out that this is a little deceiving in that the abutting small subdivisions along Jadan Place and Walmar Place are nonconforming in that 1/3 of their lots do not meet the R-15 minimum standard. By today’s standards, they would be zoned R-10. Other nearby developments with a little higher density include those along the south side of Eager Road where there is a mixture of R-15, R-10, and PRD-10 zoning, as well as the Langdale Place development which has R-P zoning. However, the most recent and the most significant development in all of this is the 2013 rezoning of the property about 300’ to the west at #316 Eager Road. This property is the exact same dimension and size (1.80 acres) and was successfully rezoned to R-10, and also received a Planned Development approval for 8 dwelling units. Given the actual R-10 nature of the abutting properties to the east and west, using this prior rezoning approval as a benchmark, seems like a logical solution and still leave open the “possibility” of up to 9 dwelling units with a quality Planned Development proposal.

Staff Recommendation: Find R-10 zoning consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommend approval of R-10 zoning (instead of the requested R-6), to the City Council.

Several questions from the Commissioners for Mr. Martin regarding zero lot line neighborhoods, total allowed lots in R-6, single story design versus two-story, and fencing.

Speaking in favor of the request: Matt Phelps. Mr. Phelps discussed in depth the proposed site plan and addressed the concerns the Commissioners raised.

Speaking against the request:

- Gregg DiMascio
- Mark Heffelfinger
- Anthony Rowe
- Chastity Luke

Comments included density and the possibility of renters in the proposed development, invasiveness of the second story houses, noise, and the quality of the building materials.

Commissioner Bailey had questions for the speakers regarding the current character of the neighborhood and if anyone had offered to purchase the subject property.

There being no further discussion, Chairperson Rountree called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Bailey to recommend denial of the request as presented, Commissioner Graham second. Those in favor of the motion: Commissioners Bailey, Ball, Biles, Graham, McClendon, Miller, Sauls, Webb, and Wildes. Commissioner Hightower voted against the motion. Motion carried.

#### **Agenda Item #5**

**VA-2020-07, Stoker Development LLC** for Planned Development approval of a mixed residential development in R-6 zoning, 310 Eager Road, (all or part of Tax Map 0111D, Parcel 164)

**Nature of Request:** Stoker Development LLC is requesting Planned Development approval for a mixed-residential development in an R-6 zoning district which would consist of 15 dwelling units. The subject property consists of 1.80 acres located at 310 Eager Road, which is the same property being requested for rezoning from R-15 to R-6 under file # VA-2020-06. The proposed higher density development requires an R-6 zoning in order to be eligible for Planned Development approval. The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing single-family residence, and redevelop the property with a combination of 7 detached single-family residences which mimic a "zero lot line" form of development pattern, as well as 8 "townhouses" (single-family attached) in the rear of the property. The property would be accessed by a shared private driveway with curb & gutter, and a hammerhead turnaround feature for emergency vehicles. (See attached conceptual master plan)

The subject property is located within an Established Residential (ER) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan.

Planned Development Approvals are reviewed and considered in much the same way as a Conditional Use. Pursuant to LDR Chapter 212, any significant changes to an already-approved Planned Development or change to the property boundaries of a Planned Development, is considered a major amendment and must be reviewed and approved by City Council in the same manner as a new Planned Development. In this case,

consideration of this proposed Planned Development is fully contingent upon successful approval of the Rezoning to R-6. Otherwise, it is clearly too dense for consideration.

All of the relevant background information for the subject property is contained in the previous Agenda Item for the rezoning request. Staff is opposed to the requested R-6 zoning, and is recommending approval of R-10 instead. This particular Planned Development request (for 15 dwellings) is not eligible for consideration under R-10, and therefore staff's recommendation is for DENIAL. However, staff would be fully supportive of a quality Planned Development request under an R-10 zoning scenario, which would be eligible for up to 9 dwelling units. However, this would likely be depicted under a different design layout, and this would need to be reviewed and advertised as a "new" and separate Planned Development request. It should be noted that if either the applicant's rezoning request or the Planned Development request for this cycle get "denied" by City Council, then this subject property is rendered ineligible for ANY land use approval consideration (rezoning, Planned Development, or CUP) for a period of at least 12 months. Therefore in this particular case, if the rezoning is approved for R-10, then the applicant is encouraged to WITHDRAW the Planned Development request in order to preserve its future eligibility.

Staff Recommendation: Find inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Planned Development Review Criteria, and recommend denial to the City Council.

No one spoke in favor of or against the request.

There being no further discussion, Chairperson Rountree called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Wildes to recommend denial of the request as presented, Commissioner Bailey second. All in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

### **Agenda Item #6**

**TWR-2020-01**, Old State Rd., 0258 003, 431 ac., E-A

**Nature of Request:** This case represents an attempt by the applicant to construct a new ~165' telecommunications monopole within a 455 acre wooded tract near Naylor, off Old State Road. The subject property is currently zoned Estate Agriculture (E-A) and is allowed to be used for the construction of a new telecommunications tower with GLPC review and LCBOC approval. For further reference, where towers are allowed per the various zoning districts, new towers require LCBOC approval while co-location on existing towers require only administrative approval. Additionally, if the proposed tower is determined to likely interfere with the use of aircraft traffic operations around the Valdosta Regional Airport (VLD) or Moody Air Force Base (MAFB) the application can be required to receive a letter of clearance from the aforementioned bodies. In this case, a letter of clearance is not required from either the Valdosta Regional Airport or MAFB.

The primary motivation for a new tower at the subject property is a gap in the existing coverage area. The subject property is in the Rural Service Area and depicted as

Agricultural/Forestry on the Future Development Map. While the character areas comment generally on the preservation of rural areas, Goal 10 of the Comprehensive Plan cites the support of technological infrastructure.

The applicant has requested relief from the landscaping requirements in favor of an undisturbed buffer given the site's remote location. Staff has found this request overall consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommends approval. The TRC had no objectionable comments regarding this request.

Speaking in favor of this request: Brian Devine (on behalf of Verizon Wireless). Mr. Devine stated the location of the proposed tower would be beneficial to emergency services by providing better coverage in the area. The proposed tower will also allow for co-location of other carriers.

Speaking against the request: no one.

There being no further discussion, Chairperson Rountree called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Hightower to recommend approval of the request as presented, Commissioner Biles second. All in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

#### **Agenda Item #7**

**REZ-2020-07 The Scruggs Company**, 4621 Old Hwy 41 N., 0053 108, 5.9 ac., R-1 to M-1

**Nature of Request:** This request represents a change in zoning on portions of the subject properties from Low Density Residential (R-1) to Light Manufacturing (M-1). The general motivation in this case is primarily to include the previously conveyed easement portion of map & parcel 0053 106 (north and west of Tract 2) that created a split-zoned parcel, and to prepare the requested portion of map & parcel 0053 108 for a possible combination with adjacent property of map & parcel 0053 106 in the future. The subject property possesses road frontage on Old US 41 N., which is a State maintained minor arterial road. Concerning the Comprehensive Plan Future Development Map, the subject property is in the Suburban Character Area and Urban Service Area. Per Comprehensive Plan guidance, M-1 zoning is not listed as a permitted zoning within a Suburban Character Area nor an Urban Service Area.

With this request the following factors are apparent: 1) the M-1 zoning of the majority of the northernmost parcel included in the request, 2) the existing business operating on the properties in this request, 3) the existing Georgia Southern & Florida Railroad buffer to the west, and 4) the depiction of the Future Development Map.

Overall, while staff finds this request inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan Future Development Map, staff believes the continued operation of The Scruggs Company at this location and its impact on future growth in the area satisfy Goal 5 of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, to "protect community resources through efficient and compatible

uses of land that promote opportunities for investment and growth” and recommends approval. The TRC considered this request and had no objectionable comments.

Speaking in favor of the request: Reece Akins (on behalf of The Scruggs Company). Mr. Akins offered to answer any questions the Commissioners may have.

Speaking against the request: no one.

There being no further discussion, Chairperson Rountree called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Wildes to recommend approval of the request as presented, Commissioner Graham second. All in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

### **Agenda Item #8**

**REZ-2020-08 Copeland Property**, Tucker Rd & Johnson Rd S., 0137 143, 6.07 ac., E-A to R-A

**Nature of Request:** This request represents a change in zoning on the subject property from E-A (Estate Agricultural) zoning to R-A (Residential Agricultural) zoning. The general motivation in this case is for the applicant to potentially subdivide the property and deed a portion to a family member. The subject property possesses road frontage on both Tucker Road and Johnson Road South, both County Local roads. Concerning the Comprehensive Plan Future Development Map the subject property is in the Urban Service Area and depicted as in a Transportation/Communication/Utilities Character Area. Per Comprehensive Plan guidance R-A zoning in this case, while not specifically called out, would be implied as a permitted zoning within a Transportation/Communication/Utilities Character Area as “Any other zoning district if compatible with surrounding zonings and uses...”.

In addition to the above information, the following factors should be considered: 1) The tied R-A zoned property to the southeast, across Johnson Road South, 2) In order for the parcel to remain in conformance with the ULDC after division, a change in zoning would be necessary as the newly created parcels will each be less than the minimum 5 acres required for E-A zoning, and 3) Any development of the property will require connection to the County Water System.

The TRC considered the request and had no objectionable comments, and Staff finds the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommends approval.

Speaking in favor of the request: Earl Copeland. Mr. Copeland is a neighbor to the subject property.

Speaking against the request: no one.



There being no further discussion, Chairperson Rountree called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Ball to recommend approval of the request as presented, Commissioner Bailey second. All in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item #9**

**REZ-2020-09 Richard Hill**, Old Clyattville Rd., portion of 0135 009, 24.46 ac.,  
E-A to R-A

**Nature of Request:** This request represents a change in zoning on the subject property from E-A (Estate Agricultural) zoning to R-A (Residential Agricultural). The general motivation in this case is for the applicant to subdivide the property into approximately seven lots for single-family dwellings, varying in size from 2.75 acres to 4.5 acres. The subject property possesses road frontage on Old Clyattville Rd., a Major Collector road, which is included in the Vision2045: Valdosta-Lowndes Metropolitan Transportation Plan for widening, from 2 to 5 lanes in the years 2026-2029. Concerning the Comprehensive Plan Future Development Map the subject property is in the Urban Service Area and depicted as in a Suburban Character Area. Per Comprehensive Plan guidance, R-A zoning is listed as a permitted zoning within a Suburban Character Area.

In addition to the above information, the following factors should be considered: 1) The property was originally zoned R-A at onset of the ULDC, and changed to E-A at request of property owner in 2006, 2) The adjacent R-A zoned property at the southwest tip of the property, and 3) The R-A zoned property to the east, across Old Clyattville Road.

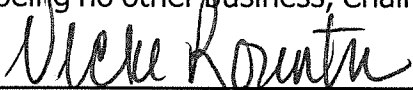
The TRC considered the request and had no objectionable comments, and Staff finds the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommends approval.

Speaking in favor of the request: Richard Hill. Mr. Hill discussed the intent of the request and added covenants would be enforced on the property.

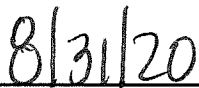
Speaking against the request: no one.

There being no further discussion, Chairperson Rountree called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Hightower to recommend approval of the request as presented, Commissioner Graham second. All in favor, no one opposed. Motion carried.

There being no other business, Chairperson Rountree adjourned the meeting at 6:53 p.m.



**Vicki Rountree, Chairperson  
Greater Lowndes Planning Commission**



**Date**