

MINUTES
GREATER LOWNDES PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
LOWNDES COUNTY SOUTH HEALTH DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
325 WEST SAVANNAH AVENUE
Monday, September 24, 2018
5:30 P.M.

Members Present	Members Absent	Staff
Franklin S. Bailey, Chairman	Chip Wildes	Molly Stevenson, Lowndes County Engineering/Planning Technician
Jody Hall, Vice Chairman	~Dasher Representative~	Matt Martin, City Planning & Zoning Admin.
Ed Hightower		Trinni Amiot, County Planner
Lou McClendon		Carmella Braswell, Recording Sec.
Johnny Ball, III		
Vicki Rountree		
Calvin Graham		
Tommy Willis		
Keith Sandlin		

VISITORS PRESENT:
(See Sign-In Sheet)

AGENDA ITEM #1:
CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Bailey called the meeting to order at 5:30 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 former County Planner, Jason Davenport, to lead the Invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Presentation to Jason Davenport:

On behalf of the Greater Lowndes Planning Commission, Chairman Bailey asked Commissioner Rountree to publically read a letter of appreciation to Mr. Davenport. Commissioner Rountree stated that Mr. Davenport has been the Lowndes County Planner for twelve plus years. The GLPC appreciated his experience, expertise,

and service as he guided them through the planning process. The members of the GLPC wanted to acknowledge and wish Mr. Davenport and his family good things as they go about in their career endeavors.

AGENDA ITEM #2:

Approval of the Meeting Minutes: August 27, 2018

Chairman Bailey called for questions, corrections, and approval of the August 27, 2018, GLPC meeting minutes. There being none, Chairman Bailey called for a motion.

Commissioner Rountree made a motion to approve the August 27, 2018, meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Hall seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion on this matter, Chairman Bailey called the motion and it was carried. (Vote 8-0)

CITY OF HAHIRA CASE:

Agenda Item #3

HA-2018-04 (Audubon Heights, LLC)

Nature of Request: Mr. Martin stated this is a Planned Development request by Audubon Heights, LLC. This is a planned development amendment. The subject property is currently zoned R-15 that was approved as a planned development in 2011. The subject property is the last remaining undeveloped phase. The final phase was originally planned to be developed as a multi-family complex; however, the applicant is proposing to build 21 high density single-family units on individual lots in lieu of their approved 64 multi-family dwelling units. The applicant is also proposing to combine 2 adjacent R-10 (Single Family Residential) lots in order to gain better frontage along Stanfill Street. The typical lot size is proposed to be 55' x 85' (approximately 4,500 square feet). The presentation includes the proposed design and layout of the proposed lots, and various designs of the proposed housing types. The subject property is currently vacant and is bordered by wetlands to the north. Staff has concerns about the proposed density design of the single-family development – it is unlike other developments within Hahira. Staff finds the request inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommends denial.

Chairman Bailey asked what was the original plan for this phase.

Mr. Martin stated the original plan was approved for up to 64 multi-family dwelling units, or the development under the R-15 zoning district.

Chairman Bailey asked how many lots will the R-15 zoning allow.

Mr. Martin stated R-15 zoning requires minimum lot area of 15,000 square feet. There is not much depth on either side of lot for an adequate turnaround. The R-15 zoning will require lots to be wider than what is proposed. The minimum building setback for the front yard and rear yard will be 15 feet with the exception of the lots on the outer curb – the minimum side yard setback is proposed at 5 feet.

Commissioner Hall asked if this request is approved, will they be able to construct 64 apartments.

Mr. Martin stated the proposed amendment will allow the changes as proposed, or they will be required to develop the property under the R-15 conventional standards.

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

Mr. Brent Moyer, Land Engineering Development, Tanglewood Drive, Fayetteville, Georgia, stated his goal is to answer questions and build support for the proposed development. In 2001, the subject property was purchased and developed as a P-D (Planned Development). From 2001-2008, the development of Audubon Heights began, however, things got tough and difficult during the latter part of this period. In 2010-2011, the subject property was taken to DCA for a proposed tax credit development and received opposition from the neighborhood. At the end of 2017, they brought in a realtor and started to look at a specific target market which called for smaller nicer homes on smaller lots. At this time, they are proposing to develop 21 lots with each lot being approximately 55' wide as an average. The minimum lot size will be approximately 4,400 square feet (~3 approximately). Eleven lots will be less than 6,000 square feet, however, 10 lots will be greater than that, and 5 lots are even greater than that. Each lot will be built by a single builder and have 2-car garages w/doors, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, a separate HOA, restrictive covenants, a central mailbox location at a minimum 1,200 square feet. This phase will have a separate entrance from Audubon Heights, and all yards will be fenced. Audubon Heights density calculates to 4.61 units per acre – the proposed development calculates at 4.5 units per acre whereas the overall density for the entire development is 2.99 units per acre. We feel that this development can work given the density calculations. The subject property will not impact any known jurisdictional wetlands.

Chairman Bailey stated he recommends that the front yard building setbacks be at least 24' from the curb to the garage to encourage off-street parking. Were there any plans for a play area for the kids? And, were there any plans to move forward with the multi-family development if the planned development request was not approved.

Mr. Moyer stated the house plans will be of a cottage look - they had no plans for amenities such as that. Regarding the multi-family development, he will let the developer respond to that question.

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

Dr. Ben Moyer, 4624 Hickory Creek Circle, stated he is a retired physician, and is proud of Audubon Heights. While a playground will be nice, the space for a playground is limited. Their idea is to market to those individuals who are downsizing. If their request is not approved they are not sure what they will do with the property.

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

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

Commissioner Rountree stated she lived one street over from the proposed development and like the idea of single-family in lieu of a multi-family given the current conditions of Stanfill Street.

Commissioner Hall stated he liked the development with garages all on the same side. Will there be sidewalks within the development.

Mr. Martin stated sidewalks are depicted on the masterplan.

Commissioner Willis asked if the driveways had to be 24' in length.

Mr. Martin stated there are no codes to require a minimum length for a driveway.

After a lengthy discussion among the Planning Commission, Chairman Bailey called for a motion.

Commissioner Hightower made a motion to recommend staff's presentation for denial. Commissioner Willis seconded the motion.

Chairman Bailey called for questions and discussion on the motion. There being none, Chairman Bailey called the motion and it was carried. (Vote 6-2[Rountree, Hall])

City of Valdosta

Agenda Item #4

CU-2018-08 (Shannon Perkins, Holly Drive)

Nature of Request: Mr. Martin stated this is a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) request for a family Personal Care Home for 4 residents. The City requires a CUP for homes with 4 or more residents. The applicant has been operating for 18 months accommodating for a 3-resident personal care home with no complaints or inquiries. The subject property contains a 5-bedroom house – it the applicant's desire to convert one of the bedrooms into an office. Based on their good track record, staff is recommending approval with conditions: 1) Approval shall be granted in the name of applicant only, as the operator for a State-licensed and fully compliant Personal Care Home with up to 4 residents at the facility. No other uses allowed in R-10 zoning shall be allowed on the property that are in addition to the Personal Care Home; 2) All parking associated with the facility shall be on-site and located on paved surfaces only, as approved by the City Engineer, with no more than 5 total cars at any one time; 3) There shall be no non-incidentual signage allowed and the property shall maintain a single-family residential character at all times; 4) Conditional use approval shall expire after 1 year from the date of approval if no updated city Business License for the expanded facility has been requested by that date.

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

Chairman Bailey asked if the employee parking on a hard surface.

Mr. Martin stated yes.

There being no further questions, Chairman Bailey asked if anyone 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.

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

There being none, Chairman Bailey called for a motion.

Commissioner Hall made a motion to recommend approval of the request as presented. Commissioner Rountree seconded the motion.

Chairman Bailey called for questions and discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was called and carried. (Vote 8-0)

Agenda Item #5

VA-2018-12 (Storey Machining Services & Quillan Powell Construction, Tucker Road)

Nature of Request: Mr. Martin stated this is a rezoning request by 2 adjacent businesses. The subject property is currently zoned DR-10 (Duplex Residential) that is a carryover from 1966 zoning map of the City. The applicant is contemplating future expansions of their existing building. The City plans to straighten the zoning boundaries in the future. The rezoning request is shared by both property owners and is needed prior to any building expansion. The current DR-10 is noncompliant given the Industrial Activity Center (IAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff is concerned that any proposed additions will be required to respect the existing residential development by providing a buffer yard. Staff finds the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power, and is recommending approval.

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.

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.

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

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

There being no questions or discussion on the motion, Chairman Bailey called the motion and it was carried. (Vote 8-0)

Agenda Item #6

VA-2018-13 (Chadd Mathis, Gard Street)

Nature of Request: Mr. Martin stated this a Planned Development request along the Bemiss Road Corridor. The subject property is currently split-zoned with Duplex-Residential (DR-10) and Single-Family Residential (R-6) and is part of the Highland Heights neighborhood (county island) that was annexed in 2006. The subject properties are located within a Commercial Activity Center (CAC) and an Established Residential (ER) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The properties to east were developed by the applicant with duplexes several years ago. The subject property has been discussed by the applicant with staff on development options. The subject property is heavily encumbered by existing drainage and utility easements, as well as a power easement. A planned development will allow the relaxation of certain development standards based on an approved master plan. The units will be accessed from a shared driveway that will function as a street. The proposed development will have a slight reduction in the building setback with 10 feet between the buildings at a minimum. Given the property's nature and location, staff is recommending approval with (4) conditions: 1) Approval shall be granted for a duplex residential development in general accordance with the submitted concepts depicting a series of 5 duplex buildings along a shared access driveway in lieu of a standard right-of-way. No other uses shall be allowed except for Home Occupations that generate no customer traffic; 2) All parking of vehicles shall be in garages or on paved surfaces approved by the City Engineer. Final location and design of the emergency vehicle turnaround shall be approved by the Fire Marshall; 3) All buildings shall observe at least a 6' side yard setback from property lines. Any fenced-in areas shall be to the rear of the proposed buildings only; 4) Planned Development approval shall expire after 5 years from the date of approval if no Final Plat has been approved and recorded for the development, and no building permits have been properly requested for the first of the duplex buildings.

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

Commissioner Hightower asked if the fire department commented on the request.

Mr. Martin stated the applicant has stated the Fire Department has approved their design.

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

Mr. Chadd Mathis, 2427 Meadowbrook Drive, stated he had been looking to develop this property for some time. The first step meeting to discuss the proposal was in 2005. The opportunity to develop the subject property for multi-family was removed through the adoption of the LDR as the original zoning classification while the property was in the unincorporated areas of the county was Residential-Cluster (R-C) then changed to Single-Family Residential (R-6).

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 wishing to speak in opposition to the request.

There being none, the public participation portion was closed.

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

Commissioner Rountree made a motion to recommend approval of the request as presented by staff. Commissioner Hall seconded the motion.

There being no discussion on the motion, Chairman Bailey called the motion and it was carried. (Vote 8-0)

Lowndes County

Agenda Item #7

REZ-2018-17 (Tom Call, Val Del Road)

Nature of Request: Mrs. Stevenson stated this is a rezoning case is for 4 parcels. The properties are within an Agricultural/Forestry Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The request is to rezone 98.5 acres from E-A (Estate Agriculture) to R-1 (Low Density Residential). The applicant has submitted a conceptual site plan. The subject property is located on the west side of Val Del Road, just south of Georgia Highway 122 East. Adjacent properties to the north (Dana Circle) are zoned R-1 and was assigned that zoning classification prior to Lowndes County's ULDC, and prior to the County's adopted 5-acre minimum standards. The dwellings units along Dana Circle are both site-built and manufactured homes. Staff's research has found that 97% of properties that are within a 1-mile radius of the subject property is zoned E-A, whereas a very small percentage is zoned R-1, and averages a minimum area of ~21.67 acres. The subject property lies within the Rural Service Area where parcels that are less than 5 acres are inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan calls for discouraging premature and scattered urbanization areas. With regards to the Agriculture/Forestry Character Area, special attention should be given to maintain a rural character, protecting farmland, and protecting open spaces. Staff's concern is the motivation of other parcels in the area that will be encouraged to proceed with a similar request. The TRC recommendation was split. Staff believes the Comprehensive Plan does not support this level of development right now, finds the request inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and recommends denial.

Chairman Bailey asked if there were public utilities serving this development, and what is the proposed width of the lots.

Mrs. Stevenson stated the development will be served by individual well and septic systems. The proposed lot will meet the minimum R-1 design standards.

Commissioner Hall stated the presentation and report lists several reasons for denial.

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

Mr. Tom Call stated he is present to represent the property owner. They have since submitted a revised plan depicting 68 lots in lieu of the initial conceptual plan that depicted ~79 lots. The proposed density had been decreased and is low density in their opinion. They anticipate targeting the Moody Air Force Base market, and not Valdosta. They anticipate traffic to travel north onto Hwy 122.

Commissioner Hall stated the proposed density doesn't appear to fit the character of the area – a rural character area.

Mr. Call stated your staff has indicated that this is low density.

Chairman Bailey asked staff if there was a zoning classification that fit this area.

Mrs. Stevenson stated the R-A (Residential Agricultural, 2.5 acres) zoning is a permissible zoning within this character area.

Commissioner Rountree stated her concerns are the houses directly across the street and the value of these homes. What is the target value of the proposed homes.

Mr. Call stated the price range will be \$200,000-\$250,000 – although they had not set the minimum square feet of homes, they expect the homes to be approximately 2,200.

Commissioner Hall stated this is such a big step in the county and appears to be spot zoning.

Mr. Call stated it would be spot zoning if R-1 zoning was not already in place to the north.

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

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

Mr. Michael Waller, 5715 Dana Circle, stated there is an underground stream that runs along the back side of Dana Circle that he is concerned about – as they all have shallow wells and individual septic tanks. Has anyone surveyed the water table? And, on the other side of Dana Circle is a wetland and will this development affect the wetland. He is a retired Air Force and is concerned that the anticipated traffic will go into town and not to MAFB.

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

Mr. Michael Merritt, 5909 Val Del Road, all the land and water behind us slopes and flows to Val Del Road. The proposed development is too dense and needs to be evaluated very carefully. When it rains, it gets bad.

Mr. Chuck Dunmon, 5930 Val Del Road, stated he lives directly across the street from the subject property. There are currently 526 homes for sale in Lowndes County. The main concern is the storm water that comes behind his home via a drainage easement by the county. In 22 years and at 12 times, the ditch has been at full capacity – the addition of roofs, driveways, and street will only triple what is currently being dumped already onto his property. He owns a construction company that repairs drainage structures for the county. He understands what happens in rainfall events. Has there been a hydrology study or impact study completed for this project? The development of this project will only speed up what is currently draining.

Chairman Bailey stated the development of this project must meet the regulations and specs.

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

Mr. Jim Kelty, 5898 Val Del Road, stated he lives next to the subject property. The existing ditch stays full and his property stays wet, especially given the rain we have had. His major concern is the storm water runoff. He has lived there over 22 years and have seen an increase in traffic. He can only imagine the increase in traffic due to the development of another subdivision. He is concerned that the proposed development will result in a high density residential development similar to Nelson Hills.

There being no questions for the speaker, Chairman Bailey allowed one more citizen to speak in opposition to the request.

Mr. Brian Summers, 5506 Coppage Road, stated he has been there for 33 years and farms directly below the subject property. He did not receive any notifications of the rezoning request. Consideration should be given to Val Del Road – it has not been improved in years and has no shoulders. The road does not need another 150 cars dumped onto the road in the mornings and evenings. If Val Del Road was a 4-lane road, he would not have a problem.

There being no questions for the speaker, Chairman Bailey closed the public participation portion of the request and entertained further discussion among the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Hall stated although the development will be constructed with bigger lots, the Planning Department comments and the Comprehensive Plan does not support the proposed density neither does the development pattern. The farmland and wetlands that are involved are all concerns.

Commissioner Graham stated that traffic and the existing road condition are a concern.

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

Commissioner Willis stated he has concerns along with staff of the proposed density, the adjacent development pattern, the potential increase in traffic, the development appears to be out of character. As such, he motions to recommend denial of the request. Commissioner Hightower seconded the motion.

There being no discussion on the motion, Chairman Bailey called the motion and it was carried. (Vote 5-2 [Ball, McClendon]-1 [Sandlin])

Other Business

There being no further business, Chairman Bailey adjourned the meeting. (6:58 p.m.)

Date