

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

March 2, 2017

7:00 P.M.

120 W. Dougherty Street

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Anderson, Maxine Easom, David Finkel, Hank Joiner, Alice Kinman (chair), Lucy Rowland, Jim Scanlon, and Jeff Scarbrough

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dave Hudgins and Jeff Ritchey

STAFF PRESENT: Rick Cowick, Jane Erwin, Brad Griffin (Planning), Bill Berryman and John Hawkins (Attorney's Office)

GENERAL BUSINESS

Ms. Kinman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Introduction of Staff reports and all other documents submitted to the Planning Commission at the meeting into the official record. Ms. Rowland moved to introduce all reports and documents into the official record. Mr. Scarbrough seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

2. Approval of February 2, 2017 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Ms. Rowland made a motion for approval. Ms. Easom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. MACORTS Update and Public Comment.

No update was given and no public comments were received.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 825 EPPS BRIDGE PARKWAY - PD-2016-09-2238

Type II – Master Planned Development

Petitioner: Williams & Associates

Owner: Rockwood Cottages, LLC

Request: From RS-25 (Single-Family Residential) to RS-8 (PD) (Single-Family Residential, Planned Development)

Tax ID: 074 C002A

Ms. Erwin presented the staff report with a recommendation for approval with conditions.

For: Jon Williams

Against: Jane Sullivan, Pete Konenkamp, Louise Hill, Mike Oakes, Annette Jordan, Dee Gillespie, William Griswold, Walter Smith, Carl Jordan, Stella Collins

Rebuttal: Jon Williams

Discussion: Mr. Anderson expressed concern with the long cul-de-sac. He asked what would not meet street standards. Mr. Williams replied that the horizontal and vertical street curvatures are designed for slower speeds, but the majority of the spine road could meet the standards.

Mr. Anderson said that the private streets will eventually fail and cost the residents. Mr. Williams responded that the streets will meet the road construction standards and money will be placed into escrow to pay for future maintenance.

Mr. Finkel asked if the street maintenance responsibility would be disclosed to the residents. Mr. Williams replied that it would be disclosed.

Mr. Finkel asked if vehicles using the fire lanes would be dangerous for pedestrians. Mr. Williams replied that vehicles would not use them except in case of emergency.

Ms. Easom asked about the maximum 25-foot street tree setback. Mr. Williams replied that the waiver would be unnecessary under a text amendment now under Mayor and Commission consideration. The trees would be set back the same distance as public street trees.

Ms. Easom asked about the width of the emergency lanes. Mr. Williams replied that they are shown on the plans as 24 feet in width for the first section and eight feet in width further into the subdivision, but those would be widened to ten feet per the Staff-recommended condition.

Ms. Easom asked whether the units would be rented or owned. Mr. Williams replied that the developer would own all of the lots at the start.

Ms. Easom asked if Iris Drive was a public street. Ms. Erwin replied that the first section is a public street from Epps Bridge Parkway until it takes a 90-degree turn.

Ms. Rowland said that a planned development should give the community something back. She expressed a concern with the proposed mass grading and its effect on water quality. She asked about what would happen if the grading occurs and the developer leaves prior to finishing the development. Mr. Berryman replied that stabilization would be required.

Ms. Rowland asked about what would happen if the LLC disappears. Mr. Berryman replied that there would be a problem.

Mr. Williams stated that mass grading would reduce the time frame of development.

Ms. Rowland asked about the expected development time frame. Mr. Williams replied that it would take less than a year for infrastructure construction and approximately 24 months for build out.

Mr. Joiner asked if a future signalization of the Iris Drive intersection with Epps Bridge Parkway is on the Transportation Corridor Concept Map. Mr. Griffin replied that proposed signalizations are not shown on that map.

Mr. Joiner asked about an explanation of the proposed alternative buffer condition. Mr. Williams explained the proposed undisturbed buffer.

Mr. Finkel asked about the street maintenance funding, which Mr. Williams answered.

Mr. Anderson asked about the 59% tree conservation. Mr. Williams explained that the entire property would not be mass graded; the perimeter areas will have conserved canopy.

Mr. Anderson asked if two entrances on Iris Drive would help traffic concerns. Mr. Williams explained that it would have no effect on the projected traffic volume caused by the development.

Mr. Anderson asked if Athens-Clarke County would assist with street maintenance. Mr. Williams replied that it would not.

Mr. Anderson asked if the project could be changed in the future if the developer left it unfinished. Mr. Williams replied that the planned development plans would be binding for any future developer.

Ms. Rowland asked about how the HOA will work with a mix of rented and owned units. Mr. Berryman replied that the number of votes is based on the number of units owned. Ms. Rowland asked if renters would have a vote. Mr. Berryman replied that they would not.

Mr. Joiner asked about the proposed vertical street curvature, which Mr. Williams answered.

Mr. Joiner asked if interconnectivity with any adjoining properties was possible. Mr. Williams replied that there had been a proposed interconnection point in the St. Ives neighborhood, but that connection was sold and the opportunity for interconnection lost.

Mr. Scarbrough questioned why the developer would go through all this trouble if the same number of dwellings could be constructed by right without a zoning change and a huge stack of waivers.

Primary Motion: Mr. Scarbrough made a motion to recommend denial. Ms. Rowland seconded the motion.

Substitute Motion: Mr. Finkel made a substitute motion to table. Mr. Joiner seconded the motion, which failed to become the primary motion by a vote of 2 to 5 (Anderson, Easom, Rowland, Scanlon and Scarbrough in opposition).

Mr. Anderson said that he supports the primary motion due to the very long cul-de-sac and that the future residents will pay a heavy price for the benefit of the developer.

The primary motion passed 5 to 2 (Finkel and Joiner in opposition).

2. TEXT AMENDMENT – Public notice

Mr. Griffin presented the proposed text amendment.

For: None

Against: None

Discussion: Ms. Kinman asked why the specific sign language is being removed from the ordinance. Mr. Griffin replied that the changes pick up the same information, but in a more general manner. For example, a phone number change would require a text amendment.

Mr. Scarbrough suggested that Planning Department contact information be included.

Discussion ensued about when signs are posted and removed.

Motion: Mr. Scarbrough made a motion to recommend approval with the addition of Planning Department contact information in Sec. 9-4-9-E-3. Ms. Rowland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP, ZONING MAP & TCC MAP UPDATES

Mr. Griffin presented the proposed map updates.

For: None

Against: None

Discussion: Mr. Anderson asked if a Special Use Permit becomes permanent once implemented. Mr. Griffin replied that the Permit is only for the specific Special Use. If that use is discontinued, the Special Use Permit is considered to be abandoned.

Mr. Cowick stated that Staff had proposed a minor boundary adjustment of about 12-15 feet for two split-zoned properties on Fairview Street, but one of the property owners is requesting that the boundary remain.

Ms. Rowland asked about the zoning of the property at 3 Beech Haven Drive since acquisition by Athens-Clarke County. Mr. Griffin and Mr. Cowick replied that it has been zoned G (Government) zoning.

Mr. Cowick stated that the Future Development Map updates were only those amendments approved by the Mayor and Commission.

Mr. Anderson asked about the removal of the Oconee Street park-n-ride from the TCC Map. Mr. Griffin replied that the earlier proposed north side parking lot is no longer considered as a viable project.

Mr. Joiner asked about the year of the last TCC Map update. Mr. Griffin replied that it was last updated in 2013.

Mr. Joiner expressed concern with several proposed improvements on the TCC Map. Mr. Cowick replied that some of those projects are listed in the MACORTS documents.

Ms. Easom asked if the applicants of the expired Special Use Permits had been informed of the expiration. Mr. Griffin and Mr. Cowick replied that they had been informed of the expirations and earlier notices had been sent of the impending expirations to provide time for the applicants to obtain the required development permits.

Mr. Joiner expressed concern with the proposed Macon Highway widening and of potential roads crossing through AR zones.

Discussion ensued about inviting the Transportation & Public Works Director and a representative of Leisure Services to a work session on the TCC Map.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP MOTION: Ms. Rowland made a motion to recommend approval. Mr. Joiner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ZONING MAP MOTION: Ms. Rowland made a motion to recommend approval with the removal of the proposed Fairview Street zoning boundary adjustments. Mr. Scarbrough seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

TCC MAP MOTION: Mr. Joiner made a motion to table. Mr. Scarbrough seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

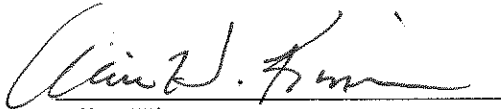
1. Planning Commission Chair's Report: Ms. Kinman reported attending a housing retreat and the progress of the Land Bank Authority in making affordable housing recommendations.

2. Planning Director's Report: Mr. Griffin welcomed John Hawkins of the Attorney's Office and thanked Planning Commissioners for attending Envision Athens meetings. Discussion of the Envision Athens process followed.

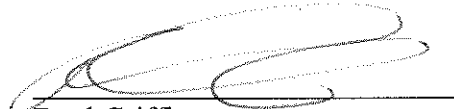
Ms. Easom asked about the status of the infill housing ordinance. Mr. Griffin replied that the Mayor and Commission approved the ordinance with the requirement that a report be made as to its effect after the first year.

3. Miscellaneous announcements. None

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.



Alice Kinman
Chair



Brad Griffin
Secretary

