

THE FAYETTE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION met on February 21, 2019 at 7:00 P.M. in the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue West, Fayetteville, Georgia.

MEMBERS PRESENT: John H. Culbreth, Chairman
Danny England, Sr., Vice-Chairman
Al Gilbert
Jim Graw
Brian Haren

STAFF PRESENT: Peter A. Frisina, Director of Community Services
Chanelle Blaine, Zoning Administrator
Howard Johnson, Planning and Zoning Coordinator

Welcome and Call to Order:

John Culbreth called the Planning Commission Meeting to order. He introduced the Planning Commission members and the staff. He noted that Danny England, the Vice-Chairman was absent.

John Culbreth called for the consideration of Minutes of the Planning Commission meeting held on Thursday January 3, 2019.

Al Gilbert made a motion to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission meeting held on January 3, 2019. Brian Haren seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. Danny England was absent.

NEW BUSINESS

John Culbreth called for the consideration of a Minor Subdivision Plat of Ryan Stanfield. The property will consist of one (1) residential lot zoned R-70, is located in Land Lot 112 of the 7th District and fronts on Thompson Road.

John Culbreth asked if the petitioner was present.

Ryan Stanfield stated that he wanted to cut-off a small tract from his family's land to build a house. He noted that he was born and raised on this property.

John Culbreth asked the other members if they had any questions or discussion. There were no additional questions or discussion.

Since there was no one present to speak in opposition of the petition, John Culbreth called for a motion.

Jim Graw made a motion to approve the Minor Subdivision Plat of Ryan Stanfield. Brian Haren seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. Danny England was absent.

John Culbreth called for the consideration of a Variance request (VA-016-19) for the existing Goza Road Subdivision Plat by Rick Halbert, owner, from the Fayette County Subdivision Regulations, Section 104-597. (3) – Contiguous Areas for Residential Development. This variance is to reduce the contiguous area for Lot 3. This property is located in Land Lots 227 & 228 of the 4th District and fronts on Goza Road.

John Culbreth asked if anyone wanted to speak about the petition.

Rick Halbert stated that he bought the 18-acre parcel of land and resides about 1/2 mile away. He said the property was an eyesore and it contained trash which was hauled away. He added that the property was purchased at auction and was not fully researched due to time restrictions. He also stated that the original goal was subdivide the property into six (6) lots with three (3) acres each, which is allowed under the current R-70 zoning.

The new plan is to create four (4) lots with a lake in the middle of the subdivision. Three of the lots will be three (3) acres and a one (1) large acre lot. The contiguous area is restricted to 1.5 acres. He stated that with both the lake buffer restriction and the Goza Road restriction, he thinks the contiguous acreage is approximately .98 acres. He noted that each of the lots can still have almost an acre for a home site to build homes in the \$450,000 to \$500,000 price range. He also stated that he can make the house fit on the site but he cannot make the math work to yield six (6) lots, they are happy with four (4) lots, however, but only having three (3) lots makes the development difficult from a cost-benefit perspective. He requested a variance for the fourth (4th) lot.

John Culbreth asked the other Commission member if they have any questions.

Al Gilbert asked how much the County's Watershed Protection Ordinance is affecting this project. Mr. Halbert responded that it affects this project quite a bit for this particular problem. If the stormwater setback restrictions were not there, it would be very close to a non-issue.

Al Gilbert asked Mr. Halbert have you developed in other areas.

Rick Halbert responded that he has the opportunity and luxury of working with Dan Cathey at Pinewood Forest and Pinewood Studios. He started his primary projects. Occasionally, there are other smaller projects, such as this one.

Al Gilbert asked had Mr. Halbert encountered other Watershed Protection Ordinances in other counties. Halbert responded, no.

Al Gilbert informed Mr. Halbert that Fayette County has the toughest Watershed Protection ordinance in the State. Then he further explained that Fayette County was the first county in Georgia to adopt the State-created model Watershed Protection Ordinance during the permitting and approval process for the Lake Horton Park & Reservoir. He added since its original adoption, the Ordinance is now

somewhat less restrictive. Other counties watershed protection ordinances are much less restrictive than Fayette County. He stated that he hopes that one day, the Fayette County Watershed Protection Ordinance is placed in line with the other counties.

John Culbreth asked the other Commission members if they have any comments or questions.

Jim Graw stated that he reviewed the plans to determine what other options the members of the Planning Commission may have because his ideas of shifting the property boundaries to meet the lot size requirements will not work, due to the wetlands.

Rick Halbert replied that the position of the lake which goes property line to property line provides no latitude to shift to the east. He responded that his team has reviewed every option and cannot mathematically meet all the requirements. He said they consider the option of making one of the lots less than three (3) acres, then requesting a variance but rejected that option.

John Culbreth asked the other Commission members if they have any comments or questions, hearing none, John Culbreth asked for a motion.

Brian Haren made a motion to approve the variance request (VA-016-19) to reduce the contiguous area for Lot 3 of the Goza Road Subdivision. Al Gilbert seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. Danny England was absent.

John Culbreth then called for the consideration of a Preliminary Plat of Emerson Woods Subdivision. The property will consist of 36 residential lots zoned R-50, is located in Land Lot 104 of the 7th District and fronts on Dogwood Trail.

John Culbreth asked if the petitioner was present.

Steve Peterson introduced himself as the agent for the petitioner and the project manager.

John Culbreth asked the other Commission members if they have any comments or questions.

Brian Haren asked if each lot met the minimum contiguous one (1) acre requirement for R-50.

Steve Peterson responded yes.

Brian Haren also questioned the meaning of red-hatched areas of Lot 8 and Lot 9 on the Plat.

Steve Peterson replies clarified that the red areas are soils and not wetlands.

John Culbreth asked the other Commission members if they have any further questions. Being none, he asked for a motion.

Brian Haren made a motion to approve the Preliminary Plat of the Emerson Woods Subdivision. Al Gilbert seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. Danny England was absent.

John Culbreth then called for the discussion of the State Route 54 West Corridor

Pete Frisina introduced Josh Strickland and Gene Thornton who came to speak to the staff about their property located on State Route 54 West. He stated the property was zoned O-I approximately 20 years ago. At that time, a Preliminary Plat was produced with four (4) lots at the end of a cul-de-sac street. All of the infrastructure has been installed. The final plat was approved but never recorded. The land has not been subdivided.

Josh Strickland and Gene Thornton came to the staff and expressed that the O-I zoning had some limitations in terms of use and they have had some issues with marketing the property. They are interested in knowing if the County will consider expanding the uses along the State Route 54 Corridor.

Pete Frisina stated that he placed this item on the agenda as a corridor discussion because whatever action the Planning Commission pursues it will affect the entire Corridor.

Peter Frisina stated that he would allow John Strickland and Gene Thornton to make a presentation, followed an open discussion.

Two questions were asked prior to the open discussion.

Al Gilbert asked whether a self-storage facility is allowed in an O-I zoning district.

Pete Frisina responded that is **not** allowed.

Jim Graw asked the presenters to identify the location of the Longboat Subdivision.

Pete Frisina clarified that the new phase of subdivision lies directly adjacent to the south of the subject parcel.

John Strickland and Gene Strickland opened the discussion by stating that prior to meeting with Pete Frisina and his staff with their concept, they explored a host of uses for their five and a half (5.52) acre parcel, including office uses, a Top Golf -type concept and a World Gym –type concept. Since the property was purchased by an ownership group in 2006, several attempts have been made to market and place the property in a productive use. The property group has studied the property to try to determine the highest and best use. The group looked all aspects including the existing infrastructure, the proximity to other sites such as Piedmont Fayette Medical Center and Pinewood Studios, the general State Highway Overlay District, the current and future demand for office space. Currently, there is a high vacancy rate in the local market for office space, along with a large surplus of available office space not being utilized. Also taken into consideration is the needed current septic and sewer systems demand. Traffic impact was also taken into consideration.

In conclusion, the ownership group felt that their best option is a modern indoor storage facility that did not exist 15 years ago. They conceptualize a three (3) story building with an office type exterior

with interior storage. They emphasized the point that the storage facility industry has made major changes over last 15 years in the aesthetics and designs of the buildings. The less attractive single story heavy concrete and corrugated metal designs are being phased out with a better looking buildings.

They felt their concept would work since it is in-line with the intent of the overlay. The exterior aesthetics would be pleasing within the view-shed of the corridor, the density will be kept in alignment of the plan, while allowing the owners to build a use that is in demand for the area.

Because of the office-type facade, it would meet the zoning regulations as it relates to aesthetics, it would have a very minimal traffic impact as compared to the current allowable uses such as academic and intuitional uses or manufacturing facility. No additional curb cuts to the corridor are foreseen. There would be minimal impact to the septic system. They also noted the use will add additional revenue to the tax base instead of a collection site for illegal trash and discarded junk.

The property owners have experienced some frustration trying to find a productive use within the intent and restrictions of the overlay district. They noted that since this type of storage facility did not exist 15 to 20 years ago, this types of modern indoor storage facility was not foreseen when the overlay district was created and therefore storage uses were only allowed in the M-1 & C-H districts. Currently, it not allowed in the O-I district.

It is their belief that this type of modern indoor storage facility should be considered as “executive storage” versus “traditional storage”, which they described as higher class of storage facility. The land usage impact can be minimized because the building can be setback or a single structure can be constructed with an ancillary structure(s) can be located behind the primary structure. It is their desire to incorporate some type of mixed-use concept with some office in the front of the primary structure or place an office building on an adjacent parcel to later construct and office building when the market allows.

John Strickland and Gene Strickland presented their market analysis of the self-storage facilities and the growing demand in the 3-mile and 5 mile radius areas. In conclusion, the concept plan proposes 60,000 to 80,000 square foot of interior climate controlled storage space within an office building facade.

Jim Graw questioned the number of stories proposed for the building.

Josh Strickland responded that the storage is proposed at three (3) stories. The zoning currently allows four (4) stories maximum in height.

The conceptual site plans shows:

- 1) A three (3)-story primary structure setback off State Highway 54 on a 30,000 to 40,000 square foot footprint which is approximately 90,000 to 120,000 gross square feet total. Some of this space is proposed as business office and demand-based office,

- 2) An office lot located on the front corner (for future office development)
- 3) An additional covered and enclosed one (1) story 10,000 to 15,000 square feet building proposed for the area located behind the main building for a luxury “white-glove” RV / Motor Home storage facility with electrical service and cleaning services.

Josh Strickland presented a slide show of potential office-building type facades. The presenters stated that only the concept plan has been worked out, but not the final details.

Al Gilbert asked if there would be any truck rental. The response was No.

Al Gilbert commented to Peter Frisina that he would feel more comfortable coming up with a way to allow this type of use instead of changing the zoning. He suggested that maybe “interior storage” could be allowed. He stated that other similar applicants in the past were turned down who wanted a different zoning in that area. He feels that the group should proceed in that direction.

Jim Graw asked if storage facilities were currently allowed in O-I. Pete Frisina responded that storage facilities are not allowed in O-I.

Josh Strickland stated they are only allowed in M-1 and C-H. The ordinance only references mini-storage type facilities.

Peter Frisina questioned the locations of other interior storage facilities in Fayette County.

Josh Strickland stated that the only one of similar design is a nearby U-Haul facility, which is a 2-story converted facility.

Brian Haren expressed his concern that if interior storage is allowed, it will set a precedence that interior storage will be allowed anywhere in O-I district. He noted that although Josh Strickland have some nice architectural renderings that look great, there are some interior storage facilities (U-Haul) that are stacked and wrapped in a glass case. He empathized that simply allowing interior storage is not enough, there should be some architectural controls.

Jim Graw stated that he is not opposed to office facilities, but has issue with a three (3) story building. He said the facility backs up to the newest phase of the Longboat Subdivision. He stated he would be upset if he lived a house and was able to see a three 3-story building from the back of the house.

Pete Frisina stated there a lot of trees between the houses and the rear of the proposed storage facility, and the zoning currently allows a 40 foot height (4 stories) maximum.

Josh Strickland noted that to address those issues, the proposed primary building pushed toward the front of the site and the is a one (1) story building behind the first building, in addition with screening and a landscaping berm along with a rear yard setback of 100 feet.

Brian Haren mentioned that the Planning Commission members should consider the issues of consistency in their decisions in how the County builds out. He noted that architectural controls should be put in place to ensure quality-looking development.

Pete Frisina noted that there are many properties along the Highway 54 corridor which are sitting undeveloped even with the infrastructure in place. He said one development even has its own community septic system and the properties are still being ignored. He questioned the need to review the entire Highway 54 West Corridor in general and determine whether the intent of the overlay is still viable and possibly expand the permitted uses for the entire Corridor. In his opinion, Pete Frisina stated that the permitted uses can be specified just within the Corridor only, and not the entire County.

Pete Frisina also noted that this interior storage concept is a low impact use. There is a low septic need for a storage facility. He liked the concept of interior storage only. He is unsure about the architecture style and whether it meets the character of the Corridor. He emphasized that the County should look at the entire Corridor and think of other general business type uses that would be appropriate for the Corridor as an alternative to straight O-I.

Brian Haren questioned whether the Corridor has architectural overlay.

Al Gilbert stated that the standard stated the building should maintain a residential look (character). Pete Frisina also responded that the standards contains some controls for roof and the parapet. He emphasized the need to re-evaluate the entire overlay district.

Al Gilbert noted that this was the County's first zoning overlay zone.

John Culbreth questioned the timeline to look at the properties in the Corridor.

Pete Frisina responded that it take some for time but no definite timeline.

Brain Haren noted he suspects that covered RV's, boats storage is very high-demand in the County.

Jim Graw questioned the locations of the elevators, and where the RV will be stored. Josh Strickland noted that the elevators will be inside the building. He also clarified that the RVs will be stored inside the building on the rear of the property with no outside parking of RVs.

Pete Frisina concluded the open discussion and described the possible next steps.

Jim Graw questioned whether additional stipulations could be added to restrict the number of stories and the size of the facility. Pete Frisina responded yes, if the Commission wanted to place those restrictions.

Brain Haren noted the height is currently limited to 40 feet.

Jim Graw expressed his concern of anything structure four (4) stories in height that backs up against residential properties.

Peter Frisina clarified the definition of form-based zoning.

Peter Frisina stated that he is interested in looking at the Corridor, in general, with architectural controls. He suggested a special development district with used that would be appropriate for the Corridor, such as intermediate uses, but not retail or industrial.

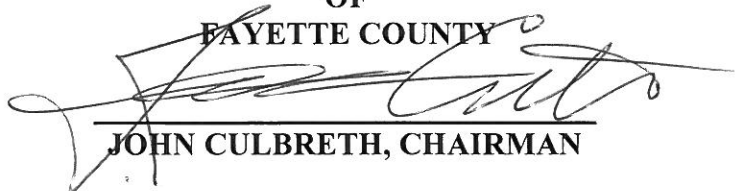
For the next meeting, Peter Frisina suggested that maybe he would provide an inventory of the vacant O-I zoned properties along the Highway 54 West Corridor to determine where potential areas for re-zoning with in-demand uses.

Peter Frisina and the other members discussed the initial setup of the other mixed-use planned unit Developments (PUDs) in the County.

The Planning Commission took no official action on this item and will continue the discussion at a future meeting.

Chairman Culbreth said he would entertain a motion to adjourn the meeting. Al Gilbert made a motion to adjourn and the motion passed 4-0. Danny England was absent.
The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

PLANNING COMMISSION
OF
FAYETTE COUNTY



JOHN CULBRETH, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:



HOWARD L. JOHNSON
PLANNING COMMISSION SECRETARY