

CITY OF PEMBROKE, GA

Minutes of Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting of 12/7/23

Call to Order: Chair Bacon called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Commissioners in attendance were Charlotte Bacon, Chair, Anne Barton, Vice Chair, Dave Williams, Van Redcross, and Salah Beckworth. City staff in attendance were Chris Benson, City Administrator, Steve Scholar, Planning Administrator and Fernanda Hauser, DDA.

Approval of November 2, 2023 Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes made by Dave Williams, seconded by Salah Beckworth, all in favor, minutes approved.

Chair Comments: The Chair reminded members of the public that the Planning & Zoning Commission is a recommending body to the City Council. Decisions made on rezoning requests and other issues tonight will be forwarded to the Mayor and City Council for the final action.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Chair Bacon opened the first hearing at 6:40 to take public input regarding a Rezoning Request application submitted by Cross Roads, LLC at 72 E. Railroad Street, owned by Carla Nelson, to amend the zoning of P07-01-003 from R-1 Residential to B-3 Village Commercial.

Chair requested any speakers to come forward. The applicant was not present and no members of the public spoke in favor or opposed.

The Commission members received summary of the request from Mr. Scholar. He informed Commissioners that the property was once home to the old Tondol Hotel built in 1915 and recently demolished, along with the adjacent lot. The owner wishes to rezone the property from its residential status to a commercial lot for a possible future business related use allowed in a B-3 zone but not yet planned. The site is also located across the street from an existing bank and other nearby commercial uses. The application was made with the knowledge of the Downtown Development Authority.

Chair closed the hearing at 6:50 and asked to hear a motion from the Commission.

Motion to recommend approval of the application to rezone 72 E. Railroad Street from R-1 to B-3 made by Salah Beckworth, seconded by Van Redcross, all in favor, motion to recommend approval passes.

2. The Chair opened the second hearing at 6:55 to take public input on a Rezoning Application prepared for Fetzer Lakes, LLC out of Guyton, GA by Thomas & Hutton Consultants. The request is to rezone property currently owned by Darlene Morgan (P015-062) on Sims Road containing 4.9 acres, and adjacent property referred to as The Stubbs Family Farm (P015-008) containing 181.5 acres accessed via Wildwood Church Road to a PUD (Planned Unit Development) zoning district.

It was explained by City staff that the rezoning application being considered will require that any action taken by the Planning Commission at this hearing must be contingent upon the property being annexed into the City of Pembroke at a future date. Annexation is an action taken by the City Council and the Bryan County Commission. The City Council will be holding their public hearing on this PUD rezoning on January 8, 2024 at the Harn Center at 7:00 p.m. Annexation would be at a later date not yet established.

Public Comments:

James Dasher, a representative, came forward to state he would be able to answer any questions the public may have on this matter.

Anne Barton asked if a brief summary could be given to explain more detail on what a PUD zoning district is and how it might impact this area.

A representative of Thomas & Hutton began a brief presentation addressing compatibility with components of the City's newly updated Comprehensive Plan, and describing the location of the lot, area, and showing an area map. (The visual portion of the presentation was conducted by Chris Benson, City Administrator, showing relevant maps, renderings, etc. from the Comp Plan on the hearing room screen.) The Thomas & Hutton rep further discussed the driving force behind this application which explores annexation and housing development is the Hyundai Mega Plant which will be creating up to 8,000 new jobs and more, and its location being close to this major development, within a 5 -10 minute drive, and also is adjacent to needed water and sewer services. He referenced components of the Comp Plan which speak to current housing conditions in Pembroke and the need for new homes, homeownership opportunities, and an appropriate mixed use development making the PUD designation in this area suitable for such a development. He reviewed how this PUD would allow for flexible land use regulation and the use of innovative design techniques. When addressing the question of "why here?" he covered aspects of the site which make it suitable. The roughly 187 acre site provides the opportunity to take into consideration conservation efforts and allows for the benefits of denser housing vs the typical subdivision consisting of houses being spread out and utilizing more of the open space and potential recreation area.

Site access points were discussed with a possible realignment of Rt. 119 to provide good access to the development at Wildwood Church Road. GA Department of Transportation (DOT) must provide approval of any and all access points from a GA State route and no part of the proposal will restrict current resident's access. A PUD District requires that a development agreement be in place with the City that details all aspects of the project dealing with any roadways, utilities and other needs of the development. Work to date has included environmental studies on wetland delineation and mapping to avoid and minimize impact to wetlands. The proposal contains a mix of housing from low density to mid-high density. Open space is maintained by using creative design methods and will provide for a perimeter buffer. Recreation amenities such as open space, parks, pools, playgrounds, ballfields, etc. have been increased from the required percentage to more than required.

Brenda Morgan: had questions specific to water, sewer, policing, etc. It was suggested by staff that detailed questions about water, sewer, police, etc. be addressed to the City Council at their January 8th meeting.

Jeremy Miles, 23 Sims Road: stated he was on his own well and septic but pays taxes he feels include a portion of those services provided to other residents who are users. He bought his 10 acres of property about a year and a half ago and did not realize he was within the City of Pembroke boundaries. He built his home as his forever spot. He thought he was safe from this type of future development that is proposed. He is not excited about it. Entrance is located directly across from his driveway and he has concerns about the traffic generated by the development. (He noted he was denied ability to vote because he was not shown on voting list.)

Ken Copi: in short he is not located in the zone area but north of it. He questioned the number of homes being built and if it would be done in phases. Will City be paying for road paving and will maps and reports be made available to the public?

Hoynes Bacon, 302 Old Patrick Road: stated his questions had been answered by the Thomas & Hutton rep

Ron Shuman, 380 Old Patrick Road/Rt. 119: spoke about the danger at the curve that is north of this project near Old Patrick Road and was concerned about any access to the new homes being along this section of Rt.119 near his street.

Ed Bacon, 66 Smith Street: asked how the non-contiguous configuration/connection to City would be dealt with and questioned if the annexation was legal.

Brian Smith, 2284 Sims Street: asked how this would affect his property. He doesn't feel his road can handle the large volume of traffic anticipated and wondered how close any road improvements would come to his house.

Russ Shuman, 576 Shuman Drive: expressed concern about traffic control and that the dangerous curve won't work with more traffic.

Steve Wilson: is concerned about how he will keep people off his property and hold back trespassers. Will there be fencing around perimeter to discourage people from coming on to his property? Trespassing is currently a problem.

Sharon Gill: owns 15 acres and asked if a Traffic Analysis had been done showing the volume of traffic and percent of traffic on road and would Wildwood Church Road be blocked or would there be a connection? Also concerned about water impacts and depleting their source of water by impacting any aquifer in the area. She has a deep well and this is cause for her concern.

Lisa Shuman, 380 Old Patrick Road: asked for clarification on whether there are 2 entrances or not - Sims and Rt.119? and which is the main entrance? She is concerned about construction workers and vehicles using her road.

Sheryl Smith, 2483 Sims Road: asked where water lines would be located and feels that Sims Road is not equipped or adequate to handle the traffic generated by this project.

Note: during this public hearing discussion many of the speaker's questions were answered by City Staff and the Thomson & Hutton representatives over the course of the hearing. Residents were encouraged to attend the City Council hearing as well to ask further questions or to clarify any of the information provided at the hearing.

Chair closed the public hearing at 7:28 and asked to hear a motion from the Commission.

Motion to recommend approval of the rezoning application for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) District currently owned by Darlene Morgan (P015-062) on Sims Road containing 4.9 acres, and adjacent property referred to as The Stubbs Family Farm (P015-008) containing 181.5 acres accessed via Wildwood Church Road, to a PUD (Planned Unit Development) zoning district contingent upon the property being annexed into the City of Pembroke at a future date made by Dave Williams, seconded by Van Redcross, all in favor, motion to recommend approval passes.

3. Chair opened third public hearing at 7:30 to take public input on a rezoning application submitted by James Dasher to rezone P0121-043 on Rogers Road from A-5 Agricultural to R-2 Two Family Residential and for variances of 5 ft. on lot width for 4 lots

Public Comments:

Anne Barton first asked Mr. Scholar if the rezoning request and the variance request would be heard together and considered at the same time for action. Mr. Scholar responded that they would be considered together.

James Dasher: presented his request explaining the lot location and reason for variances that are just shy of the 80 ft. requirement. The 5 ft. variance would allow 4 homes instead of 3.

Rose Jackson: lives across the street and questioned how, after building 4 homes, would there be access to the property behind these lots. Her question was answered by the City engineer showing her the easement that has been used thus far.

The Chair closed the public hearing at 7:40 and asked for a motion from the Commission

Motion to recommend approval of request by James Dasher to rezone P0121-043 on Rogers Road from A-5 Agricultural to R-2 Two Family Residential and for variances of 5 ft. on lot width for 4 lots made by Salah Beckworth, seconded by Dave Williams, all in favor, motion to recommend approval passes

AGENDA ITEMS:

Recommendation on the request made by the applicant, James Dasher of Rincon, GA for final plat approval of the 13 lot, W. E. Smith Subdivision

Mr. Scholar informed Commission that P & Z and City Council had approved the preliminary plat earlier this year and that the final plat is in conformance with the previously approved plat and has also been reviewed by the City Engineer who agrees that it meets the requirements of the ordinance.

Motion to recommend to City Council the approval of the request for final plat approval of the 13 lot, W. E. Smith Subdivision made by Dave Williams, seconded by Salah Beckworth, all in favor, motion to recommend approval passes.

Comments: Steve Scholar reminded members about responding on their availability to participate in the Planning & Zoning Training Course 102 offered by the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government. Chris Benson also reminded the Commission to be sure to respond about availability dates for the joint meeting with the City Council, Planning & Zoning, and the DDA in February.

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn at 8:48 p.m. made by Dave Williams, seconded by Salah Beckworth, all in favor, meeting adjourned.

Charlotte Bacon, Chair Charlotte W Bacon Date: Jan 4, 2024