

**MEETING OF THE
GREENSBORO PLANNING BOARD
February 18, 2015**

The Greensboro Planning Board meeting was held on Wednesday, February 18, 2015 at 4:08 p.m. in the Plaza Level Conference Room, Melvin Municipal Office Building. Board members present were: Chuck Truby, Chairman; Marc Isaacson, Celia Parker, Seth Steele, Day Atkins, Richard Bryson and Richard Mossman. City Planning staff present included Steve Galanti, Hanna Cockburn, Nicole Ward, and Sheila Stains-Ramp. Also present was Jennifer Schneier, City Attorney's Office.

Chairman Truby welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the procedures of the Planning Board.

MEETING MINUTES:

Mr. Isaacson moved approval of the January 21, 2015 meeting minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Steele. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Mr. Isaacson stated that he would recuse himself from the two items on the agenda related to the former Jefferson Pilot campus. Mr. Isaacson was recused by unanimous vote of the Board for these two items.

ANNEXATION:

Proposed Contiguous Annexation: 5300 High Point Road (Former Jefferson Pilot campus) and NCDOT right of way, totaling 146.4 acres. Site is north of High Point Road, west of Alamance Road and more generally I-73 and south of railway r/w and High Point Road Widening and Relocation Project. **(Approval Recommended)**

Planner Nicole Ward stated that the property is within the Tier 1 Growth Area, is considered contiguous, and is proposed for mixed use development. City water is available by connecting to an existing 16" water line along High Point Road, while sanitary sewer can be provided with the installation of a sewer lift station. The City Fire Department noted that the site is currently served by the Pinecroft/Sedgefield Station #23 on McKay Road and would continue to be so served upon annexation. The Police Department estimated that additional personnel and equipment would be necessary to provide service to this site. Provision of City services will involve a travel distance almost equal to that necessary to provide service to the adjacent properties. The Technical Review Committee (TRC) reviewed and recommended approval of the annexation request to the Planning Board and to the City Council.

There being no questions, Mr. Bryson moved to recommend approval of the proposed annexation as explained by staff, seconded by Mr. Steele. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion (6 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 recusal).

GENERALIZED FUTURE LAND USE PLAN (GFLUM) AMENDMENT:

Amendment to Generalized Future Land Use Plan (GFLUM): CP 15-03 – 5300 High Point Road, former Jefferson Pilot campus, from Mixed Use Corporate/Business Park to Mixed Use Planned Community. **(Comments offered)**

Planning Manager Hanna Cockburn noted the site is presently in 3 different use categories (Low Residential, for 3 to 5 dwelling units per acre; Moderate Residential, for 5 to 12 dwelling units per acres; and Mixed Use Corporate and Business Park), and the change is to a single category, Mixed Use Planned

Community. She noted that this designation is intended for large, undeveloped tracts of land at the City's fringe, appropriate for large scale, creatively planned residential uses, mixed with other uses, such as supporting retail and small- to medium-scale office development. She noted that the demographics in the area have been very stable, with growth trends very similar to the rest of the City, and that demand in the area for housing is anticipated to remain strong. There may even be additional pressure for multifamily units, as units are lost due to construction of the Urban Loop.

In response to a prior Planning board request, Ms. Cockburn provided a handout offering information on how Plan amendments are reviewed and criteria for the Board to use in evaluating proposed amendments.

Chair Truby stated that such a large parcel needs a degree of flexibility accommodating a wide range of uses to make a development proposal work. Board members also noted that the proposal appears to fit well in its context while allowing for reuse of the parcel and its improvements. Mr. Atkins about potential impacts on adjoining properties towards the highway, noting this was an attractive move for this parcel; Mr. Bryson asked about notification of area owners and residents. The consensus was that the proposal allowed a way forward for redevelopment of an important site and was in keeping with the intent of the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Isaacson returned to participate in the remainder of items on the agenda.

PUBLIC HEARING: LAWNSDALE DRIVE CORRIDOR PLAN (Approval Recommended)

Planning Manager Hanna Cockburn stated the Board was conducting the first of two public hearings on Phase 1 of the Lawnsdale Corridor Plan. She stated that Lawnsdale Drive is a thriving corridor in north-central Greensboro where there are change-shaping public investments about to take place that are expected to continue growth pressures along the corridor in the coming decade, including the opening of the next section of the Urban Loop by 2025, and continued growth at the Greensboro Science Center. As such, in 2013 the City Council directed staff to develop a plan for a 3.6 mile segment of Lawnsdale Drive, to provide opportunities to create a shared vision for the corridor and to recommend appropriate tools and strategies that can help guide future land decisions along the corridor.

Ms. Cockburn noted that because of the size of the study area and the diversity of uses, the planning area was divided into four phases, with the first phase – the Greater Kirkwood Community area – being what is presently before the Board. She noted the planning process began with the collection and analysis of a wide range of data, and several key conditions were identified as having a significant influence on the growth and development of the corridor. To help develop the shared vision, a series of public events, surveys and meetings were held in the corridor to help understand what really matters to the stakeholders and property owners in the area, what they like and don't like, and what opportunities exist to work together to make improvements.

Ms. Cockburn noted that continued meetings with the Greater Kirkwood community, their neighborhood association and other stakeholders in the area have taken place throughout the process. Input was received, steps for identifying actions and help in clarifying and focus the recommendations. She noted that there have been some very clear themes: stakeholders really care about the character and fine-grained mixture of development as it occurs but are concerned about more traffic; keeping infill and property maintenance at high quality levels; and sustaining a tree canopy. She noted the community's excitement about the potential and opportunities that exist in the area, including the completion of the Greenway, the repurposing of the Sears building, and building upon while sustaining the historic character of the area.

Ms. Cockburn noted that this phase is home to a wide array of uses, with everything from post-war bungalows to strip-style commercial centers and an industrial warehouse. It is this great variety and intensity of uses and building types that has resulted in some very conflicted ideas about what growth should look like in this area.

The recommendations associated with this phase of the corridor are tailored to the specific needs and desires that were heard throughout the process; as a result, it is not a typical Future Land Use Plan. The recommendations for policies and actions to be undertaken are clustered around a) preserving and maintaining compatibility; b) enhancing non-motorized amenities; and preserving and enhancing the tree canopy.

Ms. Cockburn noted that the Plan would go to the Council for another hearing in April, and requested that the Planning Board give the Plan a positive recommendation.

Planning Board members had no questions for Ms. Cockburn.

Chair Truby opened the public hearing and invited speakers to approach the podium.

Ken Boyles, 2413 Hawthorne Street, stated that he is President of the Greater Kirkwood Community Association. He thanked staff for holding the sessions and allowing the residents to ask questions and offer their comments and concerns. He noted the Association was in favor of the three goals outlined, i.e., keeping and preserving the character of the neighborhood, the architecture and setbacks that are in place; the importance of the tree canopy to everyone in the neighborhood; and the non-motorized access to the Greenway will be very important. He commented that traffic issues will continue to be a challenge but that work seemed on track for developing a good response. He underscored the importance of the tree canopy, noting that it is aging and that planning for replanting and protections needs to be done.

Ann Hummell, 1907 Rosecrest Drive, stated that she was concerned with the health and age of the trees, and with their eventual removal and replacement.

Earl Bower, 5106 Lorenzo Drive, spoke about the significance of bike lanes for the area and distributed information packets on bike usage locally and nationally. He noted that bike usage has been increasing as a way of commuting, although Greensboro's ratio is well behind many other cities. He stated the City needs to pay attention to protecting cyclists if there is to be an increase in the number of people who ride, noting the bike commuter would likely not use the greenways because of the other greenway users. He urged protected bike lanes, which would provide a physical barrier between the bike lane and vehicular traffic. Protected bike lanes encourage bike-riding while dropping the risk of injury or death by substantial margins.

No one was present to speak in opposition to the proposed plan, and the Board closed the public hearing.

In response to a question by Mr. Isaacson concerning the intersection of Cornwallis and Lawndale Drive, Ms. Cockburn stated that the intersection was flagged repeatedly in the input sessions as a danger, something borne out by incident statistics. A broader conversation about traffic management is necessary, given the coming of the Greenway and how it interacts with the lanes of traffic to the south of the study area.

Mr. Atkins stated that there is a strong interest by some of the young professionals for the use of safe bike lanes in this area. Ms. Cockburn stated that GDOT would be advised of concerns raised at these public sessions. She pointed out that this is a unique opportunity for the City to explore options for this area.

Ms. Cockburn noted that the concerns about the age and health of the large trees providing the canopy over Lawndale Drive were an opportunity to explore what options may be available for grants to help with reforestation and maintenance of the trees in the neighborhood. She noted the Urban Forester would be involved in any such assessments and programs. Ms. Cockburn noted that a tree seems to be at risk of falling, it should be reported to the City immediately. Sometimes something preventative can be done, but certainly the City is concerned about avoiding such dangerous situations as falling trees obviously create.

Mr. Atkins moved to recommend approval of the proposed Phase 1 Lawndale Corridor Plan, with a footnote that this corridor is a prime candidate along which Greensboro should consider planning in protected bike lanes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mossman. The Board voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

ANNEXATIONS:

Proposed Contiguous Annexation (PL (P) 15-03: Several properties and portions of properties totally 9.90 acres, generally between Woodpine Drive south to City limits parallel to Bass Chapel Road. **(Approved Recommended)**

Planner Nicole Ward stated that this property is within the Tier 1 Growth Area, is considered contiguous, and is proposed for single family residential use. City water is available by connecting to an existing 8" line located along Netfield Road and a 24" line along Bass Chapel Road. City sanitary sewer is available by connecting to an existing 8" sewer outfall located along Bass Chapel Road. The City's Fire Department noted that this site is currently served by Fire District #13, Station #58 on Spencer Dixon Road and will be served by City Station #53 on Lake Jeanette Road upon annexation. The City's Police Department stated service can be provided with little difficulty. Provision of the other City services will involve a travel distance almost equal to that necessary to provide service to the adjacent properties. The Technical Review Committee reviewed and recommended approval of the annexation request by the Planning Board and City Council.

Mr. Isaacson moved to recommend approval of the annexation request as presented by staff, seconded by Mr. Steele. The Board voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Proposed Satellite Annexation (PL (P) 15-01: 5207 Burlington Road, 0.71 acres, east of the intersection of Burlington Road and Mt. Hope Church Road. **(Approval Recommended)**

Planner Nicole Ward stated that this property is within Tier 1 Growth Area, is considered a satellite annexation, and is currently the site of a single family home that will remain. City water and sewer are available by connecting to lines located along Burlington Road. The City's Fire Department noted that this site is currently served by McLeansville Fire Station #47 on Freedom Church Road and would be served by City Station #57 on Mt. Hope Church Road upon annexation. The Police Department noted they can serve this site with little difficulty. Provision of other City services will involve a travel distance almost equal to that necessary to provide services to the nearby property within the City. The Technical Review Committee RC reviewed and recommended approval of the annexation request to the Planning Board and City Council.

Mr. Isaacson moved to recommend approval of the proposed annexation as presented by staff, seconded by Ms. Parker. The Board voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

GENERALIZED FUTURE LAND USE PLAN (GFLUM) AMENDMENT:

Amendment to Generalized Future Land Use Plan (GFLUM): CP 15-04 – 3525 and 3527 Lewiston Road, 10.88 acres, from Mixed Use Corporate/Business Park and Low Residential to Mixed Use Corporate/Business Park. (Comments Offered)

Planning Manager Hanna Cockburn stated that this is an opportunity to provide comments on a change to the GFLUM associated with a proposed rezoning. The property is in two use designations, Mixed Use Corporate/Business Park and Low Residential, which supports 3 to 5 dwelling units per acre. The request is for all of the property to be moved into Mixed Use Corporate/Business Park, a designation intended for large tracts of undeveloped land near the City's fringe that are appropriate for well-planned and larger scale business and employment parks, with a mixture of uses such as retail, hotel, and residential. Primary uses like office, flex office or technology and research development, light industrial uses, distribution and assembly could be placed in campus type corporate parks in settings with generous open space and locations that promote visual quality compatibility with the surrounding area.

In response to a question, Planning Manager Steve Galanti stated that this area is within the noise cone for the airport.

Chair Truby noted he questioned use of the site for multi-family residential purposes, but that that was a difficulty with the rezoning side of the matter, not the GFLUM amendment. He stated that the GFLUM amendment made sense to him and he did not have a problem with the amendment. Mr. Atkins asked what guidelines were involved in looking at small parcels for these changes; Mr. Bryson stated that he had a concern about this having a domino effect on other properties in the area. Mr. Isaacson recommended the Board members look through the guidance handout Ms. Cockburn had provided to help in their assessment of the proposal.

EASEMENT RELEASE:

Proposed release of a 10-foot wide easement located at 4101 Beckford Drive, as recorded in Plat Book 32, Page 6. (Approved/Final Action)

Planner Nicole Ward stated that this easement release has been viewed by the various departments and the release was supported.

Mr. Bryson moved approval of the easement release as presented by staff, seconded by Mr. Mossman. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Chair Truby asked what rights were actually being released by this action. Steve Galanti stated that the City can relinquish their rights to the easement, but cannot give up other parties' rights to the easement. For instance, if Duke Power had easement rights in this strip, those would not be ceded by the City's action. This process is to relinquish only the City of Greensboro's rights.

ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT

Informational presentation re Growth Strategy Map Reinvestment Corridors, Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan

Hanna Cockburn presented background information regarding amendments to the Reinvestment Corridors map, Figure 4.3, which will come to the Board for a public hearing in March 2015.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR ON ITEMS UNDER PLANNING BOARD AUTHORITY:

None.

APPROVAL OF ABSENCES:

Chair Truby acknowledged that the absence of Mr. Martin and Mr. Allen was approved.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Schwartz
Planning Department, Director
SS:jd