

**MEETING OF THE
GREENSBORO PLANNING BOARD
APRIL 20, 2016**

The Greensboro Planning Board meeting was held on Wednesday, April 20, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. in the City Council Chamber, 2nd floor of the Melvin Municipal Office Building. Board members present were: Marc Isaacson, Chair; Steve Allen; Danielle Brame; Day Atkins; John Martin, Homer Wade; Celia Parker; Richard Bryson; City staff present included Steve Galanti, Mike Kirkman, Hanna Cockburn, Shayna Thiel, Lucas Carter, Russ Clegg, Olivia Byrd and Sheila Stains-Ramp. Also present was Jennifer Schneier, City Attorney's Office.

Chair Isaacson welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the procedures of the Planning Board.

1. Meeting Minutes:

a. Minutes of March 16, 2016 Planning Board Meeting (APPROVED)

Mr. Wade moved approval of the March 2016 meeting minutes, as submitted, seconded by Mr. Martin. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Isaacson, Allen, Bryson, Wade, Brame, Martin, Atkins, Parker. Nays: None.)

2. Public Hearings:

a. Randleman Road Corridor Plan Phase 1 Draft (APPROVAL RECOMMENDED)

Russ Clegg, Planning Department, stated that he was presenting the Phase 1 Randleman Road Corridor Study for public comment and a Planning Board recommendation to take to City Council. Mr. Clegg identified the study area, from where the Randleman Corridor starts at Freeman Mill Road down to the terminus of the city limits on the southern end. The the initial phase of recommendations were focused on the northern half of the area, which includes neighborhoods from Eugene Street on the east side to Freeman Mill Road on the west side. Mr. Clegg noted the Corridor is also a reinvestment corridor as identified in the Comprehensive Plan and there are significant Capital Projects proposed for the area. The Existing Conditions Report indicated that the corridor has a high commercial occupancy of retail and service businesses; however, there are areas of challenging development opportunities because of limited access or obsolete buildings. Mr. Clegg identified the various forms of public outreach used in the study, including door to door surveys of businesses, public meetings, and an on-line survey to gather input and identify both issues and possible improvements for the area. Respondents listed sidewalks, transportation connectivity and low rents that gave rise to a diverse business community as strengths. Challenges identified included gaps in the sidewalk system, vacant buildings and lots, property maintenance and appearance issues.

Mr. Clegg stated that, based on public input, the Plan's recommendations are in three major areas: the public perception of the area; transportation issues that need addressing; and reinvestment. He noted that in terms of reinvestment, the City partners with the Greensboro Community Development Fund to help businesses in the corridor. Other projects include improvements to some of the key intersections in the area, along with changes in street lights, tree plantings and looking at bus shelter locations.

Chair Isaacson asked if there was anyone wishing to speak on this matter.

Mark Wheelihan, owner of Greensboro Harley Davidson on Faragut Street, stated that he has owned the business since 1998, has had many meetings with City Council members, and members of the Police Department, and he

agrees that investment in the area is very important. However, if there is no plan that actually brings more viable businesses into the area, beautification would not change the area sufficiently to change people's perception of it. He said prospective investors are brought into the City, but they do not see this particular area as one for investment. A better first impression is really needed in this area to make it more appealing to investors. He said the area has a reputation for crime, with a lot of drug dealing and prostitution. He said he has found that some residents of Greensboro are not familiar with his business location because they do not go to that side of town because of its reputation. He said he has patiently waited for many years and has invested time and money in his business and he is disappointed that more improvements have not been made. He said he recently located property that would be more appealing to his clients and would get him out of this area because he cannot wait any longer for the needed improvement to be made. He said he sees a lot of money being spent in areas that are already very nice, but the Randleman Road area is being ignored. He said that until the City does something bigger and more significant than making it prettier, the problems are not going to go away. From his view, he feels a lot of work needs to be done in this area to make it more appealing.

Glen Trent, 2209 Kersey Street, stated that he grew up in the Randleman Road area and has seen many changes take place in this area. He said he is a co-founder of the Randleman Road Business Association and he feels that there is an opportunity for major changes to be made. He said he was impressed with the river walk projects in San Antonio, Texas and Wilmington, NC, and he saw the potential for something similar for the South Buffalo Creek corridor. He said he felt it would be a positive influence and an opportunity for hikers to use the area. He asked that staff look into the possibility, and make some really nice parks in this area. He commented that many years ago the Greensboro Youth Council held their carnival there because it was a good place for the activity, with some nice picnic areas. Now it is full of weeds and trash and undesirable people use the area. He stated that with the help of the City and working with the local businesses around the area, it could again become a nice place to visit. He said he was concerned about the possible loss of some solid, nice business in the particular area.

Michael Smith, 2004 Randleman Road, stated that he had run a barber shop in the area for about 3 years and he would like to give back to the community by providing a cook out and sponsoring kids to go to Carowinds. There are several nice businesses in the area, along with residences and an elementary school. He would like to see more interaction between the City staff, the residents and businesses in the area. He pointed out that there are many people who live in the area that cannot get jobs because they have felonies and it is difficult for them to be hired by anyone. He stated his interest in trying to get a solution to this kind of problem because otherwise the negatives perpetuate themselves. He has suggested using land waiting for development for community gardens to help feed some of the kids in the area.

Tushar Savir, 2437 Randleman Road, said he agreed that the area needs a lot of help to re-establish itself as a healthy and vital community.

Wayne Willard, 2832 Randleman Road, stated that he has worked in this area for over 38 years and has had a business there for over 28 years. He said he had seen a lot of improvement to the area but had also heard some negative comments. He commented that there is a local business association meeting every month and they work closely with the Police Department to help to keep this area safe, and the success of their cooperative efforts can be seen in the monthly police reports they review. He invited everyone to attend these meetings. He said the perception of the area was a very hard situation to work with and felt that what the Planning Department was getting ready to do will help a lot. He said the Association and the Police Department have gotten rid of about 90% of the previous problems in this area, but they also need some more help to get up to speed for the area.

Michael Smith returned to the podium and stated that to add to what Mr. Willard said, Randleman Road is not a bad area, it is just a misconception based on memories of how it used to be. The Police presence has helped a lot to deter crime in the area.

There being no additional speakers, the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Atkins asked about the prospective time-line for the City to start making improvements in the area. Russ Clegg stated that there are times associated with the different projects, some of which have funding sources and some of which do not. Some projects can be done in the next couple of years and other projects will take a longer period of time to accomplish. Staff is trying to work closely with the residents and business owners about some of their ideas to improve the area.

In response to concerns about the Smith Homes area raised by Ms. Parker, Russ Clegg stated that staff has spoken with the Housing Authority; the Housing Authority plans to do a renovation of Smith Homes and staff would be working with them to improve services and opportunities. Planning Manager Hanna Cockburn confirmed that the Housing Authority does have plans for major investment in the Smith Homes community, but that is still several years in the future. The interim step that staff discussed with them is using their Community Center as a site to do some additional creative workforce development activities. This is an opportunity for the City to partner their programs with the programs offered by the Housing Authority. That will take a couple of years for funding to line up because it is coming from the federal government. Staff will continue to work diligently with residents in this effort.

Mr. Bryson wanted to know what can be done now. Russ Clegg stated that they do now have the existing ties with the Community Foundation and other programs in the Economic Development Small Business office that can help businesses, so there are things that are available to help reinvestment for the area. Some of the projects will take time to design and to fund. As small issues arise, they will try to tackle those as soon as possible while maintaining a balance with making sure things look good to make a better impression than it does currently. They also want to look at the business end and try to improve the ability of folks to invest in their property if they can. Mr. Bryson stated that he agrees with one of the speakers that they cannot keep waiting for something to be done, action needs to be taken now. He feels the process needs to be expedited as quickly as possible.

Mr. Allen stated that looking at some of the proposed improvements it is difficult to make everyone happy all at once, but he does believe that the proposal of Phase 1 is a start in the right direction to help that area and that corridor. He feels that some of the ideas presented by the speakers are very good and he is especially encouraged to hear that some of those speakers have already had conversations with City staff about these ideas and how to bring them to fruition. He is in favor of the plan as a start, although he realizes that it may not be as comprehensive as some.

There being no further comments, Mr. Wade moved to recommend the Randleman Road Corridor Plan, Phase 1, as submitted by staff, seconded by Mr. Allen. The Board voted 8-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Isaacson, Allen, Bryson, Martin, Wade, Parker, Brame and Atkins. Nays: None.)

3. Amendments to Generalized Future Land Use Plan (GFLUM)

a. CP16-05: 3200-3202 Horse Pen Creek Road, from Low Residential to Mixed Use Residential (APPROVAL RECOMMENDED)

Planning Manager Hanna Cockburn stated that the Board is asked to give their comments on the proposed Generalized Future Land Use Map (GFLUM) amendment, which has been requested in conjunction with a rezoning for the property. She noted the current designation is Low Residential, and the proposed designation is Mixed Residential, which applies to neighborhoods or districts where the predominant use is residential and substantial

compatible local serving non-residential uses may be introduced. She stated there are areas to the south and east that show mixed use and moderate residential designations, and that the Horse Pen Creek corridor has been experiencing transition from rural and low density residential uses to a greater mixture of more intense uses for some time now. The zoning case that is associated with this request is tentatively scheduled for the May 16, 2016 Zoning Commission meeting.

Board Comments:

Mr. Allen stated that the amendment seemed a good fit for the area, and a good location for additional development.

4. Annexation Petitions:

a. PL(P) 16-06 Proposed Annexation of 28.7 acres at 2732-ZZ Pleasant Ridge Road, at the eastern end of Highland Grove Drive (RECOMMENDED)

Lucas Carter, Planning Department, stated that the site is within Growth Tier 3 of the Growth Strategy Map in the Comprehensive Plan. As such, the Future Land Use Plan requires that annexation be discouraged until the full complement of City services can be efficiently provided. The service providers have indicated that they can provide the services. The proposed use would be single family residential. The Technical Review Committee (TRC) recommended approval. The request is scheduled to go to City Council June 7, 2016.

Planning Board member Martin moved to recommend approval of the annexation to City Council, seconded by Ms. Parker. The Board voted 8-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Isaacson, Allen, Bryson, Martin, Wade, Parker, Brame and Atkins. Nays: None.)

b. PL(P) 16-07 Proposed annexation of 0.49 acre being the western portions of 1801 Cude Road and 1199 Pleasant Ridge Road (APPROVAL RECOMMENDED)

Lucas Carter, Planning Department, stated that the site is inside Growth Tier 1 of the Growth Strategy Map, adjacent to property within City limits, and is proposed for annexation because of a request for utility servicing. The proposed annexation area is the rear portion of two residentially used lots that are proposed to remain in residential use. Mr. Carter noted that the site can be served with City water, which runs along the north side of Pleasant Ridge Road and the west side of Cude Road. He also noted the site can be served with City sewer; however gravity sewer service would require a long sewer extension. Service could possibly be provided through use of a pump. Fire protection services are currently provided by City Station 20, which would remain the same after annexation with no change in response time. All other services could be provided on the same basis as presently provided to the portion of the lots already within the City. The Technical Review Committee recommended approval of the annexation, noting the potential cost to the applicant for the sewer servicing. The Zoning Commission is scheduled to hear the initial zoning on the site at their May 16, 2016 meeting, and City Council would tentatively hear the request at their June 21, 2016 City Council meeting.

In response to a question, Mr. Carter stated that the owner is requesting city utility services and in order to get those services they would need the entire properties to be inside the city limits.

Planning Board member Parker asked for an explanation of what was meant by a 'gravity sewer line', and what that meant for the proposed annexation site. Mr. Carter stated that 'gravity' sewer service is the more conventional form of sewer service and relies on a constant downhill gradient along the length of the sewer line to maintain flow without problems. Where gravity service cannot be provided, sewage can be pumped into the system. He noted that the comment arises because the topography of this property will make it difficult to service without pumping, and the developer will be responsible for all costs associated with getting appropriate water and sewer service for the property.

Planning Board member Brame asked about the emergency services response time. Mr. Carter stated that the response time remains the same as currently provided to the site, and the 3 minutes 20 seconds travel time is well within the response time standard.

Planning Board member Wade asked for clarification on the requirement that entire properties be annexed to provide utility servicing. Planning Co-Manager Steve Galanti stated that given the change from the former consolidated water and sewer agreement, the adopted policy is that the entire piece of property must be within city limits for utility servicing to be provided.

There being no further discussion, Planning Board member Martin moved to recommend approval of the proposed annexation, as submitted by staff, seconded by Mr. Allen. The Board voted 8-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Isaacson, Allen, Bryson, Martin, Wade, Parker, Brame and Atkins. Nays: None.)

c. PL(P) 18-08 Proposed Annexation of 2.72 acres at 4751-YY McConnell Center Drive Near intersection of I-40 and McConnell Drive (APPROVAL RECOMMENDED)

Lucas Carter, Planning Department, stated that the site is within Growth Tier 1 of the Growth Strategy Map, and the proposed land use was Industrial. The Technical Review Committee recommended approval of the request. The Zoning Commission will hear the initial zoning request on May 16, 2016 and City Council will hear both the rezoning and the annexation requests at their June 21, 2016 meeting.

There being no discussion, Planning Board member Allen moved to recommend approval of the proposed annexation, as submitted by staff, seconded by Mr. Bryson. The Board voted 8-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Isaacson, Allen, Bryson, Martin, Wade, Parker, Brame and Atkins. Nays: None.)

d. PL(P) 16-09 Proposed Annexation of 1730 Youngs Mill Road, 1.986 acres, intersection of E. Lee Street and Youngs Mill Road (APPROVAL RECOMMENDED)

Mr. Wade and Mr. Isaacson requested to be recused from the item. The Board voted unanimously in favor of Mr. Wade's and Mr. Isaacson's recusal.

Lucas Carter, Planning Department, stated that the property is within Tier 1 of the Growth Strategy Map and the proposed land use is Commercial. The Technical Review Committee recommended approval of the request. The initial zoning request is scheduled for review by the Zoning Commission on May 16, 2016, with the zoning and annexation requests to be sent to City Council for final decision at the June 21, 2016 Council meeting.

Steve Galanti noted that emergency services are currently provided by Alamance station and after annexation the site would be served by both Alamance and City stations, in accordance with the mutual service agreement with Alamance County.

Planning Board member Martin moved recommendation of approval of the proposed annexation, as submitted by staff, seconded by Mr. Bryson. The Board voted 6-0-2 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Allen, Bryson, Martin, Parker, Brame and Atkins. Nays: None. Recused: Isaacson, Wade.)

5. Easement Release (Final Decision):

a. Proposed release of a 20' access easement located at 1101 West Gate City Boulevard, as recorded in Plat Book 185, Page 107. (APPROVED)

Shayna Thiel, Planner, stated that all utility providers had reviewed the request and provided their approval.

After some clarification, Mr. Martin moved approval of the easement release, as presented by staff; the second was by Mr. Bryson. (Ayes: Isaacson, Allen, Bryson, Martin, Wade, Parker, Brame and Atkins. Nays: None.)

6. Items from Staff

Steve Galanti stated that a copy of the March 2016 Growth and Development Trends Newsletter had been provided to Board members and requested that staff be advised if there were any questions.

7. Items from the Chair

None.

8. Items from Board Members

Mr. Bryson asked that staff reach out to GTA on bus shelters for the Randleman Road Corridor.

9. Speakers from the Floor on Items under Planning Board Authority

None.

10. Approval of Absences

The absence of Mr. Mossman was acknowledged.

11. Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Schwartz, FAICP, Director

Planning Department
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