

**MEETING OF THE
GREENSBORO PLANNING BOARD
DECEMBER 18, 2019**

The Greensboro Planning Board meeting was held on Wednesday, December 18, 2019 at 4:12 pm in the Council Chamber of the Melvin Municipal Office Building. Board members present were: Chair Steve Allen, Mike Cooke, Dave Blackman, Carol Carter, and Emanuel Clark. Planning staff present included Steve Galanti, Luke Carter, Andy Lester, Jeff Sovich, José Colón and Russ Clegg. Also present was Andrew Kelly from the Legal Department.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 20 2019, PLANNING BOARD MEETING (APPROVED)

Ms. Carter moved to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2019 meeting, second by Mr. Clark. The Board voted 5-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Allen, Cooke, Carter, Blackman, and Clark. Nays: None).

TYPE 3 MODIFICATION: MODIFICATION REQUESTED FOR BUILDING FACADE DESIGN REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 2.B5 OF THE REZONING CONDITIONS IN THE AUGUST 11, 1997 REZONING, 2645 LAWDALE DRIVE (APPROVED)

Mr. Lester stated that the Zoning Commission approved the rezoning on August 11, 1997, from Light Industrial to Conditional District Commercial-High for properties fronting on Lawndale Drive between Independent Road and Bluemont Drive with 24 zoning conditions. The City has received a Type 3 modification request in order to allow alternative building materials. Per Section 30-4-11 of the Land Development Ordinance, the Planning Board is authorized to approve a Type 3 modification involving changes or amendments to conditional zoning districts and special use permits. Due to the existing building material condition, the applicant proposes to use EIFS as an exterior finish system in lieu of masonry material. EIFS is a general class of non-load bearing building cladding systems providing exterior walls with an insulated, water resistant finished surface. The three factors in granted a modification are: 1) The proposed modification will result in equal or better performance than the standard that is being modified, 2) The size, topography or existing development of the property or of adjoining areas prevents compliance with a standard, and 3) A federal, state or local law or regulation prevents compliance with the standard. The Technical Review Committee reviewed the request and recommended approval based on the finding of equal or better performance. The proposed material will match the buildings along Lawndale Drive, will imitate stucco masonry and meet the intent of the zoning condition.

In response to a question from Mr. Clark, Mr. Lester stated that the Technical Review Committee arrived at their determination of equal or better performance since the EIFS system would appear to be stucco masonry.

In response to a question from Mr. Cooke, Mr. Lester stated that the masonry material was included in the original conditions to have a uniform design and a higher quality material within the development.

In response to a question from Mr. Clark, Mr. Lester stated that there were no safety implications associated with the use of EFIS since it must comply with the NC state building code.

In response to a question from Mr. Blackman, Mr. Lester stated that this material has been around since post World War II.

In response to a question from Ms. Carter, Mr. Lester stated that EFIS is a standard building material and is in keeping with their standard plans.

Ms. Carter moved to approve the Type 3 modification based on equal or better performance, seconded by Mr. Cooke. The Board voted 5-0 in favor of the motion (Ayes: Allen, Cooke, Carter, Blackman, and Clark. Nays: None).

ANNEXATION:

PL(P) 19-31. PROPOSED CONTIGUOUS ANNEXATION OF PORTIONS 2117 AND 2119 SPRUCEWOOD DRIVE (0.288 and 0.313 Acres) (RECOMMENDED APPROVAL)

Mr. Carter stated that staff received annexation petition for portions of 2117 and 2119 Sprucewood Drive, that portions of both properties have already been annexed and that the applicant is requesting that the remainder of both properties be annexed and zoned. This site is located in Growth Tier 1. City water and sewer are available for both properties. Solid waste removal can be provided. Pinecroft-Sedgefield Fire Station #23 would continue to provide service at this location with the City also responding. Response time would remain the same or slightly improve. The Police Department can respond and provide service to this site with little difficulty. This request received a favorable recommendation by the Technical Review Committee at their December 5th meeting

In response to a question from Mr. Clark, Mr. Galanti stated that the Police comment regarding resources indicated that the current request did not trigger the need for additional staff or resources at this time. But, additional annexations in this area could have an impact in the future.

In response to a question from Ms. Carter, Mr. Carter stated that the site currently contains two lots with frontage of Sprucewood Drive and they are buildable as long as they comply with dimensional requirements for the zoning district.

Mr. Cooke moved to recommend approval of the annexation to City Council, seconded by Mr. Blackman. The Board voted 5-0 in favor of the motion (Ayes: Allen, Cooke, Carter, Blackman, and Clark. Nays: None).

UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR UNITED HOUSE OF PRAYER, 2019-2521, 900 E. MARKET STREET (APPROVED)

Mr. Lester stated that this 13.70 acre tract was rezoned to Planned Unit Development on December 13, 2010, with zoning conditions. The unified development plan (UDP) sets the development standards and setbacks for development on the site. Unified development plans are reviewed with a recommendation from the Technical Review Committee and with final action by the Planning Board. The UDP is to be consistent with the concept plan, show proposed phase lines, include the master sign plan, and identify proposed setbacks or other regulations regarding building placement. The Technical Review Committee reviewed the UDP at their December 12th meeting and recommended approval with conditions that have been met. A Type 2 modification was approved allowing residential uses to be located on the first floor within the East Market Street Pedestrian Scale Overlay District under the provision of equal and better performance. Approval of the UDP was recommended.

Chair Allen stated there has been a lot of movement within the city to have this site developed and was happy to see something is moving forward.

In response to a question from Mr. Blackman, Mr. Galanti stated that rezoning to Planned Unit Development is a three step process with a concept plan approved by the TRC, a public hearing before the Zoning Commission, and if approved, a Unified Development Plan which establishes the dimensional standards, how the property will be developed, setbacks, and open space to be provided.

Ms. Carter moved to approve the UDP, seconded by Mr. Blackman. The Board voted 5-0 in favor of the motion (Ayes: Allen, Cooke, Carter, Blackman, and Clark. Nays: None).

AMENDMENT TO THE WILLOW OAKS TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN RELATED TO A REVISION TO THE DESIGN STANDARD. (APPROVED)

José Colón asked the Board to approve a set of revisions to the design guidelines included in the Willow Oaks Redevelopment and Neighborhood Plan. He described the location of the Willow Oaks Redevelopment Area in east Greensboro, southeast of North Carolina A&T University and north of East Gate City Boulevard. Most of the redevelopment area lies east of US Highway 29. He presented maps of the 5 strategy areas in Willow Oaks referenced in the Design Guidelines and proposed amendments. He stated the Willow Oaks Redevelopment and the Neighborhood plan updates were adopted in 2017 as a combined document.

Mr. Colón showcased photographs depicting the styles of homes within the Willow Oaks development and stated that the proposed guideline changes are detailed in the memo provided to the Board members. He stated that the most substantial modification is the addition of premier vinyl siding as a permitted material. Other changes included adjusted dimensions, removing wood flooring as porch floor material, changing certain elements from

“Required” to “Encouraged”, and updating fence standards to align with the Land Development Ordinance standards.

Mr. Colón explained the reasons behind the revisions. The guideline changes will maintain the high-quality and style of existing construction, but will make it easier to attract builders to finish off the project, which has been a challenge. Feedback received from builders indicates that a weak real estate market in the area, coupled with rising overall construction costs, make it difficult to invest. The consideration of vinyl as an exterior siding was the number request from almost all of the builders. He stated that the quality and color options for vinyl have increased since the adoption of the updated plan and that vinyl siding will be in harmony with the building styles and quality within the Willow Oak community. He spoke to the longevity on home quality as the design guidelines changes promote building elements that will require less long term maintenance for future homeowners.

Mr. Colón stated that the proposed design guideline amendments have been reviewed by several different entities prior to the Planning Board meeting.

- Staff presented the changes to the Willow Oaks community and received positive feedback.
- There was also a developer/builder session at the Willow Oaks Community Center with the building community regarding the proposed changes.
- Approval was received from agencies associated with the development of the project. The Greensboro Housing Development Partnership approved the changes on December 10, 2019 and the Redevelopment Commission was updated on October 2, 2019. The Willow Oaks HOA approved the design guideline changes at the October 22, 2019 meeting.

In response to a question from Mr. Blackman, Mr. Colón stated that the changes take into account the materials builders are familiar with and use, as much as to save costs. Hardy board does fade and there are instances of fading in the neighborhood. Vinyl siding will attract builders and is a longer lasting product for new and existing homes, as it is not limited to new construction. Mr. Clegg added that there are specific new products that have improved and would create better maintenance but would not take away from the qualify look of the neighborhood.

In response to a question from Mr. Clark, Mr. Colón stated that this would be the final approval of the amendment.

Mr. Galanti stated that this is a document with rules and regulations and after the changes are incorporated into the document itself, it will be shared with the Planning Board. The Design Guidelines, Redevelopment and Development Plans for several of the neighborhoods online at the Planning Department’s web page.

Mr. Blackman moved to approve the amendment, seconded by Ms. Carter. The Board voted 5-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Allen, Cooke, Carter, Blackman, and Clark. Nays: None).

EASEMENT RELEASES:

Mr. Galanti advised the Board that staff has not received responses from all of the utility companies and the cases will need to be continued until the January meeting.

AMENDMENT TO GENERALIZED FUTURE LAND USE MAP (GFLUM):**CP 19-08: 2:32 ACRES AT 4100, 4108, AND 4110 LAWDALE DRIVE AND 4201 LAKE JEANETTE ROAD, FROM LOW RESIDENTIAL TO COMMERCIAL. (COMMENTS)**

Jeff Sovich stated that this is a request in conjunction with a rezoning request for these properties and explained the current designation is Low Residential and the proposed zoning is Commercial. The Comprehensive Plan defines Low Residential 3-5 dwelling unit per acre category as including the city's predominantly single family as well as other compatible housing types that can be accommodated within this density range and provided background and history information regarding the property to the Planning Board members.

In response to a question from Mr. Blackman, Mr. Sovich stated that the applicant has been different for the three different requests heard in 2007, 2011, and 2019.

In response to a question from Mr. Blackman, Mr. Sovich stated that the corner property is wooded, 4108 has a single family structure, 4201 Lake Jeanette Road has a storage building, and 4110 Lawndale Drive is wooded.

In response to a question from Mr. Blackman, Mr. Sovich stated that as far as he knows the properties are all unoccupied.

In response to a question from Ms. Carter, Mr. Clegg stated that an office use could fit into a variety of land use categories, which could include a variety of zoning districts and conditions, with some being stricter than others.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Carter felt that Commercial designation was too intense for a land use classification from the GFLUM and would prefer to see something less intense that could accommodate some non-residential.

Chair Allen stated with all the previous attempts at changing zoning, the Board is being asked for comments and not a final decision. He feels this is a reflection of how the urban loop is spurring economic development in the City. The corridor is evidence of a number of single family properties grouped together and being marketed for development. He feels this is in line with the trajectory of this area and is in favor of the amendment.

Mr. Blackman stated that he would like the Zoning Commission to be sensitive to the people that live around the site and sensitive to what the development causes in terms of the future of that particular area.

Mr. Cooke stated that this area is suitable for some kind of lower density commercial use but probably not some other commercial uses.

Ms. Carter stated that in the Planning Department's description of commercial, it alludes to more intense uses as well stating specifically strip centers and big boxes which is why she feels commercial is too intense.

Mr. Blackman stated that if they are trying to influence Zoning, eventually it will be commercial and probably in the best interest of the City.

Ms. Carter stated that the intensity of commercial does not need to be along Lawndale and to stick to the City's Land Use plan and having the more commercial and intense uses at the major intersections.

Mr. Sovich stated that the Connections 2025 goals and policies were included in his presentation as relevant considerations to the case, not as a statement that the characteristics of the case are compatible or compliant with the goals and policies.

Mr. Clark stated that he was in agreement with Chair Allen as this represents a potential for additional development within the City. Lawndale is a major thoroughfare within the City. He could not imagine it would significantly disrupt the area and his thoughts to the Zoning Commission would be to take a look at the size.

ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT:

Russ Clegg advised there is a draft of the Comprehensive Plan. It is being circulated internally and hope to have a substantial update at the January meeting.

ITEMS FROM THE CHAIR:

Chair Allen wished everyone Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas and thanked everyone for their efforts.

ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS:

Ms. Carter complimented staff on the very good and complete presentations making it easier to make decisions and comments appropriate. Ms. Carter stated Merry Christmas to everyone and Happy Holidays.

APPROVAL OF ABSENCES:

The absences for Mr. Martin, Mr. Bryson, Mr. Wade, and Mr. Brandon were acknowledged as approved.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Schwartz, FAICP
Planning Department, Director