

TOWN OF GEORGETOWN - PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes July 19, 2023

ATTENDANCE

Commissioners

Larry Rohlffing
Linda Dennis
Lance Mears
Edwin Wise
Eric Evans - absent

Staff

Jocelyn Huff, Planning
Jamie Craddock, Planning
Tim Willard, Solicitor

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Commission Chair Rohlffing called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF JUNE 21, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Dennis moved, seconded by Commissioner Wise, to approve the June 21, 2023 regular meeting minutes as presented. **APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

3. PUBLIC HEARING

A. CASE #2022-14

Shortleaf Preserve

(A) Comprehensive Plan Amendment:
Future Land Use Map

(B) Rezone Application

An application by D.R. Horton., for (A) an amendment to the Town of Georgetown's Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map for 13.7 acres of the parcel from Commercial to Multi-Family Residential & (B) an official zoning map amendment of 70.81 acres of the parcel from Neighborhood Residential District (UR3) to Multifamily Residential District (MR1) and 10.94 acres of the parcel from UR3 to Highway Commercial District (HC). The property is located east side of Parker Road, south of East Trap Pond Road, identified as SC Tax Parcel 135-19.00-64.00, zoned UR3 (Neighborhood Residential).

Charlie Barnett, of Morris & Ritchie Associates, presented the application. Mr. Barnett reviewed the request for the minor variation to the line between uses and confirmed the zoning requested would be for MR2, for the Townhomes and single family, as reflected on the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (10-3).

Jay Heilman, of D.R. Horton, provided some history of the builder and addressed questions asked at the last meeting regarding the concept plan and parking, amenities, a revised timeline and additional entrances.

Chair Rohlffing opened the floor for public comment:

Valerie Jones – 23038 Parker Road, commented that the housing goals within the Comprehensive Plan have been met with committed volumes up to the year 2030; in reviewing the DelDOT Impact Study, DelDOT can only enforce where they have right-

of-way which would be in front of the development only; safety is a concern for Parker Road, an egress off of Route 113 is possible to alleviate traffic; and impact to endangered sheep raised across the road from the development. Formal request is that the property remain zoned UR3.

Chairman Rohlfing confirmed for the audience that the Comprehensive Plan does reflect a future land use of multifamily and commercial for the property.

Doug Sipple – Parker Road, questioned if the Commission received revised site plans based on concerns with the concept plan. (The Commission explained that once the zoning is firmed up the applicant will address their preliminary plan submittal.) Mr. Sipple also informed the Commission that Parker Road is a tar and chip road. It is not built for the proposed amount of traffic.

One letter was received from Jeffrey Bo Shockley and Courtney Tate – 21392 Park Avenue, owners of property on Parker Road in opposition to the proposal. The letter expressed concerns similar to those expressed, impacts to the character of the area, the natural habitat and to the traffic along Parker Road.

Commissioner Mears moved to table the requests pending additional information.
Motion withdrawn.

Commissioner Wise moved, seconded by Commissioner Dennis, to recommend Town Council APPROVE the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map amendment for 13.7 acres from Commercial to Multifamily Residential, as presented.

Commissioner Mears – Yes, solely as the request meets the Comp Plan and the audience was encouraged to participate with the future site plan review.

Commissioner Wise – Yes, solely as the request meets the Comp Plan and asked that the developer take a look at the traffic impact as the road will not hold up and there is concern for Little Street and East Trap Pond Road as well.

Commissioner Dennis – Yes, agrees with comments given and asks developer to consider sufficient amenities.

Chairman Rohlfing – Yes, is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)

Commissioner Dennis moved, seconded by Commissioner Mears, to recommend Town Council APPROVE the Zoning Map Amendment of 70.81 acres from Neighborhood Residential District to Townhouse Residential District (MR2), and 10.94 acres from Neighborhood Residential District to Highway Commercial District.

Commissioner Mears – Yes

Commissioner Wise – Yes

Commissioner Dennis – Yes

Chairman Rohlfing – Yes, as it is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)

4. PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN REVIEW

A. CASE #2022-34 WB Georgetown

An application by WB Georgetown, LLC., for the preliminary review and approval to construct a +/- 5,975 square foot dental office. The property is located at Dupont Boulevard, approx. 1160' south of the intersection of Old Laurel Road, identified as SC Tax Parcel 135-19.00-63.04, zoned HC (Highway Commercial District).

Robert Palmer, of Beacon Engineering, presented the application along with owners Dr. Julie Parker & Dr. Eric Balliet. The new construction is to replace the current dental office location at 212 West Market Street. The expanded location will allow modernization, more parking spaces and an additional dentist.

Waiver Requests:

1. For approval to orient the proposed building as indicated on the site plan within the existing business complex.

§230-162 Building fronts to face roadway.

The front or entrance of main buildings located within all districts shall face toward a State maintained roadway or Town maintained street as determined by the Planning Commission, except within professional or business complexes approved by Planning Commission.

Commissioner Dennis moved, seconded by Commissioner Mears, to APPROVE the waiver request regarding building orientation, as presented.

Commissioner Mears – Yes, based on the information provided and the elevation of the building, nicely done.

Commissioner Wise – Yes, based on the site plan, looks good.

Commissioner Dennis – Yes

Chairman Rohlfing – Yes, both sides of the building look wonderful.

APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)

2. For relief from the Georgetown Design Standards requirement that specifies parking be located behind buildings when feasible.

Parking Lot Design and General Landscaping

Location of Parking

- Commercial parking lots should be located behind buildings when feasible.

Where commercial parking lots are allowed to remain in front of or beside buildings, parking lots shall provide minimum 10 foot wide planting area between the parking lot and street right-of-way to include:

- a. A year-round sight barrier
- b. Evergreen shrubs
- c. Evergreen ground cover, shrub material maintained at a minimum height of 3 feet of visibility

Commissioner Mears moved, seconded by Commissioner Wise, to APPROVE the waiver request regarding parking location, as presented.

Commissioner Mears – Yes, based on the site plan looks good.

Commissioner Wise – Yes, based on previous comments.

Commissioner Dennis – Yes

Chairman Rohlfing – Yes, consistent with commercial properties in the area.

APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)

Commissioner Dennis asked if the white vinyl fence could extend all the way across the back of the property to provide sufficient buffer and as a safety factor to limit people walking between the commercial property and the Village of Cinderberry.

The applicant asked that if the fence is extended, could the buffer landscaping provided along the Megee tax ditch be eliminated because the setback requirements are met in proximity to the neighbors (147 feet) to balance the cost. The Town would have to look at the required landscaping required to ensure the percentage would be met.

Commissioner Mears moved, seconded by Commissioner Wise, to APPROVE the preliminary site plan application contingent upon the following:

1. Satisfaction of the Town Engineer's comments

2. Receipt of State agency approvals

Commissioner Wise moved, seconded by Commissioner Mears, to revise the motion to include:

3. Extension of six foot tall, vinyl fence all the way across the parcel with reduction of landscaping, as long as minimum requirement for landscaping is met.

Commissioner Mears – Yes

Commissioner Wise – Yes

Commissioner Dennis – Yes

Chairman Rohlfing – Yes

APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)

5. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT REQUEST

A. CASE #2023-10 Minor Variation Determination

An application by Joseph & Elaine Powers, to determine if their Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment request can be classified as a Minor Variation. The property is located at 120 West Market Street, identified as SC Tax Parcel 135-19.08-87.00, zoned UR2 (Medium Residential District).

Chair Rohlfing read the conditions to be met to be considered as a Minor Variation.

The application was presented by Joe Powers, who addressed the conditions confirming the unique circumstance of purchasing a minimal portion of the property (40 feet) owned by Brent Marsh, his neighbor. The surrounding area, at the back of Mr. Marsh's property,

is residential and zoned residential. The Future Land Use of Mr. Marsh's parcel is Business; the proposed purchase of 40' of land would be applied to the parcel behind it which is a Future Land Use of residential. There would be no impact to the intent of the Comprehensive Plan as the front portion of the property would remain with the Future Land Use of Business.

Commissioner Mears moved, seconded by Commissioner Dennis, to APPROVE the application as a Minor Variation to the Comprehensive Plan, as it meets the conditions as presented.

Commissioner Mears – Yes, for the reason's stated.

Commissioner Wise – Yes

Commissioner Dennis – Yes

Chairman Rohlfing – Yes, it is a minor change.

APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)

B. CASE #2023-12 Minor Variation Determination

An application by DHW Holdings, LLC., to determine if their Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment request can be classified as a Minor Variation. The property is located at 504 West Laurel Street, identified as SC Tax Parcel 135-19.07-36.00, zoned UR1 (Urban Residential District).

Chair Rohlfing reminded the applicant of the conditions to be met.

Chris Schafner, of DHW Holdings and the Preston Automotive Group, presented the application. Shore Auto Sales business along Dupont Boulevard is doing very well and the seven-acre parcel behind it was purchased a few years ago. The business is now ready to expand. The applicant would like to partition 2.23 acres of the seven-acre parcel (zoned residential) to the business for expansion. The neighboring residential properties will have a natural buffer from the tax ditch to the north and the proposed stormwater area. The area to the southeast side abuts a paper street with no residential development. Commercial uses are to the south.

Commissioner Wise moved, seconded by Commissioner Dennis, to APPROVE the application as a Minor Variation to the Comprehensive Plan as presented.

Commissioner Mears – Yes, based on all of the conditions being met.

Commissioner Wise – Yes, based on the criteria and it being minor.

Commissioner Dennis – Yes, for the same reasons.

Chairman Rohlfing – Yes, as it meets the requirements.

APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)

6. Discussion – Guidelines for Public Comment

Proposed guidelines to be presented for adoption at the next meeting.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was provided.

8. PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORT

Updates were provided to the Commission on current and proposed projects.

9. ADJOURNMENT


Commissioner Dennis moved, seconded by Commissioner Wise, to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. **APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

APPROVED:



Larry Rohlfing, Chairperson

ATTEST:



Jocelyn Huff, Planning