

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

July 6, 2017

7:00 P.M.

120 W. Dougherty Street

~~**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Sara Beresford, Maxine Easom (vice-chair), David Finkel, Hank Joiner, Alice Kinman, Kristen Morales, Lucy Rowland, and Jeff Scarbrough~~

~~**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jim Anderson (chair) and Jim Scanlon~~

~~**STAFF PRESENT:** Rick Cowick, Jane Erwin, Brad Griffin, Bryce Hix (Planning), John Hawkins (Attorney's Office)~~

GENERAL BUSINESS

Ms. Easom called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Introduction of Staff reports and all other documents submitted to the Planning Commission at the meeting into the official record. Ms. Rowland moved to introduce all reports and documents into the official record. Mr. Scarbrough seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

2. Approval of June 1, 2017 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Ms. Rowland made a motion for approval. Mr. Scarbrough seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. *MACORTS* Update and Public Comment.

Mr. Griffin reported that the Mayor and Commission had hired a consultant to draft an update of the Long Range Transportation Plan.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 240 & p/o 230 SWANSON DRIVE, 200 JONES DRIVE and p/o 610 EPPS BRIDGE PARKWAY - PD-2017-06-1572

Type II – Preliminary Planned Development

Petitioner: James C. Warnes

Owner: Chestnut Grove Baptist Church; Tyrone M. Barnett

Request: From RS-25 (Single-Family Residential) and Special Use in RS-25 to RS-8 (PD) (Single-Family Residential, Planned Development)

Tax ID: 074 B001, 074 B002, 074 B002A and 074D C006N

Ms. Erwin presented the request with Staff comments only.

For: Jim Warnes

Against: LaKeisha Gantt, Jean Gerard, Larry Moon, Walter Allen, Anthony White, John Jeffreys, Carolina Lane, Carl Jordan

Discussion: Mr. Scarbrough said that Athens is a retirement destination, but this site has difficult topography. This is a high-density project with a narrow buffer. The requested mass grading is fraught with peril. There will be a lot of water to capture. He is concerned with whether adequate space is being provided for street trees. The density should be reduced and the buffer increased. Primary concern is with the traffic going through the adjacent neighborhood.

Ms. Rowland said that people do not necessarily want to live in age-restricted neighborhoods. A number of lots would sit empty for a while. She is concerned with what happens when the marketing is not successful. The density needs to be lower or this will be a real shock to the adjacent neighbors.

Ms. Kinman said that access through the adjacent neighborhood is a major problem and a 20' buffer is too narrow.

Mr. Joiner said that he is not a proponent of connecting neighborhoods. This is infill development. He would like to see RS-15 zoning like Pinecrest. He likes the design, but the cut-through traffic should be eliminated as much as possible. He has no concern with the request for standardized setbacks.

Mr. Finkel said that walkability is important. Swanson Drive should not be used.

Ms. Morales said that residents would need access to places when they cannot drive. Also, because of the need of residents to drive to other places for their needs, this is no different from any other neighborhood. She shares the Staff concern with the parking across the street from the amenity lot.

Ms. Easom said that she is not in favor of connecting to the neighborhood even if the request was changed to RS-15. Timothy Road Elementary School is nearby and this volume of traffic will be dangerous for children.

Ms. Easom asked about the retaining walls. Mr. Warnes explained the need for temporary retaining walls should the mass grading not be approved. Low, permanent retaining walls would also be constructed.

Ms. Easom said that she has visited another development where even a 35' buffer was insufficient.

2. 387 SOUTH MILLEDGE AVENUE – SUP-2017-04-1211

Type II – Special Use Permit

Petitioner: Lori Bork Newcomer / Bork Design

Owner: Thomas and Ann Wilkins

Request: Special Use in C-O (MAC) (Commercial-Office, Milledge Avenue Corridor)

Tax ID: 171C1 D008

Mr. Hix presented the request with a recommendation for denial.

For: Lori Bork Newcomer, Mike Morris, Gabe Comstock, Linda Massie

Against: Gary Bertsch, Daniel Haygood, Ed Halper, Patricia Moore, Todd Baker, Jason Bennett, Diana Jackson

Discussion: Mr. Scarbrough said that the request proposes a very dense parking lot with a dumpster location that will be difficult to access. It is a little too much for the site.

Ms. Rowland said that the addition is being maxed out, which increases the amount of parking. She agrees that the dumpster access is difficult. This proposal is maxing out the development at the very start without considering the traffic impact on the nearby streets.

Ms. Kinman said that there is no problem with having another sorority on Milledge, but the proposed parking is too much for Henderson Avenue and Harris Street.

Ms. Beresford said that it is disappointing that UGA is not doing anything to have a less car-oriented campus. There are major traffic concerns expressed by the neighbors. There are benefits and drawbacks for the development.

Ms. Morales said that this is another burden on the neighborhood, which they did not ask for. She asked about the difference in the two parking calculations required by the ordinance. Mr. Griffin explained the two required parking calculations.

Mr. Joiner said that this is a great house and this is a chance for its preservation.

Variance #1 Motion: Mr. Joiner made a motion to recommend approval. Ms. Morales seconded the motion, which passed 4 to 3 (Kinman, Rowland and Scarbrough in opposition).

Variance #2 Motion: Mr. Joiner made a motion to recommend approval. Ms. Beresford seconded the motion, which passed 4 to 3 (Kinman, Rowland and Scarbrough in opposition).

Variance #3 Motion: Mr. Joiner made a motion to recommend approval. Ms. Morales seconded the motion, which passed 4 to 3 (Kinman, Rowland and Scarbrough in opposition).

Variance #4 Motion: Mr. Joiner made a motion to recommend approval. Mr. Finkel seconded the motion, which passed 4 to 3 (Kinman, Rowland and Scarbrough in opposition).

Special Use Motion: Mr. Joiner made a motion to recommend approval with the following condition:

- The exit drive shall be designed for left-turn-only movement onto Harris Street.

Ms. Morales seconded the motion, which passed 4 to 3 (Kinman, Rowland and Scarbrough in opposition).

3. 125, 135, 145, 155 & 165 WYNTER COURT – ZONE-2017-05-1543

Type II - Rezone

Petitioner: Williams & Associates

Owner: Athens Student Apartments, LLC

Request: From RS-8 (Single-Family Residential) to RM-1 (Mixed Density Residential)

Tax ID: 163B4 A027, A028, A029, A030 & A031

Mr. Hix presented the staff report with a recommendation for approval with condition.

For: Kevin Baer, Daniel Malino

Against: None

Discussion: Mr. Joiner expressed his appreciation to the developer that the property is no longer an eyesore.

MOTION: Ms. Rowland made a motion to recommend approval with the following condition:

- Any future development of the subject property shall provide a minimum 20-foot vegetative screening buffer per the standards found in Section 9-15-3.

Ms. Kinman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

4. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- Vision Statement, Community Goals and Community Policies

Mr. Griffin made the Staff presentation.

Speaker: Cam Yearty

Discussion: The Planning Commission discussed the public participation, the availability of Comprehensive Plan draft documents for the public, and the importance of the Envision Athens process being completed to guide development of the Comprehensive Plan.

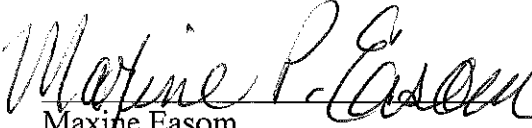
OTHER BUSINESS


1. Planning Commission Chair's Report: None

2. Planning Director's Report: Mr. Griffin complimented Ms. Easom on her chairing the meeting, and reported the latest Mayor and Commission actions on zoning items.

3. Miscellaneous announcements. None

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.


Maxine Easom
Vice-Chair


Brad Griffin
Secretary