

MINUTES
Town of Lexington
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
May 22, 2013

The Town of Lexington's Planning Commission held a meeting on May 22, 2013 at 8:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers at Town Hall, 111 Maiden Lane, Lexington, South Carolina. The meeting was attended by: Chairman Keith Frost, Vice-Chairman Frank Berry and Commissioners Brian Amick, John Bartlett, Roscoe Caughman, Jamie Fite, Edwin Gerace, Lisa Gibson, and Sammy Hendrix.

Others in attendance were: Council Liaison Kathy Maness, Assistant Town Administrator Stuart Ford, Municipal Attorney Brad Cunningham, Director of Planning, Building and Technology John Hanson, Chief Building Inspector Charly Thomas, Director of Parks, Streets and Sanitation Dan Walker, Engineer Rosemarie Nuzzo, Network Administrator Darrell Pritchard and Assistant Municipal Clerk Karen Hanner.

Nine citizens were in attendance. No one was present from the news media

INVOCATION AND CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Frost introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the Planning Commission meeting. He announced that the meeting was being broadcast live on the Town's Time Warner Channel 2 and would be replayed several times during the week. Commission members and Staff then introduced themselves. Commissioner Berry gave the invocation. Chairman Frost led in the Pledge of Allegiance and called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Gerace and seconded by Vice-Chairman Berry to approve the Planning Commission Minutes from April 17, 2013 as submitted. The vote on the motion to approve the Minutes was unanimous in favor.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS ITEMS:

1. 294 Cedarcrest Drive: *Recommendation on rezoning classification*

Director of Planning, Building and Technology John Hanson presented the request from Mr. Thomas Peele to rezone a property located at 294 Cedarcrest Drive from Protected Residential (PR) to a commercial zoning. The property is currently undeveloped and there is no specific commercial use proposed for the property at this time.

Since this parcel is zoned Protected Residential, it may be used only for residential uses or for other uses that are inherently compatible with a residential setting. If the property was rezoned to a commercial zoning classification, it could be used for a variety of commercial uses, provided that the use could meet the zoning as well as all associated land development requirements.

The property is bordered by Cedarcrest Drive and Freedom Drive. Cedarcrest Drive is classified as a Collector Road and Freedom Drive is classified as a Local Road.

Chairman Frost welcomed Robert Peele and invited him to speak. Mr. Peele stated his brother Thomas Peele had applied for the rezoning. He said their intent would be to build some type of commercial building on the property. Together they have forty five commercial buildings and rental properties in Lexington County. He said they would like to build an office/warehouse on the property. Mr. Peele confirmed that adjacent properties are residential.

Chairman Frost commented that property in the Town along Cedarcrest Drive is zoned Limited Commercial. He asked Mr. Peele if he had any objection to Office Commercial or Limited Commercial zoning since the property is adjacent to residential property. Mr. Peele stated that Limited Commercial would be fine.

Chairman Frost asked if there were any adjacent property owners present who would like to speak.

Amber Woodard introduced herself and stated she owns the property at 113 Freedom Drive, directly across from the parcel being considered. She bought the property about seven years ago but her family has owned the property next door for about thirty years. She stated several nice homes have been built on the property along Freedom Drive and she intends to build a home on her property. Ms. Woodard said she was very concerned about a business going in across the street from her property which would bring traffic on Freedom Drive. She stated she had hoped it would remain Residential and was opposed to seeing a business or warehouse or shed there. Chairman Frost asked if there had been a home on the property being considered. Ms. Woodard stated that a mobile home had been on the property at one time but was removed five or six years ago.

Mr. Allen Waln introduced himself and his wife Dorothy and stated they live at 125 Freedom Drive, about two or three doors down and across the street from the property being considered today. He stated they built their home about fifteen years ago and all the property was Residential. Mr. Waln stated he strongly would like to keep it Residential. He explained one reason for his opposition was the depth of the property being considered, it is about three hundred feet deep along Freedom Drive. He stated this is an entrance to their community and a business there would change the flavor of the community. He asked that the owners consider dividing the property into two residential lots which could enhance their community instead of taking away from it. Mr. Waln stated he felt it would be a detriment to their community to change the property under consideration to even a restricted commercial classification. Chairman Frost asked if the properties across Cedarcrest Drive and on the other side of Freedom Drive were used for commercial activity. Mr. Waln confirmed that Cedarcrest Drive is a mixed road with residences and businesses. He stated the Laser Butler property is not as deep on Freedom Drive and shrouded with trees so the business is not visible from the residences on Freedom Drive. He stated anything built on the property being considered would have a big influence on the feel of their community.

Chairman Frost asked Mr. Peele if they would want access to only Cedarcrest Drive. Mr. Peele responded that they would like to access both Cedarcrest Drive and Freedom Drive. Chairman Frost asked if they would be comfortable with just access to Cedarcrest Drive and Mr. Peele said that would be fine.

Mr. Chris Shealy introduced himself and presented a petition signed by nine homeowners in the area stating that they would prefer the property being considered remain Residential. He said he agreed that it is an entryway into their neighborhood. He stated there are a number of businesses on the opposite side of Cedarcrest Drive but they are concerned about having a business on the other side which could lead to others. Mr. Shealy stated they would prefer to keep it Residential. Commissioner Gibson asked about the zoning on the adjacent property on Cedarcrest Drive. Chairman Frost responded that the adjacent property is in Lexington County. He said he believes there is commercial property on that side of Cedarcrest Drive but it is sporadic with more residential property.

Mr. Tommy Richardson introduced himself and stated he lives at 292 Cedarcrest Drive. He said he is the longest resident on Cedarcrest Drive and he bought his property in 1982. He stated he has a welding business there. Mr. Richardson said he has talked to members of the neighborhood about the property being considered and they don't want a business there. Chairman Frost asked Mr. Richardson about the zoning on his property by Lexington County. Mr. Richardson responded that it is Limited Manufacturing. He said it is commercial but he doesn't have signage. His home is there and he operates the business on the back of the property.

Sharon Whitacre introduced herself and stated she lives at 212 Isobel Court, behind Mr. Richardson's property. She said they have been there about eight years. She said she didn't know how long the current owners have held the property being considered but since the mobile home was removed from the property, it has not been maintained. Ms. Whitacre said she didn't know who the owner was when a rusty modular unit was put on the property but she called to complain about that.

Commissioner Gibson asked Mr. Peele if he could specify the planned use for the property. Mr. Peele responded something like an office warehouse building. He said they have other buildings in West Columbia. They are built with brick fronts and sidewalks such as the ones at 125, 127 and 129 Wade Street and 2243 Leaphart Road. Commissioner Gibson asked about traffic. Mr. Peele stated that if they built five units of nine hundred to one thousand square feet, there would not be very much traffic. Mr. Peele stated the kinds of businesses locating in their units are hair salons, barber shops, an insurance office, a pressure washer business, a vacuum center business, and a medical supply business.

Commissioner Amick asked Mr. Peele if they would consider coming back at a later date with more specific plans for the property to let the neighbors see what is proposed. Mr. Peele said he would like to get it resolved but he was willing to work with them. Chairman Frost clarified that after the property is zoned, a conceptual plan could be changed at a later date. He stated the zoning decision should be evaluated and designated for uses that are compatible.

Vice-Chairman Berry asked Mr. Hanson if the site plan would come to the Planning Commission if the zoning classification on the property were changed. Mr. Hanson responded that one business on one parcel would not come to the Planning Commission unless specifically requested. Chairman Frost clarified that Town staff would review any plans to make sure requirements were met.

Mr. Hanson suggested the possibility of sub-dividing the property into residential and commercial parcels. Mr. Peele said he would consider that option. He stated he would need two hundred to two hundred twenty five for one of his buildings. He asked Commissioners to look at his buildings before making their decision to see how neat they are. Vice-Chairman Berry asked if the property was on the public sewer line. Mr. Peele said no but he would consider adding a lift station and connecting to the Town service.

Chairman Frost stated there have been a lot of concerns expressed and he would like to ask Mr. Peele to withdraw the request for this month and come back next month after meeting with Mr. Hanson to look at the requirements and setbacks. Mr. Frost stated he would encourage contact with the neighbors to try to ease their concerns. Mr. Peele said that would be fine.

2. Goodwill Industries 4708 Sunset Blvd: *Site plan approval*

Director of Planning, Building and Technology John Hanson presented the request from Mr. Walden Jones who has submitted a site plan to build a new 18,342 square foot Goodwill retail store and donation center on 5.22 acres of land at 4708 Sunset Boulevard. It appears that the plan meets all zoning requirements except that it does not show an area to provide connectivity to the undeveloped property adjacent to the site.

Mr. Walden Jones of McCutchen Engineering introduced himself and Mr. John DeLoach from Goodwill. Mr. DeLoach said they now have two stores in the area; one in the Kmart shopping center and one in the White Knoll area. The new store will include a Job Connections training facility.

Chairman Frost asked about the open section of the parcel between the lot and the creek. Mr. Jones stated that is part of the flood plain and is planned green space. Chairman Frost stated that if it was developed, it would need to use the access at the existing curb cut.

Mr. Jones spoke about the connectivity issue and an existing embankment on the lot up the hill.

Commissioner Gerace made a motion to approve the site plan. Commissioner Bartlett seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Commissioner Gibson gave a Traffic Committee report. The project is 25% complete and moving forward. There have not been complaints from business owners.

COMMENTS

There were no comments from Assistant Administrator Ford.

Councilmember Maness thanked Commission members for their service. She announced the first Farmer's Market will be held on Saturday, June 1, from 9:00 a.m. to at 206 North Church Street. It will be open every Saturday through October 26. She reminded everyone that Town Hall will be closed Monday, May 27 in observance of Memorial Day. Town Council Meetings will be held on a special summer schedule on June 3, July 15, August 19 and September 16. She wished everyone a safe Memorial Day weekend and the beginning of a safe summer.

Commissioner Hendrix asked about attendance at the Wine Walk. Dan Walker reported 3800.

Chairman Frost wished his son a happy 17th birthday.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further comments or questions, a motion was made by Commissioner Gibson and seconded by Commissioner Gerace to adjourn Planning Commission meeting. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor by all those present.

The Planning Commission Meeting was adjourned at 8:57 a.m.

Chairman Frost thanked everyone for attending the Planning Commission meeting and stated that it would be replayed on the Town's Channel 2 several times during the week.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Hanner
Assistant Municipal Clerk

APPROVED:

Keith Frost
Chairman

FOIA COMPLIANCE – Public notification of this meeting was published, posted and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Lexington requirements.