

MINUTES

TOWN OF LEXINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING November 18, 2015

The Planning Commission held a meeting on November 18, 2015 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, Commissioners John Bartlett, Roscoe Caughman, Lisa Gibson, Sammy Hendrix and Jeannie Michaels. Vice-Chairman Frank Berry, Commissioners Brian Amick and Jamie Fite were absent (excused).

Others in attendance were: Town Councilmembers Kathy Maness and Ron Williams, Town Administrator Britt Poole, Town Attorney Brad Cunningham, Director of Planning, Building & Technology John Hanson, Foreman of Parks and Sanitation Johnny Dillard, Chief Building Inspector Charly Thomas, Engineer Rosemarie Nuzzo, Transportation Director Randy Edwards, Junior Network Administrator Darrell Pritchard and Assistant Municipal Clerk Karen Hanner. Twelve citizens were in attendance. One representative was present from the news media.

CALL TO ORDER & INVOCATION: Chairman Frost welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Commissioners. 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 Gibson gave an invocation and Chairman Frost led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Frost called the meeting to order at 8:02. He stated no items on the agenda have been deleted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Commissioner Hendrix and seconded by Commissioner Bartlett to approve the Minutes from October 21, 2015 as submitted. The motion was unanimously carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Recommendation to Amend the Setback and Buffer Requirements for Large Commercial Centers - Action Requested: recommendation on ordinance amendment.**
Director of Planning, Building and Technology John Hanson stated that most of the different uses listed in the Zoning Ordinance have two different buffer and setback requirements. The Intensive requirement is used when commercial property is adjacent to commercial property. The Restrictive requirement is used when commercial property is adjacent to residential property. In cases where the Intensive requirement is allowed a five foot buffer and setback on all sides, except those that are adjacent to major thoroughfares, is typically allowed. With large Commercial Centers the zoning

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ordinance only provides a Restrictive standard. This standard requires a 70 foot buffer and 100 foot setback on all sides of the property which can be burdensome and inhibit master planning of commercial projects. The Commission is asked to consider recommending an amendment that provides an Intensive requirement for large Commercial Centers which lowers the buffer and setback requirement when these developments are located adjacent to commercial property. The recommended buffer and setback for these situations would be 10 feet.

Commissioner Hendrix made a motion to approve as recommended. Commissioner Gibson seconded. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

- 2. Site Plan Approval for a Commercial Center Located at the Intersection of Hope Ferry Road and Sunset Boulevard** - *Action Requested: approval of the site plan pending final annexation of the property with General Commercial zoning, resolution of the discrepancy on the setback issue, revision of the traffic study to address the access issue on Sunset Boulevard and revision of the traffic plan if supported by a revised traffic plan.*

Director of Planning, Building and Technology John Hanson presented the site plan from Mr. Terry Marks on behalf of SJ Collins Enterprises for a commercial center to be located near the intersection of Hope Ferry Road and Sunset Boulevard. The development will encompass approximately 29 acres. It will have 131,829 square feet of commercial space in the same general area where the Hobby Lobby commercial center was proposed last year. This proposal is larger than the previous one as it now encompasses the property occupied by the Northwood Baptist Church and includes two large tenant spaces. He understood that these spaces will be occupied by a Hobby Lobby store and a grocery store. Access to the development will occur through two existing limited service driveways on Sunset Boulevard and a new full service driveway on Hope Ferry Road. Additionally, the existing full service driveway currently on Hope Ferry Road will be converted to a limited service driveway. The developer submitted a traffic impact study with the proposal that has been reviewed by the Town's Transportation Director. Mr. Randy Edwards concurs with the study's findings but recommended that the Commission consider requiring it to address how traffic flow would be impacted if the limited service driveway to Sunset Boulevard located on the western edge of the property were converted to a full service access.

The project appears to meet all zoning requirements except that the buffer and setbacks adjacent to the 14 Carrot store and along Sunset Boulevard are less than currently required. The applicant will need to either seek a variance to reduce this requirement or the Ordinance will need to be amended for the project to receive a permit.

Transportation Director Randy Edwards stated he had reviewed a traffic impact study submitted by Mike Ridgeway of SRS Engineering and found it to be acceptable with some of the improvements that are necessary in that area. He has had discussions with Mr. Ridgeway and SCDOT regarding some of the limited access and a possible alternative full access point on the western side. There would need to be some improvements at the right in right out. He said he was fine with the proposed plan with

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some tweaks to reduce impact on the Hope Ferry Road signal. Chairman Frost clarified that these issues would continue to be worked on along with SCDOT to finalize how the access is going to be addressed.

Commissioner Bartlett asked about moving the full access on Sunset Blvd. closer to the grocery store side to get more separation. Mr. Edwards responded that the current distance from the signal is actually okay and moving it closer to the store would have a negative impact on parking.

Mr. Jeff Garrison introduced himself, Steve Collins and Terry Lawrence from SJ Collins Enterprises in Atlanta Georgia. He stated they have enjoyed working with the Planning staff to create a plan that would mirror what has been asked by the neighborhood groups and what benefits the community at the highest level.

Chairman Frost asked about creating a full service access on US 378, where there is a limited left turn now, in exchange for potentially making improvements with an island or median and if that was acceptable to them. Mr. Garrison responded that they would support that change. Chairman Frost asked about the second entrance on Hope Ferry Road and possible improvements with a left turn lane in and a through lane on the right. Mr. Garrison stated he hadn't studied that part of the plan but that sounded consistent with his understanding.

Commissioner Michaels asked about the large trees lining Hope Ferry Road and if the plan is to keep that landscape. Mr. Garrison responded that the plan is to preserve the trees.

Mr. Steve Collins with SJ Collins Enterprises spoke and praised the responsiveness of the staff.

Mr. John Phillips stated he lived in the Hope Ferry subdivision and he urged the Town to consider a planted median in order to provide a better sense of a town. He added that the new Hobby Lobby would be very close to 378 and a lot of the side of the building with the loading dock would be visible. He also asked about pedestrian access as he has noticed in the last three years there are many more bicycles and walkers. He hoped the developer would put in sidewalks.

Director Hanson stated the discussion regarding the median on Sunset Boulevard indicated at least a portion of it would be grassed with probable landscaping added at some point. The Town's Sidewalk Ordinance requires either a sidewalk to be installed or payment into the sidewalk fund. These haven't been addressed yet.

Mr. Garrison stated they are looking into the sidewalks and there are certain economies of scale but they are working with Mr. Hanson to determine how that will move forward. Chairman Frost clarified that Architectural Review will address some of the landscaping and the screening of the Hobby Lobby. Mr. Hanson confirmed that it will have to go through the review process and he hoped they will be able to do it at the staff committee

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level. In predevelopment meetings with the Collins group that was one of the issues that was pointed out.

Commissioner Gibson made a motion to approve. Commissioner Hendrix seconded. Chairman Frost inquired if Commissioner Gibson would consider amending the motion to address the updated traffic issue with the full service access that is not on the plan and allow them to work with staff to address the median and other issues. Commissioner Gibson stated the motion is amended as stated with the updated traffic study. Commissioner Hendrix seconded the amended motion. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

3. **Annexation of Lexington County Tax Map #4496-01-001 Located at 5236 Sunset Boulevard - Action Requested: - recommendation on Zoning and Road Classification.**

Director of Planning, Building and Technology John Hanson presented the request from Northwood Baptist Church which owns 3.4 acres located at 5236 Sunset Boulevard and had petitioned to annex the property. A portion of the commercial center discussed on Item 2 of the agenda is being planned for this property.

Properties in Town near this one are zoned General Commercial (GC) and Protected Residential (PR) and Sunset Boulevard is classified as an Arterial Road. Due to the surrounding conditions and the intended use of the property the recommended zoning is General Commercial (GC) and the recommended classification of Sunset Boulevard is an Arterial road.

Commissioner Hendrix made a motion to approve as recommended. Commissioner Bartlett seconded. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

4. **Annexation of Lexington County Tax Map #4319-02-007 Located at 104 Hamilton Street - Action Requested: - recommendation on Zoning and Road Classification.**

Director of Planning, Building and Technology John Hanson presented the request from RMWL Properties, LLC, who owns .43 acres located at 104 Hamilton Street and has petitioned to annex the property. A Nationwide Insurance office is located on the site.

Properties in Town near this one are zoned General Commercial (GC) and Protected Residential (PR) and Hamilton Street is classified as a Local Road. Due to the surrounding conditions and the use of the property the recommended zoning is Office Commercial (OC) and the recommended classification of Hamilton Street is a Local Road.

Commissioner Bartlett made a motion to approve as recommended. Commissioner Michaels seconded. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

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REPORT FROM COUNCIL LIAISON: Councilmember Maness announced Town Hall will be closed on November 26 and 27 for the Thanksgiving holiday and she wished everyone a great Thanksgiving. Beginning Friday, December 4, the Town will hold the Snowball Festival starting with a concert and carnival in the Lexington Square from 6 to 8 PM with the Christmas tree lighting at 8 PM. On Saturday, December 5 there will be a Patty Packs 5k and 10 k run starting at 7:30 AM and a movie in the Square starting at 5:30 PM. On Sunday, December 6, the Christmas Parade will be held on Main Street starting at 3:30 PM. She thanked the Commission for everything they do.

Commissioner Gibson added that after going through the recent flood she wanted to say thanks the Town Police, First Responders, the Town Staff and County Staff who are working to rebuild and help families. She stated she was proud to be a part of this community and wanted to say thank you.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, Commissioner Hendrix made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and unanimously carried.

The Planning Commission meeting adjourned at 8:27 a.m.

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.