

# MINUTES

## TOWN OF LEXINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING January 20, 2016

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The Planning Commission held a meeting on January 20, 2016 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, Commissioners Brian Amick, John Bartlett, Roscoe Caughman, Jamie Fite, Lisa Gibson, Sammy Hendrix and Jeannie Michaels.

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

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**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 8:04. He stated no items on the agenda have been deleted.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Frank Berry and seconded by Commissioner Hendrix to approve the Minutes from November 18, 2015 as submitted. The motion was unanimously carried.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1. Site Plan Approval for a Commercial Center Located at 5326 Sunset Boulevard -**  
*Action Requested: approval of the site plan pending final annexation of the property with General Commercial zoning.*

Director of Planning, Building and Technology John Hanson presented the request from Columbia Development Company who has submitted a site plan for a commercial center to be located at 5326 Sunset Boulevard. The development encompasses approximately 18 acres of a 24 acre site. It will have 143,000 square feet of commercial space. Access from Sunset Boulevard will occur through a signalized driveway that aligns with Palmetto Park Boulevard. A secondary driveway that accesses Saluda Springs Drive is

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also included on the plan. The developer submitted a traffic impact study that has been reviewed and approved by the Town's Transportation Director. The primary driveway will require installation of an additional leg on the traffic signal. It will also include a new deceleration lane for west bound traffic and new striping for east bound turns into the site. The plan appears to meet all zoning requirements except that there is no connectivity or future connectivity for properties on the east side of the property shown.

Mr. Hanson stated he received several emails regarding this project. Copies have been given to the Commission and the clerk for inclusion in the record.

Mr. Jenkins Williamson of Columbia Development introduced himself and stated they have been working in Lexington for some time trying to find a location for the Fresh Market. They wanted a site on Highway 378 with signalized access and good visibility close to the road and also near SC 6. Mr. Williamson said they understood there would be concerns about any project in a municipality and they met with Planning and Traffic staff to make sure that what they were doing was what was wanted. They also met with members of the community from neighborhoods in close proximity to the project, the residents of Saluda Springs and members of the HOA in Hope Ferry subdivision. Mr. Williamson said they tried to address any concerns. They are excited about this opportunity and look forward to working together.

Mr. Jim Gamble of Bohler Engineering introduced himself and distributed handouts to Commission members for a PowerPoint presentation (attached). He described the first slide which showed the location of the project on Highway 378 next to Saluda Springs Road near other commercial developments. The next slide showed parcels already in the Town limits adjoining the site. Mr. Gamble stated the property owners desire annexation into the Town of Lexington. The next slide listed the steps taken in the development process including multiple meetings with Town staff, SCDOT and the community to understand and address any concerns. He said they are planning several transportation solutions on Sunset Boulevard and Saluda Springs Road to protect the residents from traffic. Opaque screening and maintaining existing vegetation are included with plantings and fencing to help protect the residential areas. Mr. Gamble said 25% of the parcel is preserved as undeveloped and they have attracted some very high quality and desirable retailers to this property. The next slide showed the proposed site plan with an undeveloped area to the rear of the site. Mr. Gamble noted the actual size of the detention pond could be slightly different than depicted depending on what was needed for stormwater management. He pointed out the proposed signalized entrance from Sunset Boulevard with a decel lane, an accel lane and a "deep throat" drive to provide ease of movement into and out of the site with little congestion. Mr. Gamble noted the location of the grocery store at the southern side of the site with a big box retailer at the rear of the site. He said there would be a connection with Saluda Springs Road at the request of SCDOT to allow traffic from the west ease of access. The next slide showed the section studies. Mr. Gamble directed attention to Section B which showed some of the site elevation and a retaining wall to protect the existing vegetation and the buffer. He said Section A showed the rear of the property which

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would screen visibility from the townhomes. The next slide showed building elevations and provided an example of the high quality development that Columbia is known for.

Chairman Frost asked about fencing along the residential side of the site and did it include both sides and the rear of the parcel. Mr. Gamble said fencing is planned on the northern side of the property as it abuts the single family residential and not all around the property. He stated the fencing would go approximately a third of the way back along the Saluda Springs side. Mr. Williamson added that members of the Hope Ferry community specifically asked about fencing for screening and security purposes. He said they are happy to do that.

Chairman Frost noted that the site plan they have does not show an accel lane on Sunset Boulevard. Mr. Mike Ridgeway corrected that and stated there is not an accel lane planned. There is a traffic signal and there will be a deceleration lane to make a right turn into the site with a striped turn lane coming from Lexington.

Mr. Tony Barfield with Property Management Solutions at 201 West Main Street in Lexington introduced himself as the managing agent for the Whiteford HOA and Saluda Springs HOA. He stated they support the development but both have an issue with the side street that comes onto Saluda Springs Drive. He stated he understands the Town's need for connectivity but this one behind the Fresh Market comes out onto a privately owned and maintained road that is owned by the Saluda Springs HOA and goes between Saluda Springs Road and Whiteford Way. It is their desire that the road not be used for this development. Mr. Barfield said they understood the plan to put in signage to control traffic into the Saluda Springs subdivision. There is signage currently in place but they already are seeing an increase in traffic into the neighborhood and damage to the entranceways. He added it was his understanding from the board president of Saluda Springs that the board has approved the addition of speed bumps and possibly gating the privately maintained road to help ease the situation with the traffic. Mr. Barfield said Whiteford Way is a cut-through from SC 6 and Lake Murray to Highway 378. He stated that in May they had a traffic study done with 29,000 cars over a nine day period and 57 traffic tickets written for exceeding 15 mph over the posted speed limit and running stop signs on Whiteford Way. He added that there are four sets of 4-way stop signs and they do not stop at those stop signs. At every homeowner meeting for the last two years homeowners who live along Whiteford Way complain about traffic and speed. Mr. Barfield stated there was also a concern about the construction. He stated the construction project next to Golden Hills has already caused damage and traffic problems on Highway 378 with dirt and debris. He said the impact of the project on the Hope Ferry subdivision would be a lot less than on Saluda Springs.

Vice-Chairman Berry asked how many residents are in the Whiteford subdivision. Mr. Barfield said there are 534 homes. Commissioner Hendrix asked about the privately owned road and speed bumps or gating. He asked if the Town Engineer thought that was possible. Transportation Director Randy Edwards stated he couldn't guarantee that it is not possible but it is an access that was part of the original development to gain access to the signal for the Saluda Springs subdivision. He said it is a private road that

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was never turned over to the County. He stated as far as he knew it could not be gated; fire service and police have to be able to have access and it is not permissible unless certain criteria are met. He added it is his understanding that this road does not meet that criteria. Commissioner Hendrix asked if it was a privately owned and maintained road with public access and Mr. Edwards confirmed that was his understanding.

Chairman Frost commented that if maintenance of the road was a concern then it would be prudent to enter into discussions with the Town to turn the road over to the Town for maintenance and making it a public road. Mr. Barfield responded that he didn't think that was the issue. Chairman Frost said that was the issue in most of the emails they've received. He added that one of the first things just said was that the access coming out to the east side of this property is accessing a private road and that is incorrect. The access is on Saluda Springs Road which is a public road across from a private road. Chairman Frost stated connectivity is a huge issue for the Commission but he is not sure that the private road issue is something the Commission can get into.

Chairman Frost stated the debris from construction is required to be addressed from stormwater controls and site plans and if they would let the Town know, staff will address the problem and it should not be a significant issue.

Teresa Coolidge of 397 Spruce Glen Road in Hope Ferry Plantation introduced herself and stated she speaks more about the problem in Lexington of traffic. She said she believed that approval of the traffic study was a disservice to the citizens. The study said it would add 5320 cars per day to that area but did not address how those cars were going to be at Hope Ferry Road and 378 and at Old Cherokee Road and 378 and at 6 and 378. She said the traffic problem was only going to get worse. Ms. Coolidge referred to Table 3 in the traffic study and the intersections that went from grade B to a D. She said it didn't address the problem of Corley Mill Road and how a problem there adds traffic to 378. She said traffic needs to be fixed first before anything is added to the Town.

Director of Transportation Randy Edwards responded that the change to the intersection at Palmetto Park Boulevard would go from a three legged intersection with a low volume to a four legged intersection. He introduced Mike Ridgeway, the traffic engineer for the project. Mr. Ridgeway commented that the site will work with the existing intersection so they can operate together which explains the change in level of service grading. He also pointed out that the 5,300 car number mentioned is expected to be pass-by traffic that is already there. The main intent is to make use of existing infrastructure with no new intersection made onto 378. He stated it makes sense to use the connectivity to allow residents of Whiteford and Saluda Springs to get to this project without getting onto 378. Mr. Edwards added the traffic situation has a long term plan with the computerized adaptive system which has five intersections currently operational and has already shown improvements made to the flow of traffic. The system should be in place at about the same time as this development is coming online.

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Teresa Coolidge responded that the 5320 cars was a net taking into consideration that 8220 cars are coming in everyday minus 35% bypass traffic. She said there was an apartment complex on Palmetto Park Boulevard.

Kim Carnes introduced herself and said she lives at 336 Saluda Springs Road. She said she was concerned about the ground at the Saluda Springs subdivision and she wanted to know how runoff would affect her neighborhood. She said she did not know what was going on. Ms. Carnes stated she worked across the street at Columbia Cardiovascular and sees traffic out of the window. She asked if the traffic was going between the Lazy Boy and the Dominoes or if it would go to Whiteford using the access road. She stated she was concerned about the tractor trailer delivery trucks and what roads would they use.

Chairman Frost explained that the stormwater coming off the site would be captured and held in the detention pond which has been designed to EPA standards. Ms. Carnes said the pond appears to be almost half the size of the building site. Mr. Frost elaborated that there are rules designed to make sure the pond is adequately sized for the project. Chairman Frost added that the Commission is here to try to understand and address concerns about this project. The plan that has been presented will hopefully alleviate some traffic concerns. Ms. Carnes said this will make it worse.

Chairman Frost referred to an email response from Lexington County which stated that if developed in the County there would be zero buffering, screening and building setbacks in an intensive development as defined by the County. He stated this is an opportunity to control growth and development.

Ms. Teresa Coolidge commented that if the citizens of Lexington were asked if they wanted to have additional traffic on 378 or a retail development the answer would be no.

Fern Rothman stated she lives at 410 Saluda Springs Road. She stated cars turn around because they think it is a cut through and it is not a good situation now. Parked cars make it difficult for emergency vehicles to have access. This change will affect their quality of life.

Ed Elbrecht from 14 Carrot at 5300 Sunset Boulevard introduced himself and asked about the connectivity on the east side of the project. He stated he would like to see connectivity all the way down to Hope Ferry Road. Chairman Frost stated that this had been discussed before and they were told that he had blocked that so they were surprised to hear about that this morning. Mr. Elbrecht said no one had ever called him and he had no idea that was being planned. Chairman Frost said he was glad to hear that because there have been proposals to connect to that signal. Mr. Elbrecht said everybody should have access to that light. He said that intersection needs to be improved and he is willing to spend money on it. He added he would like to see the development next to him spend money on it.

Karen Campbell of 393 Spruce Glen Road introduced herself and said her property backs up to the development. She stated she felt this was a lot of development and

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buildings for that narrow tract of land. She asked if there was an environmental study done and if anyone from the Commission had walked the property. Ms. Campbell said there is a creek behind her house. She stated she understood the buffer and the plan to plant trees but she was concerned about the slope and if that would work. Chairman Frost confirmed that the zoning requirement is a 70' buffer and 100' setback and that is drawn on the site plan. He noted that the buffer and setback on the plan appears to be identical to the buffer and setback done on the other side of Hope Ferry behind Walgreens. He stated he does not believe there is an official environmental study but the developer will have to delineate any wetlands and make sure they protect that. It will be addressed and identified as they move forward.

Mr. Dwayne Fisher of 340 Saluda Springs Road introduced himself and said that he was told the property behind him was wetlands that would not be developed. He didn't know if he had gotten bad information or if that has not yet been determined. He asked about civil engineering for the project and the water issue. He was concerned about flood insurance and traffic issues and that the homeowners were taking all the risk. He was concerned about removal of trees and putting in pavement. He stated he understood you could meet every rule and every code but that doesn't make it right.

Mr. Tommy Outlaw, one of the owners of the property being developed, introduced himself and stated he built a house there in 1995. It is a commercial area now and they have worked for three years to find a class act to put in there. He stated the number one issue facing Lexington County residents is taxes and development helps taxes. Mr. Outlaw said since the Levers passed away, their taxes went up 1000% and they are not complaining but they can't afford to pay it and they have got to move on. He added they have worked to get a development into the Town where it would have buffers and protection for their neighbors. He said they have got to sell it. They tried their best to make this good for everybody.

Commissioner Hendrix made a motion to approve the site plan pending final annexation of the property. Commissioner Gibson made a second. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

2. **Annexation of Lexington County Tax Map #4300-01-002 & #4300-01-003 Located at 5326 Sunset Boulevard - Action Requested: recommendation on Zoning and Road Classification.**

Director of Planning, Building and Technology John Hanson presented the request from the Lever Family Trust who owns 19.02 acres on three parcels (shown under two tax map numbers) located at 5326 Sunset Boulevard and has petitioned to annex the properties. A portion of the commercial center discussed on Item 1 of this agenda is being planned for these properties.

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

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General Commercial (GC) and the recommended classification of Sunset Boulevard is an Arterial road.

Vice-Chairman Frank Berry made a motion to approve as recommended. Commissioner Bartlett seconded. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

3. **Annexation of Lexington County Tax Map #4300-01-039 Located at 5326 Sunset Boulevard - Action Requested: recommendation on Zoning and Road Classification.**

Director of Planning, Building and Technology John Hanson presented the request from Cheryl and Thomas Outlaw who own 3.1 acres located at 5326 Sunset Boulevard and have petitioned to annex the property. A portion of the commercial center discussed on Item 1 of this 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.

Vice-Chairman Frank Berry made a motion to approve as recommended. Commissioner Michaels seconded. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

4. **Annexation of Lexington County Tax Map #4300-01-023 Located at 5326 Sunset Boulevard - Action Requested: recommendation on Zoning and Road Classification.**

Director of Planning, Building and Technology John Hanson presented the request from Bryce Wesley Lever who owns .44 acres located at 5326 Sunset Boulevard and has petitioned to annex the property. A portion of the commercial center discussed on Item 1 of this 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 Gibson made a motion to approve as recommended. Commissioner Hendrix seconded. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Chairman Frost thanked the citizens for coming out and contributing to the process.

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**REPORT FROM COUNCIL LIAISON:** Councilmember Kathy Maness announced that the Mayor will present the State of the Town address at the Council Meeting on Monday February 1, 2016 at 6:30 PM. On Saturday, January 23, 2016 the Friends of the Lexington County Museum will be celebrating the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Oak Grove Schools at their Gala here at the Municipal Complex. She thanks everyone for their service.

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

The Planning Commission meeting adjourned at 9:18 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Hanner  
Assistant Municipal Clerk

APPROVED:

Keith Frost  
Chairman

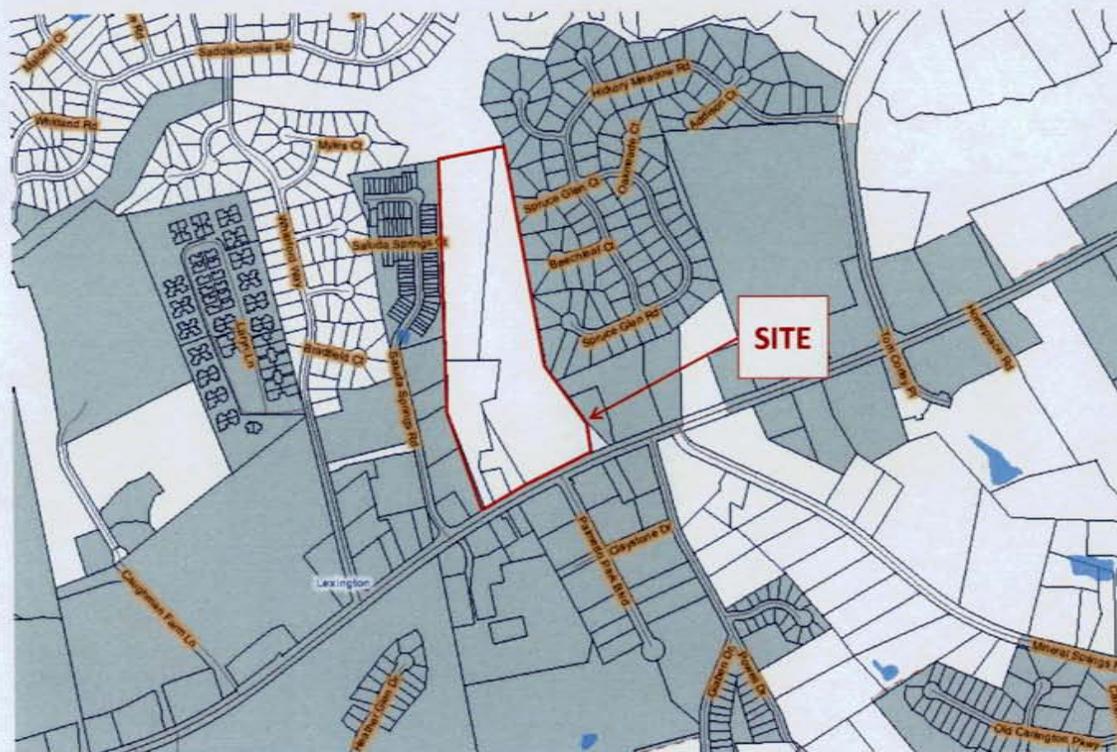
*FOIA COMPLIANCE – Public notification of this meeting was published, posted and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Lexington requirements.*



Proposed Annexation/Zoning  
Sunset Blvd. and Saluda Springs Rd., Lexington, SC

# Objective

- Annexation into the Town of Lexington under commercial zoning (GC)



Proposed Annexation/Zoning  
Sunset Blvd. and Saluda Springs Rd., Lexington, SC

# Development Process and Proposed Improvements

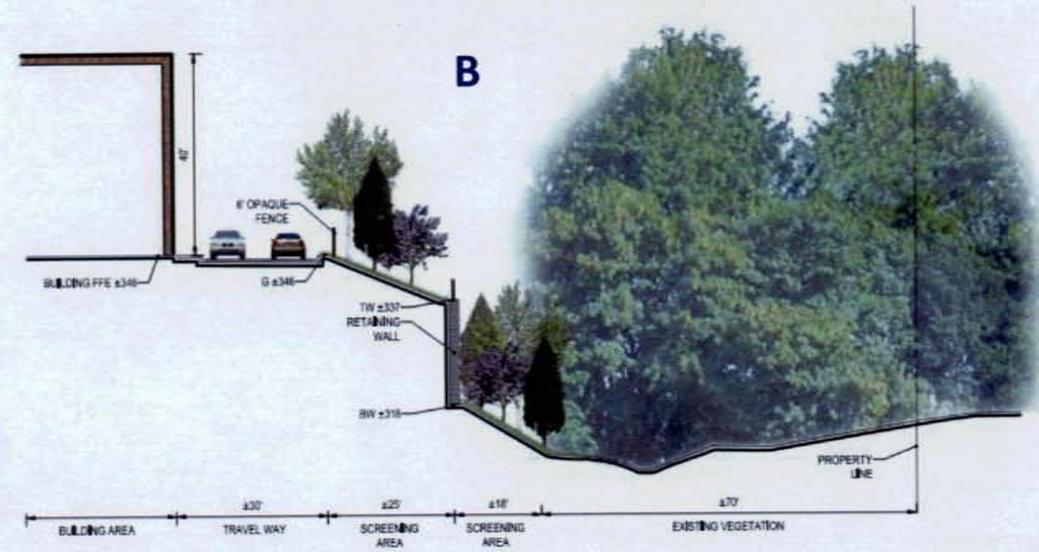
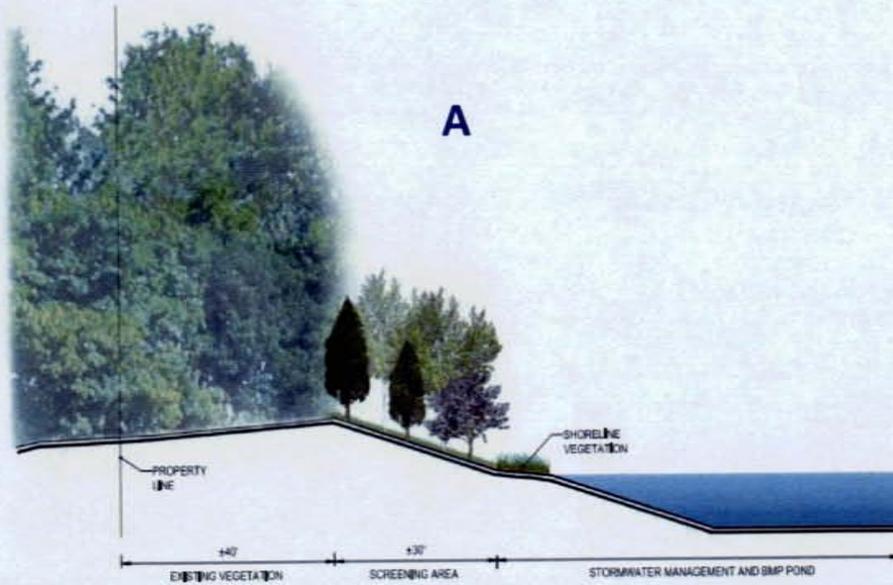
- Multiple meetings with Lexington Planning & Engineering staff
- Multiple community meetings
- Transportation improvements on Sunset Boulevard and additional signage on Saluda Springs Road
- Opaque screening/security fence against adjacent residential
- Maintain the existing vegetation and supplemental plantings and fencing
- Preservation of 25% of parcel as undeveloped
- Highly desirable quality retailers to the market

# Proposed Site Plan



Proposed Annexation/Zoning  
Sunset Blvd. and Saluda Springs Rd., Lexington, SC

# Section Studies



Proposed Annexation/Zoning  
Sunset Blvd. and Saluda Springs Rd., Lexington, SC

# Proposed Building Elevations



Front Elevation



Side Elevation

\* Building signage on these drawings are shown for representation only. Final area requirements for signage will be determined by the local municipality having jurisdiction.