

MINUTES
GLYNN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
January 20, 2004 - 6:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Perry Fields, Chairman
Robert Ussery, Vice Chairman
Mike Aspinwall
Jay Kaufman
Ann McCormick
Gary Nevill
Jonathan Williams

STAFF PRESENT: John Peterson, Director
York Phillips, Planning Manager
Paul Andrews, Assistant Engineer
Janet Loving, Admin/Recording Secretary

Chairman Perry Fields called the meeting to order and the invocation was given, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. He then gave a brief recap of the rules, voting procedure and audience participation in discussing agenda items.

Mr. Phillips advised that the applicant for Agenda Item #6 (*SP-2003-1201-1100*) requested a deferral until the next Planning Commission meeting. Also, "*The Brunswick News*" failed to run the advertisement for the February 3, 2004 Public Hearing and therefore staff is requesting that the Planning Commission meeting date be changed to the following Tuesday, February 10th. All items would remain on track for the scheduled February 19th Board of Commissioners meeting. Chairman Fields stated that this request would be considered at the end of the meeting.

There being no further changes to the agenda, a motion was made by Mr. Jay Kaufman, seconded by Mr. Gary Nevill and unanimously adopted to accept the agenda as amended for the January 20th Planning Commission meeting.

GC-2003-32

Application by Sea Island Company to rezone from RR Resort Residential to PD-G Planned Development-General, property located on both sides of Sea Island Drive from the Black Banks Creek bridge to Fourth Street, including property between Hudson Drive and River Club Condominiums, together with a portion of Rainbow Island and consisting of approximately 107 acres, and having approximately 3,050 feet of frontage on Sea Island Drive, approximately 350 feet of frontage on Hudson Place, and approximately 350 feet of frontage on Fifth Street. The purpose of this zoning change is to provide for the redevelopment of the Cloister complex and related facilities.

Mr. Bill Edenfield and Attorney Jim Gilbert were present for discussion.

The following report from staff was included in the packages for the Planning Commission's review:

The existing complex has been developed over the past 80 years as primarily a resort. The Sea Island Company desires to redevelop the site, beginning with the Cloister Hotel itself on the west side of Sea Island Drive. Other than hotel and support uses, the

complex will contain recreation facilities and resort villas. The change to PD-General is the result of the desire to have flexibility in the design and operation of the complex. The application proposes to deviate from the 45 ft. height limit for the RR district by permitting a height of 55 ft. for a portion of the main hotel building.

The adopted Glynn County Comprehensive Plan designates this area as commercial. The hotel complex has evolved over many years, and the proposed rezoning would not substantially change its character or use.

In conformance with Section 1103 of the Glynn County Zoning Ordinance, the following findings of fact were considered in making the recommendation:

- Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property.

Yes.

- Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property.

No.

- Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned.

Yes.

- Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use, which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, or schools.

No.

- Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

The future land use map identifies this area as commercial.

- Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property, which give supporting grounds for approval or disapproval.

No.

The use and character of the area will not substantially change. The requested Planned Development zoning would permit the redevelopment process to proceed with greater flexibility. Staff's recommendation is for approval.

Attorney Jim Gilbert gave a brief history of the property and an overview of the proposed project. He then displayed sketched photos of the finished product. However, during the course of discussion, several changes in the text were suggested, and as such, Chairman Fields felt that the Planning Commission could not take action at this time. It was also noted that some pages of the text were inadvertently omitted. Therefore, it was the consensus of the Planning Commission to have staff bring the revised text back for review and action at the February 10th meeting. In addition, the applicant was asked to provide some type of approval from the Fire Chief indicating that the proposed height of the building would not pose an inordinate risk to Glynn County. The applicant concurred and was assured that the deferral would not interfere with the request being heard at the February 19th Board of Commissioners meeting.

As a matter of record, Ms. Kim Gollin, representing RUPA, was present to oppose the height increase on St. Simons Island.

GC-2003-33

Application by Atlantic Survey Professionals, Inc., agent for Lax and Trella Dills, Jr., to rezone from FA Forest Agriculture to HC Highway Commercial property located at 415 Canal Road, on the west side of the Golden Isles Parkway (Spur 25) and on the northwest side of Canal Road. The property consists of approximately 6.989 acres and has approximately 165 feet of frontage on Canal Road and 720 feet of frontage on Spur 25.

Mr. Ernie Johns and Mr. John Callaway, developer, were present for discussion.

The following report from staff was included in the packages for the Planning Commission's review:

This site is located on the west side of Spur 25 at Canal Road. The property to the west is in agricultural use and is zoned FA. To the south is the Pepsi plant (LI zoning). There is commercial zoning (GC, HC, LC) at the intersection on the east side. The extreme southeast corner of the Golden Isles Gateway tract is a short distance to northeast. According to the general layout plan submitted with the application, the intention is to develop retail uses. The Comprehensive Plan designates this area for commercial use.

In conformance with Section 1103 of the Glynn County Zoning Ordinance, the following findings of fact were considered in making the recommendation:

- Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property.

Yes.

- Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property.

No.

- Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned.

Yes.

- Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use, which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, or schools.

No.

- Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

The future land use map identifies this area as commercial.

- Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property, which give supporting grounds for approval or disapproval.

No.

The character of the area is consistent with the development of commercial retail uses at this site. Commercial uses will be needed as the population of the area grows. Access to the site is from Canal Road. Staff's recommendation is for approval.

Chairman Fields asked if there were any plans for parking under the power line. Mr. Callaway replied no.

It was noted that no one was present to oppose this request.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Gary Nevill to recommend approval of this request. The motion was seconded by Mr. Robert Ussery and unanimously adopted.

PP-2003-1014-1300 Power's Landing

Application by Charles Powers, purchaser, for approval of a preliminary plat for property located south of Druid Oaks Drive approximately 650 feet east of its intersection with US 17 North. The subdivision contains 76 lots on 10.131 acres. The property is zoned PD-R Planned Development-Residential. This item was continued to allow for the amendment of the PD text.

Mr. Charles Powers was present for discussion.

The following report from staff was included in the packages for the Planning Commission's review:

The planned development zoning for this property is over twenty years old. In the interim, rules concerning wetlands and flood plain construction have changed. As a result, it was necessary for the applicant to request some amendments to the planned development text to accommodate this project. The final consideration of the zoning change is scheduled for Board of Commissioners action on January 22nd. Officially no approval of the preliminary plat will be effective until the Board's action is final.

Staff has reviewed this proposal and has no significant comments that cannot be addressed during the construction plan review phase. Therefore, staff's recommendation is for approval of the preliminary plat subject to the Board of Commissioners approval of the zoning change.

Following review, a motion was made by Mr. Robert Ussery to approve this preliminary plat with staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jonathan Williams and unanimously adopted.

SP-2003-1219-1200 ALLTEL- Hampton Point

Application by Falk & Foster/ALLTEL, agent for Inn of Lake City, Inc., owner, for site plan approval of a telecommunications tower on property located approximately 80 feet northwest of Butler Lake Drive approximately 250 feet southwest of its intersection with Rice Mill Road and consisting of approximately 1525 square feet. This project is in the Hampton Point Planned Development.

Ms. Belinda Bodie was present for discussion.

The following report from staff was included in the packages for the Planning Commission's review:

The Planning Commission recently considered a request to amend the planned development text for Hampton Point to permit this tower subject to site plan review,

which will be considered by the Board of Commissioners on January 22nd. Any approval of the site plan will be subject to final approval by the Commissioners of the zoning change.

This site is located adjacent to a tennis club and maintenance facility. There are a number of trees in the area and the tower will be partially visible from the street, but visibility will be fairly limited. No waivers are required for any of the applicable regulations.

The ordinance provides criteria to be used by the Planning Commission in considering proposals for telecommunications towers, and further provides that the Planning Commission may “waive or reduce the burden on the applicant of one or more of these criteria if the Planning Commission concludes that the goals of the ordinance are better served thereby.” The criteria to be applied are listed as follows:

1. Height of the proposed tower.
2. Proximity of the tower to residential structures and residential district boundaries.
3. Nature of uses on adjacent and nearby properties.
4. Surrounding topography.
5. Surrounding tree coverage and foliage.
6. Design of the tower with particular reference to design characteristics that have the effect of reducing or eliminating visual obtrusiveness.
7. Proposed ingress and egress.
8. Availability of suitable existing towers and other structures as discussed in Section 1403.1 of this ordinance.

There is a relatively high demand in this area for various telecommunications services. This demand is not being adequately met by the existing system and more antennas will help resolve this problem. This proposal is one of the least objectionable methods for meeting this need. Staff recommends that the site plan be approved subject to approval of the proposed planned development text amendment by the Board of Commissioners.

Ms. Belinda Bodie, representing Falk & Foster/ALLTEL, stated that previous concerns were expressed about the availability of space on the Southern Linc Tower. As a result of those concerns, she asked the engineer to re-evaluate the tower and it was discovered that they are co-located on another tower called St. Simons North Tower. They are also co-located on the county’s water tank.

Ms. Ann McCormick stated that some of the more recent towers that the Planning Commission has looked at have had antennas that fit snug against the towers, but not in this case. Ms. Bodie stated that Ms. McCormick is referring to the flush mount antennas. She stated that they did not do the flush mount antennas with this tower because it limits capacity and they wanted to maximize capacity to avoid having to come back in a year for another tower in this particular area. She stated that two of the three towers approved for Sea Island will have the flush mount antennas.

Ms. Kim Gollin, St. Simons Island resident, stated that there seems to be different standards for Sea Island and St. Simons Island. She would like to see flush mount antennas on St. Simons as well. Ms. Gollin stated that they have been getting the spiny antennas on St. Simons. Ms. Bodie reiterated that the flush mount antenna limits capacity and they would have to come back in about six months to a year for another site, which is what they are trying to avoid.

Ms. McCormick stressed that she understands that Glynn County needs the telecommunication towers because of G-8 and other services, but G-8 is temporary. She stated she would prefer that they use the flush mount antennas, which are less visible. Chairman Fields stated that he shared the same concerns at one time. He stated that Sea Island is basically developed but there is a lot of undeveloped property on the north end of St. Simons and he concluded that he would rather have one tower that is not as attractive, as opposed to having three or four.

Mr. Jonathan Williams wanted to know if there were any towers proposed close to the north end that would serve some of the areas in McIntosh County. Ms. Bodie was uncertain but stated that she would check.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Mike Aspinwall to approve this site plan subject to staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gary Nevill and unanimously adopted.

SP-2003-1219-1300 ALLTEL- Thalman

Application by Falk & Foster/ALLTEL, agent for Plum Creek Timberlands, owner, for site plan approval of a 350 ft. tall telecommunications tower on property located approximately 5.4 miles west of the US 341/Zuta Branch Road intersection, and approximately 2.5 miles north of SR 32, and consisting of 5.3 acres (leased area).

Ms. Belinda Bodie was present for discussion.

The following report from staff was included in the packages for the Planning Commission's review:

This site is located within a vast timberland area. There are no residential structures in the vicinity and no waivers are required for any of the applicable regulations.

The ordinance provides criteria to be used by the Planning Commission in considering proposals for telecommunications towers, and further provides that the Planning Commission may "waive or reduce the burden on the applicant of one or more of these criteria if the Planning Commission concludes that the goals of the ordinance are better served thereby." The criteria to be applied are listed as follows:

1. Height of the proposed tower.
2. Proximity of the tower to residential structures and residential district boundaries.
3. Nature of uses on adjacent and nearby properties.
4. Surrounding topography.
5. Surrounding tree coverage and foliage.
6. Design of the tower with particular reference to design characteristics that have the effect of reducing or eliminating visual obtrusiveness.
7. Proposed ingress and egress.
8. Availability of suitable existing towers and other structures as discussed in Section 1403.1 of this ordinance.

This area is not currently well served by telecommunications services. This demand is not being adequately met by the existing system and more antennas will help resolve this problem. This proposal is one of the least objectionable methods for meeting this need. The Airport Commission requests a particular lighting arrangement on this tower. Staff's recommendation is for approval.

Mr. Gary Nevill wanted to know if the applicant had received FAA approval. Mr. Phillips stated that he believes so. He added, however, that the applicant is willing to do the lighting requested by the Airport Commission. FAA approval, which is somewhat in conjunction with the Airport Commission, is usually one of the last items received

Following discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Robert Ussery to approve this request. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jonathan Williams and unanimously adopted.

SP-2003-1216-1345 Veranda Breeze Cottages

Application by Kay P. Curry for site plan approval for a 10 unit row house development on property located on the west side of Woods Avenue and on the east side of Ocean Boulevard, approximately 50 feet north of Olive Way and consisting of 1.6175 acres. The project is called Veranda Breeze Cottages.

Mr. Ernest Curry was present for discussion.

At this time, Chairman Fields stated that he has an interest that is adverse to Mr. Curry and therefore would abstain from participating in the discussion as well as the action of this item. He then turned the meeting over to Vice Chairman Robert Ussery.

The following report from staff was included in the packages for the Planning Commission's review:

This site currently contains two or three dwelling units. To the south and north are residential developments. Beyond Ocean Boulevard to the west is a marsh area. The proposed arrangement is for two sets of five units each, one set facing Ocean Boulevard and one set facing Woods Avenue.

While no application has been submitted, staff understands that the intent is to plat these units, which will require subdivision approval.

The plans reviewed by staff are somewhat simplistic, although they appear to basically meet the requirements for review. Staff has met with the applicant on several occasions to discuss the summarized issues included in the packages. Some of these issues have been addressed. The remaining issues can be addressed when detailed engineering plans are submitted. If this particular project is platted, it will require a preliminary plat, construction plans and a final plat. Staff's recommendation is for approval subject to review of more detailed plans meeting all requirements prior to issuance of building permits.

Mr. Ussery stated that according to the calculations for site coverage, the applicant is allowing a permeable paving block driveway, which is actually not an allowance under the ordinance. Mr. Phillips agreed and added that there might be some site design issues associated with this, which could possibly require a variance or a re-design, but he would have to see the engineering plans to be sure of the numbers. Mr. Curry pointed out that what Mr. Ussery is referring to was supposed to have been taken off according to his architect. Mr. Ussery stated it appears that the parking lot has been divided by two in order to come up with the numbers. He stated that the coverage calculations are very close and he's wondering if perhaps they could cut the parking lot in half and still be able to get into the units. Mr. Curry stated that the only other option would be to have off-street parking with no garages in the back, similar to Coast Cottages.

Mr. Ussery explained that the reason for site plan approval is to approve a particular site plan, and not a concept. Mr. Kaufman agreed and added that in his mind, this is a concept rather than a specific plan. Mr. Ussery stated that it is very unusual to have a cross access easement that allows for parking in a row house development. He

stated that there are some subdivision issues, and the issue of how you would go about doing a fee simple title with the access easement.

There was additional discussion regarding the access easement, paving, driveway coverage, and possible variance or site re-design. The Planning Commission concluded that this application as submitted is not ready. Mr. Phillips suggested that as an option, staff could circulate more information for review, or the Planning Commission could approve the request as a conceptual plan subject to seeing the site plan for the building permit. However, Mr. Ussery stated that all of the issues of concern should to be addressed before approval is granted. Mr. Curry stated that he would not have a problem with “going back to the drawing board.”

Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Planning Commission to defer action on this application to allow for additional review.

Request by Shops at Sea Island and Harris Teeter under Section 611.7 of the Zoning Ordinance for approval of a reduction in the parking requirement for the Shops at Sea Island to accommodate a 5,000 sq. ft. expansion of the Harris Teeter Store. The proposal would result in 372 spaces, or a 22% reduction from the 477 spaces required.

Mr. Bill Edenfield was present for discussion.

The following report from staff was included in the packages for the Planning Commission’s review:

This is a request by the Shops at Sea Island and Harris Teeter for approval of a 22% reduction in the required parking based on preservation of land for green space. This proposal is submitted under the provisions of Section 611.7. Approval would accommodate a minor (5,000 sq. ft.) addition to the Harris Teeter Store utilizing the existing parking. This would permit the project to preserve the existing internal undeveloped space without converting it to parking.

The applicant seeks this approval prior to preparing a formal site plan submittal for the building expansion. The formal submittal will be presented to the Planning Commission for review.

Experience with the site over several years indicates that the parking for the complex is currently sufficient. The proposed addition to the Harris Teeter Store will not be large enough to trigger any significant increase in traffic or parking demand.

A plan has been submitted showing how the required parking could be met if deemed necessary by the Planning Commission, as provided in Section 611.7. Staff notes one correction that needs to be made to the plan, and which will need to be reflected on the formal site plan. The 20 parking spaces on the south side is an existing paved area and do not qualify for reservation for additional parking under Section 611.7. The number of spaces shown, however, is 17 more than required. If instead three spaces are added as reserved space by rearranging the existing parking in the extreme northeast corner of the site, the standard will have been met.

Staff recommends approval of the request, subject to rearrangement noted and subject to processing of a formal site plan for the expansion (such site plan to note the undeveloped areas reserved for future parking spaces, if needed).

Following a brief discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Robert Ussery to approve the 22% reduction in the required parking to allow for a 5000 sq. ft. addition to the Harris Teeter Store. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jay Kaufman and unanimously adopted.

In other business, the Planning Commission unanimously adopted a motion to change the next meeting date from February 3rd to February 10th due to an advertising error of "*The Brunswick News*." (This change would not affect the items scheduled for the February 19th Board of Commissioners meeting.)

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.