

MINUTES

ISLANDS PLANNING COMMISSION

JUNE 16, 2009 - 6:00 P.M.

The Casino Bldg, 530 Beachview Drive, SSI

MEMBERS PRESENT: Preston Kirkendall, Chairman
Desiree Watson, Vice Chairman
John Dow, Jr.
Patricia Laurens
William Lawrence
Paul Sanders
Joan Wilson

STAFF PRESENT: David Hainley, Community Development Director
York Phillips, Planning Manager
Janet Loving, Admin/Recording Secretary

Chairman Preston Kirkendall 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.

MINUTES

May 19, 2009 Regular Meeting

Upon a motion made by Mr. John Dow and seconded by Ms. Patricia Laurens, the Minutes of the May 19th Regular Meeting were approved and unanimously adopted.

SP1555 (I) Old Stables Tract Phase I

Consider site plan approval for development of Phase I of the Old Stables Tract commercial area, located at the northwest corner of Sea Island Road and Frederica Road. The proposed improvements address access and utility improvements and removal of trees in accordance with the approved PD Master Plan and Text. Individual commercial projects will be subject to further site plan reviews. The commercial portion of the Planned Development is 11.337 acres, while this Phase is 5.76 acres. The property is zoned Planned Development (PD) and is part of the Old Stables Tract Planned Development. Parcel ID: 04-05141, 04-01542, 04-05158, 04-05060. Sea Island Company, agent for JLV-VASL, LLC, owner.

Mr. Bill Foster of Thomas & Hutton Engineers was present for discussion.

In presenting the staff's report, Mr. Phillips explained that this proposal consists of a layout for utilities and access driveways to serve a portion of the commercial area within the planned development. Four outparcel sites are shown (identified as Lots 3 through 6), along with the approximate location of building pads within two of them (Lots 5 and 6). The proposal does not address specific commercial establishments. Site plan approval will be required for each of the individual buildings when a specific business is determined and a detailed plan developed.

Mr. Phillips distributed a new tree save tabulation and explained that the applicant made some adjustments in the configuration of the driveway. The net affect was to reduce some of the trees that were impacted and improve traffic circulation. The revised plan increases the number of trees that are being saved. The 34 inch or greater is 12 trees being saved instead of 11 and the 24 inch or greater is 14 trees being removed and 21 being replaced. The large trees are being saved both in the buffer and on the building site.

Staff originally recommended not permitting tree removal on the individual building sites since specific plans were yet to be developed. This was particularly significant for Lots 5 and 6 where the large trees are currently located. Lots 3 and 4 show generalized clearing areas, but there are no large trees on these lots. The revised plan is more precise however, and while it does not show the individual site plans in detail, the plan at least shows generalized building layouts that clarify how the sites can be developed and what trees will need to be removed. Consequently, staff now recommends permitting the tree removal shown on the plan. The following is a list of the changes made in the revised plan:

- The southern entrance along Frederica Road has been modified to save additional trees in the buffer.
- An illustrative drawing showing how a future roundabout would be coordinated with the site plan was added. The illustration shows that once a roundabout is built, the buffer area south of the southern entrance could be widened.

- A small encroachment on the Frederica Road buffer was added to accommodate a driveway and drive-through for a building on Lot 6. Note that this is in the area where the buffer could be enlarged when a roundabout is built.
- The driveway has been realigned slightly, allowing the preservation of an additional large tree and improving traffic flow and safety.

Engineering has raised a number of technical design issues, particularly with respect to the configuration of traffic circulation, both onsite and on the adjacent roads. These issues will be addressed during the site plan review for individual commercial establishments. Engineering also commented on the preservation of an area for a potential roundabout. The illustration supplied in the revised plan addresses this issue.

The impact of this development on the road system in the vicinity of Frederica Road and Sea Island Road was a major topic of discussion during the rezoning process. The access arrangements and utilities are consistent with the approved PD Master Plan. Details of these facilities will be reviewed when the building permit site plans are reviewed.

The Fire Department will need to see the more detailed plan for hydrants in conjunction with the review of individual site plans.

Under Section 619.4 (a) of the Glynn County Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Commission review shall be guided by the following standards and criteria:

- 1) The application, site plan, and other submitted information contain all the items required under this Section. **Staff Comment: This requirement has not been fully met. Because of the technical nature of most of the information, many of the missing items will be more appropriately addressed in the reviews of individual building site plans.**
- 2) The proposed uses, buildings and structures are in accordance with the requirements of this Ordinance and other ordinances of Glynn County. **Staff Comment: To the extent information is available, this requirement has been met.**
- 3) Adequate provisions are made for ingress and egress, off-street parking, loading, and the flow of traffic, which may reasonably be anticipated. **Staff Comment: This requirement has been met, subject to review as part of the review of the individual site plans and building permit site plans.**
- 4) Adequate provisions are made to control the flow of storm water from and across the site. **Staff Comment: This requirement has been met, subject to review by Engineering as part of the review of the individual site plans and building permit site plans.**

- 5) Adequate provisions are made to protect trees that are selected to remain as depicted on the site plan. **Staff Comment: This requirement has been met.**
- 6) Adequate provisions are made to buffer intensive uses and to screen all service areas from view of the adjacent properties and streets. **Staff Comment: This requirement has been met.**
- 7) Adequate provisions are made to control the location, intensity, and direction of all outdoor lighting so that it will not have an adverse effect upon adjoining properties. **Staff Comment: This requirement has been met or will be met through the building permit process. The site plan notes that the project will comply with the lighting regulations, including Section 622.**
- 8) Open space, as required, has been provided and appropriate means are proposed to assure maintenance of common areas and facilities. **Staff Comment: N/A**
- 9) Adequate provisions are made for water supply, fire protection, and sewage collection and treatment. **Staff Comment: This requirement has been met, subject to review as part of the review of the individual site plans and building permit site plans.**

Mr. Phillips stated that the tree removal meets the standards for the PD zoning. The revised plan reduces the tree removal in comparison with the plan reviewed at last month's meeting. The existing parking and driveway areas in the eastern buffer on the north side may remain. There is a small encroachment in the southern portion of the property as illustrated on the conceptual plan for Lot 6. Mr. Phillips stated that staff recommends that it be understood that approval of this site plan is authorization to undertake that particular encroachment. In addition, staff recommends approval of this site plan subject to the applicant meeting with staff to resolve details of the peripheral (public) road system as it relates to this site before review of individual site plans, and subject to meeting all ordinance and PD requirements through the site plan process for individual buildings.

Chairman Kirkendall asked that if the roundabout is built as shown, would the buffer still be acceptable on the east side of Frederica Road. Mr. Phillips stated that the properties on the northeast and southeast corner are large triangular shaped pieces of property that at one time were actually part of a "Y" shaped road configuration. The property is owned by Sea Island and it was intended for buffer and roadway usage. It does provide sufficient right-of-way to create the roundabout with little impact on the triangular shaped properties but virtually no impact on the existing commercial properties on the west side of Frederica Road.

Mr. Lawrence wanted to know the proximity of the closest traffic light to the proposed circle. Mr. Phillips stated that there is a conceptual signal at the western entrance, which is opposite the main entrance into the "Shops at Sea Island." There is no data yet indicating when or whether in fact the signal would be needed. The

southern entrance on Frederica Road and the eastern entrance on Sea Island Road are right-in/right-out only and are physically configured to limit the possibility of people crossing traffic.

Mr. Dow had questions about the number of trees proposed to be saved. Mr. Phillips stated that overall, there are 10 additional trees saved in favor of the new plan. Mr. Dow asked if the developer had any discussions with the county regarding the amount of land required for the roundabout. Mr. Bill Foster replied yes, Mr. Varner and the Sea Island Company have both met with county staff and have agreed to provide whatever property is necessary for the improvements to the intersection that would allow the roundabout.

Mr. Paul Sanders had questions about the possibility of a land swap with regard to the sewage treatment plant. Mr. Hainley explained that the discussion has been to move forward with the intersection design, but to his knowledge there is no land swap involved. Chairman Kirkendall stated that the purpose of this site plan approval is to approve it as if the streets stay as they are. Mr. Hainley agreed but stated that this is not the approved plan; it is just the best engineering concept. Mr. Dow asked if this approval would include consideration of the variance for the minor buffer encroachment. Mr. Hainley replied yes. Mr. Dow then asked if the encroachment would create a hazard with the existing road system or traffic problems. Mr. Hainley replied no, the encroachment is fairly narrow.

Mr. Sanders was curious as to what is being proposed for Lot 6 and asked if a restaurant is being considered due to the drive-thru appearance. Mr. Foster replied no. It is his understanding at this time that there are no signed contracts for any particular use. The design would accommodate a bank facility.

At this time, Chairman Kirkendall opened the floor for public comments. Ms. Marlene Parmley of 121 Dunbarton Drive wanted to know if the traffic circle is resulting from the proposed use or was there always a plan for a traffic circle at the site. Mr. Hainley explained that as part of the zoning for the site and in conjunction with the modifications near the movie theater site, there was a traffic study requested by staff and accepted as part of the zoning case demonstrating that the traffic circle was the best way to address the existing traffic as well as future traffic anticipated for the intersection. He stated that neither of the zoning cases had caps on the development until they came through the commission again this year.

Ms. Parmley had additional concerns about the road. She pointed out that currently, as you make a right turn south on Frederica Road, turning west onto Sea Island Road and coming out of the "Shops at Sea Island" there is a "Y" shape design that is supposed to be an entrance. However, there is a lot of traffic that stops and turns left, but there is no turn lane or signal. She has asked to have a "no left turn" sign put in place but it hasn't happened yet and she feels that this should be taken into consideration with the design changes for the area.

Ms. Meredith Trawick of St. Simons wanted to know why the road approaching the new roundabout from the north side is curved. Mr. Hainley explained that the road was constructed in a curved shape because of the traffic. Engineering's recommendation was to build most of the road off line due to the existing traffic flow while the circle is being constructed. Mr. Foster stated that in addition to the traffic, they tried to take all of the monumental trees along with all of the large utility polls and maneuver the proposed traffic circle in a manner to save the existing trees.

Ms. Trawick wanted to know how many trees over 24 inches are being removed. Mr. Phillips pointed out that trees 24 inches or greater, there are 14 trees being removed and 21 trees being added, and trees 34 inches or greater, there are 12 trees being preserved. He stated that there is a specification included in the PD text outlining the tree size replacements, etc. Ms. Trawick asked that they consider not removing any of the trees until the site plans are finalized in an effort to avoid removing trees unnecessarily.

Ms. Sharon Flores also expressed concerns about the trees. She wanted to know if there are any guarantees that the replacement trees will be Live Oaks. Mr. Hainley stated that the replacement trees are typically of the same species with the exception of Pine trees. Ms. Flores asked if this could be put in writing. Mr. Hainley pointed out that the tree replacement statement and caliber are already included in the PD text.

Mr. John Turbidy had questions concerning future traffic projections in relation to the site plan and whether the traffic would require widening the roads or perhaps cause a loss of some of the buffer area. Mr. Hainley stated that the traffic study and buffer concerns were part of the zoning case. He stated that he would have to re-check the traffic projections. Mr. Foster added that the traffic study did include the full build-out of the proposed development in the calculations and it was also recommended that with or without the commercial development, improvements to the intersection would be required. Mr. Paul Sanders stated that to the best of his knowledge, the increased traffic from this project and the one near the movie theater was a total of 15,000 vehicles in a 24-hour period.

At the end of discussion, a motion was made by Mr. John Dow to approve application *SP1555* for Phase I of the Old Stables Tract subject to the applicant meeting with staff to resolve details of the peripheral (public) road system as it relates to this site before review of individual site plans, and subject to meeting all ordinance and PD requirements through the site plan process for individual buildings. The motion also includes the minor buffer encroachment waiver. The motion was seconded by Mr. Paul Sanders and unanimously adopted.

In other business, Mr. Hainley reminded the members of the Planning Commission Training Session scheduled for Wednesday, July 22nd from 9 am to 4 pm at the SSI Casino Building, Room 108.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.