

MINUTES

ISLANDS PLANNING COMMISSION

NOVEMBER 20, 2012 - 6:00 P.M.

The Casino Bldg, 530 Beachview Drive, SSI

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Dow, Chairman
Stan Humphries, Vice Chairman
Preston Kirkendall
Patricia Laurens
Paul Sanders
Desiree Watson

ABSENT: William Lawrence

STAFF PRESENT: David Hainley, Community Development Director
Iris Johnston, Planner III
Eric Landon, Planner II
Janet Loving, Administrative Assistant

Chairman Dow 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.

Due to time constraints, the *October 16th* Minutes were not completed in time for review; however, a summary of action was submitted for approval. Thereupon, a motion was made by Mr. Paul Sanders, seconded by Ms. Patricia Laurens and unanimously adopted to approve the summary of action taken at the *October 16th* IPC Meeting. A complete set of Minutes will be submitted for approval at a later date.

ZM2483 St. Simons Island North End: Consider a request to amend a PD (Planned Development) by revising the Planned Development Text and Conceptual Master Plan for St. Simons Island North End, two properties which consist of approximately 3,543 +/- acres, located on the north end of St. Simons Island. The purpose of the zoning amendment is to designate the use and depict the location of the Regional Park within the boundary of Tract I, whereas it is now in Tract IV. Parcel IDs: 04-00206 and 04-14385. Taylor H. Haley, Esq., of Compass Law Group, agent for Frederica Development Group, LLC, and Cannon's Point Preserve, LLC, and CD Preserve, LLC., owner-applicants.

Attorney Taylor Haley was present for discussion.

The following report from staff was included in the packages for review and was presented by Ms. Iris Johnston:

The Conceptual Land Use Master Plan Map and the Planned Development text are proposed to delete the RP (Regional Park) use from Tract IV and add it to Tract I. No other change is proposed.

Because no other changes are proposed, and the same uses are permitted, although in a different location, there are no additional engineering, utilities, schools, or fire and police comments.

In conformance with Section 1103 of the Glynn County Zoning Ordinance, the following findings of fact are to be considered in making a decision on a request for rezoning:

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

The proposed uses were previously found consistent with the use and development of adjacent and nearby property; only the location, not the use, of the future regional park is proposed to change.

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

The proposed uses were not anticipated to adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property and are not proposed to change with this amendment request.

- 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.

None

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

Yes, this area is designated for Future Islands Development Area, Low Density Residential. However, because it proposes retrofit development of two existing buildings, is located near a ¼ mile radius Village Center on the adopted Future Land Use Map, and is located on the opposite side of Sea Island Road from a large Medium Density Future Land Use Map area, it is consistent with and not contrary to the policy and intent of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

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

None

Ms. Johnston stated that this request is a policy decision because the net result will be to transfer the regional park from one tract to another, with the receiving tract restricting the uses allowed in the “park” to passive uses. No land in Tract I will be transferred to Glynn County. The St. Simons Island North End Planned Development amendment meets the technical requirements for rezoning. Therefore, staff’s recommendation is for approval.

Chairman Dow asked if it is staff’s position that this is policy. Mr. Hainley replied yes, you have to meet the technical requirements for rezoning in accordance with state law. Chairman Dow stated that staff is in agreement with transferring a portion of what is now in Tract 4 identified as a regional park to Cannon’s Point. He then asked, “What are we preserving in Cannon’s Point that’s not already preserved and what are we giving up?”

During the course of discussion, there was a consensus among the IPC members that transferring 68 acres to Cannon’s Point is redundant. Cannon’s Point is already a conservation preservation area and protected from development, and if the remaining acreage from the St. Simons Island North End Regional Park is transferred, the public would lose the benefit of uses currently permitted in the park. The county won’t be saving 40 acres of land from development with the park. Instead, permitted recreation uses would be taken away from the public.

Ms. Taylor Haley gave a brief presentation and a lengthy discussion followed. During which time, Ms. Haley made a formal request to defer this application until the January IPC Meeting. Thereupon, a motion was made by Mr. Stan Humphries, seconded by Mr. Paul Sanders and unanimously adopted to defer this request until the January 15, 2013 IPC Meeting, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

SP2486 The Inn at Sea Island: Consider a request to approve a site plan for the renovation of an existing building complex on a 10.17 acre parcel. The property is zoned PD, Planned Development known as “Shops at Sea island West”, and is located on the south side of Sea Island Road on St. Simons Island about two miles from its intersection with Demere Road. Parcel ID: 04-01597. Johnathan Roberts of Roberts Civil Engineering, agent for Vasa Cate of Sea Island Acquisition.

Mr. Roberts and Mr. Cate were present for discussion. Mr. Bill Edenfield was also present to answer questions.

The following report from staff was included in the packages for review and was presented by Ms. Iris Johnston:

This request is to construct a building that will unify with the existing buildings and be operated as a hotel. The site is within a Low Density Residential area on the adopted Future Land Use Map. However, the fact that the proposal is a retrofit development for existing buildings, is located close to a Village Center, and is opposite a large Medium Density Residential area, makes it acceptable as a transitional use.

The proposed building will tie into existing public (JWSC) water and sewer. Stormwater is to be discharged into the adjacent marsh so detention will not be necessary.

Under Section 619.4 (a) of the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Commission’s 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 been met.**
- 2) The proposed uses, buildings and structures are in accordance with the requirements of this Ordinance and other ordinances of Glynn County. **Staff comment: 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.**

- 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 building permit process.**
- 5) Adequate provisions are made to protect trees that are selected to remain as depicted on the site plan. **Staff comment: This site has been previously developed and landscaped.**
- 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: The property is well landscaped on all perimeters and adjoins marsh which acts as a natural buffer.**
- 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.**
- 8) Open space, as required, has been provided and appropriate means are proposed to assure maintenance of common areas and facilities. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met.**
- 9) Adequate provisions are made for water supply, fire protection, and sewage collection and treatment. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met or will be met during the building permit process.**

Ms. Johnston stated that staff recommends approval of *SP2486*, The Inn at Sea Island, subject to meeting all requirements.

Chairman Dow had questions about parking for a hotel. Mr. Hainley stated that the required parking is 1.1 space per room, plus 4 spaces for this particular site. He stated that the applicant is in compliance with the parking requirements.

Mr. Sanders asked if staff made any determination as to whether there would be a diminution of value to the Harrison Point Subdivision, which backs up to the property in question. Mr. Hainley replied no because this was part of an older zoning text that allowed a hotel at this particular location.

Chairman Dow wanted to know if there are any uses anticipated in the hotel, i.e., restaurant or lounge that would affect the parking. Mr. Hainley stated that the applicant would have to address this issue.

Ms. Patricia Laurens wanted to know the difference in traffic (from past to present) relative to the number of offices currently located in the building. Mr. Hainley stated that the applicant would have to address this issue as well.

Mr. Humphries stated that the residents at Harrison Pointe are very unhappy with the new ownership of the “Shops at Sea Island” because they have apparently removed a lot of the vegetation and a lot of the sound barriers. Mr. Bill Edenfield stated that the buffer at the “Shops at Sea Island” is only about 15 ft. wide, but the buffer on the project in question is 40 ft. wide and it is currently very heavily vegetated.

In addressing the traffic concerns, Mr. Johnathan Roberts explained that when the site was developed a deceleration lane was put in, as well as a left-turn lane, by GA DOT standards to ensure safety.

Regarding parking, Mr. Vassa Cate stated that in the past, there were probably about 170 people housed on four floors. Now there may be less than 40 people. He pointed out that the mailroom, training and the marketing group have all been moved out. There are very few uses currently in the building. He explained that the idea of this project is to create a lower price point hotel with connections to the golf course. He stated that they have been working with an architect of Atlanta who has designed hundreds of select service hotels. He stated that there would be no restaurant, lounge or alcohol at the hotel. They will offer a continental breakfast, 85 guest rooms with a small refrigerator similar to any select service hotel, such as the Hampton Inn. Chairman Dow asked Mr. Cate if he would be willing to agree or state that this property would never be eligible for a liquor license. Mr. Cate stated that he is not prepared to make that commitment at this time. Mr. Hainley pointed out that if the applicant decided to open a restaurant, or any other facility, such as a bar, he would have to come back to address the parking issue.

At the end of discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Paul Sanders to approve application *SP2486*, The Inn at Sea Island, subject to meeting all requirements. The motion was seconded by Mr. Stan Humphries and unanimously adopted.

TA2497: An amendment to article VII Section 607 to amend the standards and administrative practices for nonconforming uses, and to permit administrative relief under certain conditions.

Mr. David Hainley was present as the applicant for Glynn County.

According to the staff’s report, the proposed changes to Section 607 of the Zoning Ordinance provide clarification of a nonconforming use in Glynn County’s regulations. It also provides an opportunity for administrative relief under certain conditions.

Mr. Landon stated that staff recommends approval of Text Amendment *TA2497*.

There was no one present to oppose this amendment and following review, a motion was made by Mr. Preston Kirkendall to recommend approval of Text Amendment **TA2497** to the Glynn County Board of Commissioners. The motion was seconded by Ms. Patricia Laurens and unanimously adopted.

In other business, Mr. Hainley stated that he would notify the members about an upcoming workshop scheduled for December 18th at 5:30 p.m.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.