

MINUTES
MAINLAND PLANNING COMMISSION
APRIL 1, 2014 - 6:00 P.M.
Historic Courthouse, 701 G Street

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Murphy, Chairman
 Tom Boland, Sr., Vice Chairman
 Bill Brunson
 Larissa Harris
 Buddy Hutchinson
 Gary Nevill
 John Williams

STAFF PRESENT: David Hainley, Community Development Director
 Janet Loving, Admin/Recording Secretary

Chairman Murphy called the meeting to order and the invocation was given, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES

March 4, 2014 - Regular Meeting

Upon a motion made by Mr. Tom Boland and seconded by Mr. Bill Brunson, the Minutes of the *March 4th Regular Meeting* were approved and unanimously adopted.

At this time, Vice Chairman Tom Boland gave a brief recap of the rules, voting procedure and audience participation in discussing agenda items.

ZM2773 Peppertree Crossing Phase II: Consider a request to amend a Planned Development (PD) Zoning District Text for property consisting of 9.874 acres known as Peppertree Crossing Phase II. The purpose of the amendment is to permit detached single-family dwellings. Parcel IDs: 03-00917, 03-16721, 03-22910, 03-22904 through 03-22910 and 03-22916 through 03-22955. Larry Bryson, agent for PC2 LLC, owner.

Mr. Larry Bryson was present for discussion.

The following report from staff was included in the packages for review and was presented by Mr. Hainley:

The proposed request is to amend the Peppertree Planned Development to permit detached single-family dwellings. The current text allows for duplex and row house development only. The proposed request will allow detached units on a minimum of 6,000 sq. ft. lots as shown on the preliminary layout plan.

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 request will not be a detriment to the adjacent property owner(s). The proposed use is consistent with the surrounding properties and will result in a decrease in the density of the overall project.

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

The proposed change will not adversely affect the use of the adjacent property.

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

Yes, the existing zoning allows for duplex and row house development. However this property has remained vacant for several years with existing infrastructure in place.

- 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, street and utilities have previously been approved.

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

Yes, this property is identified as being located in a Regional Center Future Land Use Map.

- 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

Mr. Hainley stated that staff recommends approval of application **ZM2773** to amend the Planned Development (PD) for Peppertree Crossing, Phase II.

Mr. Boland asked if the area near Altama would remain as a construction gate. Mr. Hainley replied no, it is not an approved entrance. He stated that the only approved entrance is off of the Scranton area. Mr. Williams asked if it could be approved at a later date. Mr. Hainley replied no, staff would not recommend it to be approved.

Mr. Boland asked if the small pump that's located on one of the parcels would be used for irrigation only. Mr. Bryson replied yes, it is an irrigation well.

Mr. Nevill had questions about the minimum lot size. Mr. Bryson explained that the lots are laid out as submitted and are a minimum of 6,000 sq. ft. as noted by staff. He stated that the minimum lot width is 50 ft. with the exception of some of the narrower lots, which are between 25 and 26 ft. There is frontage that exceeds the 50 ft. but it narrows back. Mr. Bryson also stated that they are reducing the developable lots by 9.

There being no further questions and no opposition, a motion was made by Mr. Tom Boland to recommend approval of application **ZM2773** to amend the Planned Development for Peppertree Crossing, Phase II. The motion was seconded by Mr. Buddy Hutchinson and unanimously adopted.

SP2803 United Refrigeration: Consider approval of a site plan for an 11,000 sq. ft. office, warehouse, and showroom on 5.75 acres. The property is zoned General Industrial (GI). Parcel ID: 03-14923. Greg Dystra, applicant.

Mr. Johnathan Roberts was present to represent the applicant.

According to the staff's report, this site is located in Central Glynn on the Future Development Map and is shown on the adopted Future Land Use Map as Medium Density Residential. The proposed request is to construct a new structure consisting of 11,000 sq. ft. for United Refrigeration.

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 or will be provided during the permitting process.**
- 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 subject to full review for the building permit.**
- 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. The applicant is going to access onto Habersham Street.**
- 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 cleared.**
- 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 site has industrial zoning on adjacent properties.**
- 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 will be met during the review, permitting and inspection of buildings.**

- 8) Open space, as required, has been provided and appropriate means are proposed to assure maintenance of common areas and facilities. **Staff comment: Not applicable.**
- 9) Adequate provisions are made for water supply, fire protection, and sewage collection and treatment. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met. Utilities to be provided by JWSC.**

Mr. Hainley stated that staff recommends approval of application *SP2803* for an 11,000 sq. ft. building at 5215 Habersham Street.

Mr. Boland wanted to know if this proposal would have any impact on the large canal that runs along the edge of the property. Mr. Hainley replied no.

During a brief presentation, Mr. Johnathan Roberts of Roberts Civil Engineering stated that he prepared the proposed site plan and he is soliciting the Planning Commission's approval at this time.

Mr. Hutchinson wanted to know what type of business is being proposed for this site. Mr. Roberts stated that the owners are proposing to have a warehouse in the back to store the inventory, and there will be a showroom up front with a couple of offices.

Mr. Boland asked if this will be a new business. He also wanted to know the anticipated number of employees. Mr. Roberts stated that this will be a new business and in accordance with the parking tabulation, there will be 10 employees.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Larissa Harris to approve application *SP2803* for an 11,000 sq. ft. building at 5215 Habersham Street. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bill Brunson and unanimously adopted.

CUP2800 Glynn Solar Facility: Consider a request for a Conditional Use Permit to allow a solar power generating site in Forest Agricultural (FA) zoning. The property consists of approximately 3,660 acres. Parcel ID: 02-01076. J. Thomas Welchel, agent for Plum Creek Timberlands, owner.

Mr. Welchel was present for discussion. Mr. Andrew Lewis and Mr. Matt McCurry of the Alabama based Southern Power Company were also present to answer questions.

In presenting the staff's report, Mr. Hainley explained that this proposed request is to permit a solar power generation site adjacent to the existing Georgia Power substation in Thalman. Solar panels will be located at the proposed site to produce

energy for Georgia Power. The entire parcel consists of over 31,000 acres; however, this request is only for 3,660 acres.

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, special use permit, or a conditional use permit:

- 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 conditional use will generate solar energy in an agricultural area. There should be no conflict with the surrounding properties.

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

The proposal should have no affect on the use of the surrounding properties.

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

Yes, it has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned.

- 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.

The proposed conditional use should not generate any additional stress on the existing infrastructure once the project is constructed.

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

The future land use map has this property as agricultural use. However, the proposed use is incidental to the adjacent agricultural properties.

- 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

Mr. Hainley stated that staff recommends approval of application *CUP2800* to allow a solar power generating site as a conditional use subject to meeting all requirements.

Mr. Hutchinson wanted to know how high the solar panels would be. Mr. Hainley stated that they appear to be less than 15 to 20 ft. high.

Mr. Nevill asked if this proposal would be considered a public utility installation. Mr. Hainley replied yes. He also pointed out that the facility will be enclosed.

Mr. Tom Welchel gave a brief presentation explaining that he filed the application on behalf of Southern Energy, a sister company of GA Power. He stated that the applicants have been prompted into asking for this conditional use by virtue of the decision from GA Power to add solar energy into their system.

Mr. Welchel stated that this proposal is going to be a farm of a significant size and will generate some traffic in and out of the area mostly during construction. The applicants feel that they have located a site in the Thalman area that is ideal for this proposal. Mr. Welchel pointed out that the entire tract of land consists of 31,000 acres, but the applicants will only use 3600 acres as noted in the staff's report. Some of the area is wetlands but the solar panels will be built on the non-wetland area. He then briefly described what the panels will look like including the size and how they operate.

Mr. Welchel stated that this proposal will not generate any noise, pollution or high volume of employees except during the course of construction. He stated that the solar panels will not be visible from the highway and will be barricaded for security. Mr. Welchel pointed out that this proposal will not adversely impact the community and will not be an offensive use to the neighbors. There isn't anything located in the area where the panels will be built and access will be off of Highway 32.

Mr. Brunson asked if solar farms typically have a power substation associated with them. Mr. Welchel stated that it is his understanding that the sun comes into the system and generates the power, which then goes through the converter and into the substation and finally distributed into the GA Power lines. For additional clarification, Mr. Andrew Lewis with the Southern Power Company of Birmingham, Alabama explained that they are particularly fond of the Thalman site because of the existing substation. He stated that it is a very large substation that has 500 kilovolt, 230 kilovolt and 115 kilovolt capacity that they can readily plug into, and with that much capacity there is no need for an additional substation. Mr. Lewis stated that they will have a collector station on site that collects the energy from the arrays to a point. From there they have a line that goes to the substation directly adjacent to the property.

Chairman Murphy asked if any of this will be motorized. Mr. Lewis stated that they are currently looking at fixed or tracking arrays. The tracking arrays would be motorized.

Mr. Boland wanted to know where the main entrance would be. Mr. Lewis stated that the main entrance would be off of Highway 32. He stressed that they will avoid the wetlands as much as possible and will stay away from the floodplain. He pointed out that construction will commence in October of this year, with the latest operation date

being December 2016. Mr. Boland had additional questions about water and sewer treatment and the possible impact to the marsh. Mr. Lewis stated that they would only need sanitary sewer for a small maintenance building approximately 1500 sq. ft. which would house 2 or 3 employees to oversee the site once it's built. He stated that they would probably have a well for domestic and construction water. Mr. Brunson asked if there would be any issues with stormwater run-off. Mr. Lewis replied no. They will have grassed or groundcover to stabilize the site once the panels are built.

Mr. Williams asked if this project would require someone to be on site around-the-clock. Mr. Matt McCurry of Southern Power Company stated that he's not sure if there will be an employee on site 24 hours a day, but the site will be remotely monitored. Mr. Williams then asked to what extent will they secure the facility. Mr. Lewis stated that the perimeter will contain a 6 ft. chain linked fence. With some of the other facilities, they've obtained security based on need and they would probably do the same in this case. He also stated that this project is the largest of any others that they have done.

Mr. Boland asked if there would be any toxic materials in the area, to which Mr. Lewis replied no.

At this time, Chairman Murphy opened the floor for public comments beginning with Ms. Joanne Kitchings, adjacent property owner. Ms. Kitchings stated that she doesn't know enough about this request to be opposed. Her property is located at 1201 Highway 32 and depending on where this proposal is built she stated that it could possibly be in her backyard. She is very concerned about her property value being diminished especially if the panels are visible from the rear of her house. Mr. Lewis assured Ms. Kitchings that the solar panels would be built at least 1000 ft. away from her property. At Ms. Kitchings request, Mr. Lewis and Mr. McCurry agreed to meet with her and explain the specifics of this project and show her exactly what the panels would look like and where they will be located in relation to her property. In the meantime, Mr. Brunson explained to Ms. Kitchings that this proposal is one of the least invasive uses that the FA zoning allows. He pointed out a number of other uses that the applicants could put on the property without having to come before the Planning Commission.

At the end of discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Buddy Hutchinson, seconded by Mr. Gary Nevill and unanimously adopted to approve application **CUP2800** to allow a solar power generating site as a conditional use subject to meeting all requirements.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.