

The regular meeting of the Beaufort County Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") was held on Thursday, September 7, 2006, in County Council Chambers, the Beaufort County Administration Building at 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort, South Carolina.

Members Present:

Ms. Diane Chmelik, Acting Chair

Ms. Mary LeGree

Mr. Cecil Martin, Jr.

Mr. Thomas Mike, Sr.

Mr. Frank Mullen

Members Absent:

Mr. Jim Hicks, Chair

Mr. Alan Herd, Vice Chair

Mr. Ronald Petit

Mr. Vernon Pottenger

Staff Present:

Mr. Anthony Criscitiello, Planning Director

Ms. Barbara Childs, Administrative Assistant to the Planning Division Head

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Chmelik called the meeting to order at approximately 6:07 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Ms. Chmelik led those assembled in the pledge of allegiance.

Ms. Chmelik stated that the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman was unavailable for this meeting and she was appointed as Acting Chairman.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Ms. Chmelik welcomed the newest Planning Commissioner, Ms. Mary LeGree, who represents St. Helena Island.

REVIEW OF MINUTES: The Commission reviewed the August 7, 2006, meeting minutes.

Motion: Mr. Martin made a motion, and Mr. Mullen seconded, **to accept the minutes of the August 7, 2006, meeting, as written.** The motion was carried (FOR: Chmelik, Martin, Mike, Mullen; ABSTAINED: LeGree).

PUBLIC COMMENT on Non-Agenda Items: None were received.

BEAUFORT COUNTY ZONING MAP AMENDMENTS/REZONING REQUEST FOR SOUTHERN BEAUFORT COUNTY R600-40-209, R600-41-168, 170 AND 172 (41.87 ACRES TO BE KNOWN AS THE VILLAGE AT HILTON HEAD NATIONAL PUD) FROM URBAN/U (13.87 ACRES) AND RURAL WITH TRANSITIONAL OVERLAY/R-TO (28 ACRES) TO PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT/PUD; OWNERS: TOWNE CENTER LLC AND EXECUTIVE GOLF CLUB, INC., APPLICANT: RON MACAULAY

Mr. Criscitiello welcomed Ms. LeGree to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Criscitiello briefed the Commission. He noted the split zoning involved, explained the transitional overlay district and the Southern Regional Plan, noted the infrastructure deficit in Southern Beaufort County, stated the County Transportation Engineer believed that any development prior to the completion of the Bluffton Parkway would strain the existing transportation deficit, noted a powerline easement at the southern end of the property, and noted that apartments near other apartments were not allowed in the current ZDSO. The County staff is recommending deferral of a decision pending the outcome of Phase 5A of the Bluffton Parkway and securing funding for the Parkway.

Discussion included the 525 dwelling units in 34 buildings at the rate of 14 units per acre, if a traffic impact analysis had been done on how this project would affect the area, and had there been a housing shortage report showing the requirements for the area.

Applicant Comments:

1. Mr. Roberts Vaux, representing the applicant, noted that the project was consistent with what is envisioned for the area, except that the traffic impact was problematic. The PUD, rather than changing zoning, enabled what must be accomplished to extract concessions from the developer by the County. He noted a shortage of funding for transportation needs. The developer is willing to give 3,000 feet for the Bluffton Parkway and is willing to build part of the Parkway. The applicant is asking the Commission to pass this project on to the County Council with adequate concessions toward the Bluffton Parkway and noting the County Transportation Engineer's concern. He noted that there is a shortfall of high-end apartments or condominiums in Bluffton.
2. Mr. Randolph Stewart, representing the applicant, noted the New Urbanism concept was smart growth. The project has mixed uses, with neighborhood centers, three access roads, and 50% of the residents would come from the the target market of empty-nesters, retirees or vacationers.

A question and answer period with the applicant's representatives included the following:

- Q: A concern that the New Urbanism philosophy would change the face of the area, since the community desires the slow pace and not a crowded environment.
- A: Mr. Stewart stated that the New Urbanism concept was downtown Beaufort where a combined concentration of the services and residences would decrease sprawl and reduce traffic.
- Q: A clarification on the \$300 million infrastructure shortfall in Southern Beaufort County to build roads, libraries, parks, etc.
- A: Mr. Vaux explained the shortfall and how the developer would partially reduce the shortfall by donating some land and build a small part of the Bluffton Parkway.
- Q: A concern that the Moss Creek/Highway 278 intersection would be severely impacted by the traffic coming from the proposed development.
- A: Mr. Stewart noted the traffic impact study showed the intersection would not be as affected because there would be three access roads.
- Q: A concern that if the Bluffton Parkway is not built, then Highway 278 would be the only traffic outlet for the project.

- A: Mr. Stewart indicated the project had three 3 accesses—through the Tanger Outlet Mall, Hilton Head National golf course and the Moss Creek/Highway 278 intersection. If the two other accesses are not available, then the Moss Creek intersection would be the only access.
- Q: Mr. Bob Angeles commented on the density issue and the unrealistic belief that the project residents would not leave the property to shop at the nearby big box stores. The project would send approximately 1000 cars daily on an already aggravated Highway 278. He cannot believe the Planning Commission would favorably recommend this project.
- Q: A clarification on the marketing strategy regarding retirees, empty-nesters, and vacationers.
- A: Mr. Stewart stated that using the nationwide statistics for second homes for retirees, he believed 50% of the prospective purchasers would be empty-nesters.
- Q: A clarification that the units serving as second homes could be rented and the traffic would be affected.
- A: Mr. Stewart acknowledged that rentals would add to the traffic counts.
- Q: A concern regarding the archaeological findings on the property.
- A: Mr. Stewart stated he was in the process of contracting a company that would do an archaeological study of the property. He noted that the same company discovered the artifact while working for the Bluffton Parkway project.
- Q: Was there a study on the percent of residents who might live and work at the same site?
- A: Mr. Stewart indicated that he could not gauge the percentage, but he cited the Habersham PUD as a local example of such dual uses.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Mr. Tom O'Brien, a ten-year resident of Beaufort, is concerned with the actions of the Commission. He said the Commission was looking at 10-pound package in a 5-pound bag. He noted the large number of residents who came to the subcommittee meeting in August in opposition of the project. He believed that bad decisions had been made in Bluffton, include the Roller restaurant. It is not realistic that the people from the project will remain within the project. He does not believe the Tanger Outlet traffic intersection would provide any relief to the traffic congestion from this project. Interconnectivity is a mantra that is not realistic. He strongly recommended that the Commission not approve this project. That this project will donate some land for the Bluffton Parkway that hasn't even been approved is not a benefit to the area.
2. Ms. Beth Hilton, representing Tanger Outlets, had no reason to object when a land owner uses the Tanger property. Tanger Outlets will support what the taxpayers' representatives (County Council) will adopt.
3. Mr. Richard Smith, a Bluffton resident, agreed with Mr. O'Brien's comments. He encouraged the Commission to say no to this project.

Discussion included the project affecting Bluffton and Hilton Head, the concessions sounding intriguing but the major concern is the congestion on Highway 278, a marketing plan that is not a guaranteed statistic, the affect on the school system if the marketing plan for empty-nesters does not occur, hurricane evacuation concerns, a direly needed alternative roadway to Highway 278 rather than the proposed six-lane expansion, the appropriate project at the wrong time due to the

current traffic congestion on Highway 278, and concern that this project catered to the new people coming into the area rather than the current residents.

MOTION: Mr. Martin made a motion, and Mr. Mullen seconded, to recommend delaying a decision until a final alignment for Phase 5A of the Bluffton Parkway has been identified and funding for the construction of this Phase has been secured. Ms. LeGree asked that the language in the motion be amended to deferred rather than delayed. Mr. Martin and Mr. Mullen did not object to the amendment. The motion is **to recommend deferring a decision on the Beaufort County Zoning Map Amendments/Rezoning Request for Southern Beaufort County R600-40-209, R600-41-168, 170 and 172 (41.87 acres to be known as The Village At Hilton Head National PUD) from Urban/U (13.87 acres) and Rural with Transitional Overlay/R-TO (28 acres) to Planned Unit Development/PUD until a final alignment for Phase 5A of the Bluffton Parkway has been identified and funding for the construction of this Phase has been secured.** The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Chmelik, Mike, Martin, Mullen and LeGree).

Mr. Criscitiello noted to the audience that the Planning Commission's recommendation would be forwarded to the Land Management Committee of County Council.

BEAUFORT COUNTY ZONING MAP AMENDMENT/REZONING REQUEST FOR PORT ROYAL ISLAND R200-28-155 (8.87 ACRES); FROM SUBURBAN/S TO COMMERCIAL SUBURBAN/CS; OWNER: T&B RENTALS, APPLICANT: BOBBY TILLMAN, AGENT: DON GREEN

Mr. Criscitiello briefed the Commission. The applicant wanted to expand his mini-warehouse facility and access to the rezoned property would be from the applicant's existing property that fronts Parris Island Gateway. Staff recommended approval of the request.

Applicant's Comment: Mr. Bobby Tillman, one of the owners, reiterated that his Four Seasons mini-warehouse facility abuts the proposed rezoned property and access to the property would be through the Four Seasons facility. The property is not surrounded by residential homes.

Discussion included a clarification of the net buildable acreage of the proposed property that will allow Mr. Tillman to expand his mini-warehouse facility on the proposed property.

Public Comment: Ms. Eartha Lee J. Gray, a resident abutting Mr. Tillman's property, asked if the proposed zoning would impact her residential property taxes. She believed property taxes will be increased for herself and her neighbors.

Mr. Criscitiello noted that based on similar questions posed to the representative of the County Assessor during past community meetings, the appraiser will look at comparable properties, not necessarily next door, to determine tax increases.

Further discussion included clarifying Mr. Criscitiello's comment to Ms. Gray regarding tax increases, and informing Ms. Gray of the tax exemption offered to the elderly that would decrease her taxes.

MOTION: Mr. Mike made a motion, and Mr. Martin seconded, **to recommend approval of the Beaufort County Zoning Map Amendment/Rezoning Request for Port Royal Island R200-28-155 (8.87 acres); from Suburban/S to Commercial Suburban/CS; Owner: T&B Rentals, Applicant: Bobby Tillman, Agent: Don Green. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Mike, Martin, Mullen, Chmelik and LeGree).**

TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE BEAUFORT COUNTY ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS ORDINANCE/ZDSO, APPENDIX I—LADY’S ISLAND COMMUNITY PRESERVATION AREA, DIVISION 5—VILLAGE CENTER (VC):

- a. **Section 5.4—Permitted Activities, Table 1—Land Use, Commercial Retail (amend allowable use to limited use)**
- b. **Section 5.5—Limited and special use standards (add standards for Commercial Retail exterior storage)**

Mr. Criscitiello briefed the Commission. The Lady’s Island Community Preservation Committee recommended the text changes to allow retail exterior storage in the Lady’s Island Village Center District.

No discussion occurred.

MOTION: Mr. Mike made a motion, and Mr. Martin seconded, **to recommend approval the Text Amendments to the Beaufort County Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance/ZDSO, Appendix I—Lady’s Island Community Preservation Area, Division 5—Village Center (VC), Section 5.4—Permitted Activities, Table 1—Land Use, Commercial Retail—that amend allowable use to limited use; and Section 5.5—Limited and special use standards that adds standards for Commercial Retail exterior storage. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Mike, Martin, Mullen, Chmelik and LeGree).**

OTHER BUSINESS: None were discussed.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Mullen made a **motion**, and Ms. LeGree seconded, **to adjourn** the meeting. The motion **was carried unanimously** (FOR: Chmelik, LeGree, Martin, Mike, and Mullen). The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:52 p.m.

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Barbara Childs, Admin. Assistant to the Planning Director

Jim Hicks, Beaufort County Planning Commission Chairman

APPROVED: November 6, 2006