

Spartanburg City Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 19, 2018

City Hall Council Chambers
Spartanburg, South Carolina

The City Planning Commission met in City Hall Council Chambers on Thursday, July 19, 2018 at 5:30 P.M. The following City Planning Commissioners attended this meeting: Howard Kinard, Bob Pitts, Mike Epps, William "Luke" Quillen, and Reed Cunningham. Jared Wilson and Phillip Stone were absent. Representing the Planning Department were Natalia Rosario, Planner III.; Apoorva Kumar, Associate Planner; Julie Roland, Administrative Assistant; and Assistant City Manager, Chris Story.

Roll Call

Mr. Kinard, the Vice-Chair, stated that notice of this meeting was posted and provided to the media 24 hours in advance as required by the Freedom of Information Act.

Mr. Kinard noted that four Planning Commissioners were currently present, constituting a quorum; and he went over the rules and procedures for conducting a public hearing.

Mr. Epps moved approval of the Agenda for tonight's meeting; and he was seconded by Mr. Pitts. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

Disposition of the Minutes from the June 21, 2018 meeting of the Spartanburg City Planning Commission.

Mr. Pitts moved the Minutes from the June 21, 2018 Meeting be approved as presented; and he was seconded by Mr. Epps. The minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

Old Business – None.

New Business

1. Rezoning Request – The Planning Department has received a request to consider amending the City of Spartanburg, South Carolina Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element, by amending Section 206, changes to District Boundaries, of thirteen properties, Specifically Parcels #7-12-08-045.00; 046.00; 047.00; 048.00, 049.00; 050.00; 051.00; 061.00; 062.00; 063.00; and 064.00 located on 169.00 Avant Street; 121 Garrett Street; 125 Garrett Street; 156 Oakwood Avenue; 154 Oakwood Avenue (3 different lots); 137 Avant Street (2 lots); 155 Avant Street; 157 Avant Street; and 161 Avant Street, that are currently zoned R-8 (General Residential District) or LOD (Limited Office District) to zone R-6 PDD: General Residential Planned Development District in order to allow for the construction of a proposed townhome development. Ray Billings, J. Hiltabiddle Construction, Agent/Developer/Property Owner. If the request is approved all of the properties will be combined into one parcel.

Ms. Natalia Rosario, Senior Planner came forward and was sworn, and she submitted the meeting packets the Board Members had previously received via email, as well as tonight's presentation, and slides into evidence as Exhibit A. Mr. Rosario said there were thirteen properties along Avant Street and Oakwood Street, close to Converse College off of East Main Street. The proposal at this point was to do 70 new townhome units; and she said the site was 3.73 acres in size, which at the 2500 square feet per acre for the R-6 PDD zone permits approximately 65 units. A PDD zone is also eligible for an additional 10% density, which brings us up to 72 units. Ms. Rosario said the Planning Commission could authorize an additional 5%, a maximum of 3 units; so in theory there would be enough space and if the developer wanted to do this; they could put up to 75 units; so they were within their density count. The developer has provided us with their stormwater, landscaping, circulation plans, and grading plans, which they could go over tonight as briefly or as in depth as you would like to. Staff was also provided with a tree survey and the developer

had done some preliminary traffic counts on Avant Street during peak hours. Ms. Rosario said she believed they were in the process of doing another study regarding Avant and Oakwood near the college for their own records, as well as was requested by some of the nearby residents that were heard at the public meeting held in June, 2018. She said Staff was satisfied that the use of these properties for a market rate townhome development was an appropriate use; and she would recommend the Planning Commission approve the request favorably which would then need to go to the Mayor and City Council for another Public Hearing and First Reading of Ordinance on August 13, 2018; and if it was approved on First Reading, it would go for a Second/Final Reading on August 27, 2018. More slides were shown in order to better illustrate the request. Ms. Rosario said the Developer and his Engineer were present regarding any questions as well.

Planning Commission Questions for Staff:

There were no questions for Staff at this time.

Mr. Kinard, Acting Chair asked the applicant to come forward; and he said for the record, a month ago they held a public meeting that was just for informational purposes.

Mr. Eric Horton of 4503 N. Highway 14, one of the applicants came forward and was sworn. Mr. Horton said since the last meeting they had added another property on Oakwood Street; and they had ended up dropping two units along Avant along the alley regarding the turning radius, and had dropped two more units at the other end in order to get stormwater and sanitary sewer lines through the alleyway.

Mr. Kinard asked Mr. Horton if they either owned or were under contract to own all of the proposed properties between the block of Oakwood, Avant and Garrett.

Mr. Horton said they owned them all except for Mr. Wendell Cantrell's property.

Mr. Kinard asked whether Mr. Cantrell's property was part of the site plan at this time.

Mr. Horton said it was not.

Mr. Pitts asked Mr. Horton about the retaining walls on the site plan; and he said it looked like they would be five to seven feet tall.

Mr. Horton said one or two areas might get that high, but the majority of them would stay around three to four feet.

[Editor's Note: Board Member William Luke Quillen arrived to the meeting at 5:38 P.M.]

Mr. Pitts asked Mr. Horton regarding the distance from the garage door to the sidewalk; and he asked if there was twenty feet there.

Mr. Horton said he thought it was eighteen feet that was what a standard City parking space was.

Mr. Pitts asked if there would be fire access to the back of the buildings.

Mr. Horton asked was he talking about the back of each unit between the two roads.

Mr. Pitts said yes.

Mr. Horton said he did not think that was required for this type of development; but he would go over that with the Fire Marshal. Mr. Horton said he had the alleyway designed for the fire access.

Mr. Kinard asked about a traffic count.

Mr. Horton said they did one during peak hours and it came up to 500 or so.

Mr. Kinard said he knew it was one of the concerns some of the neighbors had previously expressed.

Mr. Horton said he would maybe expect a 25% to 30% increase off of that, but that was still relatively low volume.

Mr. Cunningham said he noticed there was a comment made by Ms. Rosario concerning the mature canopy trees. He said he went to the property today and said there were a number of nice Oak trees on the site; and he asked Mr. Horton if he was going to be able to preserve most of them or some of them.

Mr. Horton explained it would be limited to some of them. He said they had just gotten the tree survey in this week; but they would probably be limited to what was along the right-of-way of Avant and Oakwood Street. He explained they would probably have to get rid of most of the interior trees.

Mr. Cunningham asked would it not lighten the hvac load to keep some of them in the interior spaces.

Mr. Horton said it would; but ultimately it would be up to the client.

Mr. Cunningham asked if rearranging the units to accommodate that would not be feasible.

Mr. Horton explained. He said they would have new plantings that he thought would exceed the code.

Mr. Kinard asked about the buffer yard.

Ms. Rosario said they were going to install one around Mr. Cantrell's property, and there was already an existing one near the gas station.

Mr. Epps asked about the alleyway that ran to the left of Mr. Cantrell's property, would they keep it open.

Mr. Horton said they would tie in to it; and to answer his question it would remain open.

Mr. Cunningham asked would the City Sanitation collect refuse on the streets and not the alleyway.

Ms. Rosario explained.

Mr. Pitts asked would there be privacy separation at the back of the buildings running parallel with the retaining wall.

Mr. Horton said he did not know that the developer would install anything there, that it may be something that each tenant would do.

Mrs. Hiltabiddle explained they had not planned on it.

Mr. Pitts explained there would need to be some sort of separation.

Mr. Horton said there would be a guardrail for safety reasons.

Mr. Kinard opened the public hearing and asked anyone who wished to speak in favor or against the request to come forward and state your name and address for the record.

- Mr. Mark Moss came forward and said he was a renter on Ravenel St.; and he was also here on behalf of his mother who lived at 158 Avant Street; and said he wanted to reaffirm what he said at the June, 2018 meeting. They are still very much in support of this request. He said they did not agree with the traffic comments that were made by someone who lived on Fairview that was not part of this area at the last meeting.

Mr. Kinard mentioned at the June meeting someone had mentioned speed bumps, and he asked Ms. Rosario was that not a resident driven item.

Ms. Rosario said it was; and it would need to be handled by Community Services; and she explained how that process would go.

Mr. Kinard asked if there were any other questions or comments. There were none.

Mr. Kinard asked Ms. Rosario if she wanted to come back up and present the City Findings.

Ms. Rosario said she did not have findings regarding a PDD request.

Mr. Kinard closed the public comment portion.

Planning Commission Discussion/Deliberation:

Mr. Epps felt that the applicants had done everything they had asked them to.

Mr. Kinard felt it would be a good project; and he was in favor of it.

Mr. Epps felt it would be a positive outlook for the City.

Mr. Kinard also felt it would help to alleviate *some* of the housing concerns in the City, and it was a plus they would be market rate.

Mr. Pitts said he was in favor of the request; but would like to ask Ms. Rosario about the density of the project as it related to the surroundings.

Ms. Rosario said it was more dense, but not to an inappropriate scale, and explained there would probably see more of them. She did say that she hoped something the Planning Commission would push for a new Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Quillen moved to approve the request as presented; and he was seconded by Mr. Epps.

Ms. Rosario said the request would go for another Public Hearing and First Reading before City Council on August 13, 2018; and if approved at that meeting it would then go for a Second/Final Reading on August 27, 2018.

Site and Landscape Plans Approved (information purposes only) since the June 21, 2018 Meeting.

There were none approved since the June 21, 2018 Meeting.

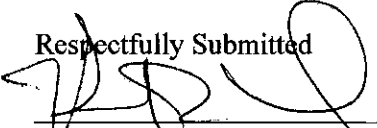
City Council Updates (FYI) Since Last Mtg. of Planning Commission on June 21, 2018 Meeting.

Ms. Rosario went over the updates that were listed on the Agenda.

Staff Announcements

- Ms. Rosario welcomed new Planning Commissioner Reed Cunningham to the Planning Commission.
- Ms. Roland updated the Board Members on the Continuing Education Training that would be hosted by the City of Spartanburg in October, 2018.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted

Howard Kinard, Acting Chair

Minutes by Julie Roland, Administrative Assistant