

Spartanburg City Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 16, 2020
ZOOM Meeting Minutes

The City Planning Commission met via ZOOM on Thursday, July 16, 2020, at 5:30 P.M. The following City Planning Commissioners attended this meeting: Jared Wilson, Howard Kinard, Dr. Phillip Stone, and Reed Cunningham were present. Mike Epps was absent. Representing the Planning Department were Natalia Rosario, AICP, Planner III; Rachel Grothe, MCRP, Planner II; and Julie Roland, Administrative Assistant. Martin Livingston, Neighborhood Services Director was also present.

Roll Call

Mr. Wilson, the 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. Wilson noted that four Planning Commissioners of the current five member Board were present, constituting a quorum; and he went over the rules and procedures for conducting a public hearing; and he had all of the Planning Commissioners introduce themselves.

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

Disposition of Minutes from the April 23, 2020 Meeting:

Dr. Stone moved approval as submitted of the April 23, 2020 Meeting Minutes; and he was seconded by Mr. Cunningham. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

Old Business: None.

Zoning Classification/Annexation Request TMS#7-08-16-043.00 and 7-08-16-061.00; located at 225 Milliken Street & "0" Cleveland Court, currently un-zoned, and the requested zone is R-6, General Residential District upon annexation. Orange Capital Advisors, LLC, Applicant on behalf of Pacolet Milliken, LLC, Owner.

Ms. Grothe was sworn; and she submitted the meeting packets the Board Members had previously received via email, tonight's presentation and slides into evidence as Exhibit A. Ms. Grothe said tonight they would review the Zoning Classification/Annexation Request; and she showed a slide of the location map and said the project site is an approximately 27.3 acre site and is comprised of two parcels. The applicant has petitioned the city for annexation, and would like to designate the property as R6, which is general residential with the intent of developing the site with multifamily units. She showed an aerial slide of the properties and surrounding area. Ms. Grothe said historically, the site has been vacant save for a couple of cell towers and the Lower Drayton Trail. The trail is part of the Greater Dan Trail System that once completed will be a 32 mile trail system that will traverse neighborhoods throughout the community. The trail on this site will eventually extend under the Norfolk Southern Trestle toward the old Spartanburg High School and the Cottonwood Trail. More slides were then shown of the site's current condition that included a view from Milliken Street, facing south which was undeveloped. She showed a slide from another view, a little bit closer up. And another slide was shown from standing out in the middle of the street, closer to Drayton Road. And then here, the site can be seen on the left with Drayton Mills shown in the background. Ms. Grothe showed the proposed site plan the applicant had provided, which showed a potential multi-family development that was being considered for the site. In

order to develop the site with multifamily units, the applicant is seeking a zone designation of R6. Ms. Grothe said there were two sets of laws that were applicable to this project, the first being local laws and the second being state laws. She said the zoning ordinance stipulates that "all property to be annexed shall be zoned at the highest and most restrictive residential classification." The R15, which is single family residential, is the most restrictive classification, and because the property owner is requesting a less restrictive or a higher density classification, the matter has been referred to the Planning Commission to provide a recommendation to City Council on the requested zoning. Ms. Grothe said the Planning Commission was tasked with determining if the proposed R6 zone designation would be an appropriate land use for the site. The R6 designation is the densest residential designation in the ordinance, and allows for one dwelling unit for each 2,500 square feet of lot area.

Ms. Grothe said there were a number of factors to consider when contemplating a new zone designation to ensure that potential development was compatible with the surrounding area. In analyzing this proposal, a multifamily designation made sense for this location given the surrounding developments. It is located across the street from the Drayton Mills complex, a successful mixed use project. The site and surrounding area contained buffers, which would help to ensure any potential developments would be separated from nearby uses. Ms. Grothe explained in addition to location, traffic was another important consideration; and with growth, of course came an increase in vehicle trips. According to SCDOT, the section of Drayton Road nearest the project site sees an average of 23,100 trips per day. Preliminary traffic modeling indicated that higher density housing would create around four trips per day. With the increase in density, use of the existing Lower Drayton Trail would also increase. This trail would allow residents to walk, bike, or jog to other parts of the city, which would create connections between neighborhoods. The trail would not be exclusive to residents of the site and would be open for public use. Ms. Grothe said the final consideration was the number of housing units this potential designation would add. She said additional units would help alleviate some of the housing issues that the city was currently facing. Ms. Grothe concluded by saying the proposed zoning and subsequent multifamily developments were appropriate for the site. Should the Planning Commission choose to recommend this annexation and accompanying zone favorably to City Council, all plans for development would be subject to the site plan review process by City Staff. I am available to answer any questions that y'all may have, and I believe Danny Balon, the applicant with SeamonWhiteside is here as well.

Planning Commission Questions for Staff:

Mr. Cunningham asked would this development essentially eliminate the parking area that's across the street from Drayton Mills, or is it set back further.

Ms. Grothe said her understanding of it was those were two separate lots. The parking was located on another lot that she believed was also owned by Milliken as well. She said Mr. Balon could probably speak to that a little better, but she thought they would stay. She thought maybe in the future there might be some plans for development of that lot, but not at the present time.

Mr. Balon said that was correct, and the parking lots would not be part of this project. It actually will not end up being part of this annexation. Pacolet Milliken as of right now was going to retain that property for the time being.

Mr. Cunningham asked was that tract behind that property.

Mr. Balon said that was correct.

Dr. Stone asked the Chairman if he was looking at the map, it looked like the property was adjacent to City Property. There was a kind of a tan property that he guessed was at the back of the Beaumont Neighborhood, and then across the railroad tracks. He asked was that how they could do this, because they were adjacency to other City property.

Ms. Grothe said yes and she explained and showed the location map slide that referenced City Limits/and zoning of the surrounding properties and unzoned properties that were in the County; She pointed to 380, that was currently within city limits. And she showed another portion on the map on the other side of the railroad tracks, and said that was also within city limits...

Mr. Danny Balon, Seamon Whiteside, Spartanburg Office was sworn, and said he was representing the applicant, who was Orange Capital. He said Ms. Grothe did a very thorough job of explaining the request, and she had gone over most of the high points as it pertained to the actual planning piece of this. We've done a great regular coordination with the City so far in terms of trying to put this in a way that would work for everybody's best interests. But as of right now, I don't really have any more to say.

Planning Commission Questions for Applicant:

Mr. Wilson asked Mr. Balon was the intended design or plan to have this as a gated community at all.

Mr. Balon said as of right now, the plan was for it not to be gated.

Mr. Kinard asked was there any opposition from neighbors or other parties who had expressed or written in regarding any objections or concerns with the project.

Ms. Grothe said none that she was aware of. She said it looked like there were 11 attendees, one being with their hand up. She said she talked to three or four different people who just sort of wanted to know a little bit about it and what it was, or folks who wanted to know if this was going to affect their property, or if the City were annexing their property, that sort of thing. She had not heard any opposition.

Mr. Cunningham asked about the size of the units and approximate market value or sales price.

Ms. Grothe said she could not speak to that; and she did not know that the applicant was there yet in terms of their plans.

Mr. Wilson, the Chair referenced the engineered site plan rendering that was part of their meeting packet; and he explained it showed a total of 320 units. Of those, 128 were proposed single bedrooms; 158 were two bedrooms; and 34 were three bedrooms. He said since it would be a rental apartment complex, there would be no proposed sale price; and he asked Mr. Balon if he could speak to that figure.

Mr. Cunningham said that had answered his question.

Mr. Wilson opened the public hearing portion of the meeting for public questions or comments; and he explained anyone could address the Planning Commission by either using the raise hand function and the host would recognize them, or they could request a chat via the host.

Mr. Wilson asked whomever had their hand raised to state their name and address for the record.

[Editor's note: there was some trouble with the audio regarding the person trying to speak was not coming through].

A lady who identified herself as Sharon; asked what part of Milliken was going to be closed.

Mr. Wilson referenced a slide of the area; and he said based on what had been requested and submitted here this evening, this was the parcel and property, while it was owned by Pacolet Milliken, It's across the street from the Milliken building and Drayton development. There's nothing on the property, currently, that existed and was being closed.

Mr. Balon said she may be referring to Milliken Street. He explained right now, there was a gate down near the intersection of Milliken and Cleveland Court, which continued on into the property, which was technically still Milliken Street and past the gate. The applicant had petitioned to take that from the county, and that would become part of the property. But the rest of Milliken Street would stay open. There was nothing that would be closed.

The lady said o.k.

Dr. Stone asked the lady if she had a statement or any other comments she would like to make.

The lady said she did not.

Mr. Wilson asked were there any other hands raised or people who wished to chat or make any comments.

Dr. Stone said he did not see any more hands raised; and he said there were eleven property owners signed on to the Zoom Meeting.

Mr. Wilson said they would wait a few more seconds. Since no-one else indicated they wished to speak, Mr. Wilson closed the public portion of this evening's proceedings; and he said they would now move on to Board Deliberation.

Planning Commission Deliberation:

Mr. Wilson said he would hit the high points they typically considered; and he felt like what's being requested would annex in additional property to the City, it would add to the tax revenue income for the City, it would provide additional housing, which was certainly in need in the City. From the density standpoint, as staff and the traffic study pointed out, while this was the densest use, when you compared it to the R6, this would only create four additional trips per day versus 10 if it were to be annexed and zoned as single family dwellings. Mr. Wilson said from a traffic impact standpoint, this was the least impactful. He knew Mr. Cunningham always liked to know about the trees; and from the report they had it looked like every effort would be made to preserve the trees on site. Mr. Wilson thought it was a great thing they were committed to maintaining the public access to the trail system. And that it would be an amenity for not only the residents, but also the general public.

Dr. Stone agreed with the Chair; and he felt it would be a very good project since it would add to the taxable wealth of the City; added housing; and would extend the boundaries of the city, actually closer to the Drayton project that's already been developed, and that it looked like it would be of benefit to the City. He saw no reason why they should oppose this annexation or this particular zoning classification; and felt like the right zoning classification in his opinion.

Mr. Cunningham was in agreement; and thought it would be a nice addition.

Mr. Kinard felt everything had been addressed and had nothing else to add to the prior comments.

Dr. Stone moved to approve the request and recommend R6 as the zoning classification to City Council as presented by Staff; and he was seconded by Mr. Cunningham. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

Mr. Wilson said for the record, the Planning Commission approved the requested zoning classification for the annexation as submitted, for Tax Map Parcel numbers 7-08-16-043.00 and 7-08-16-061.00 for the two properties located at 225 Milliken Street and 0 Cleveland Court that were currently un-zoned and they were recommending approval for the requested zone as R6. He said this favorable recommendation would be sent for approval to City Council; and he asked Staff what dates that would be heard.

Mrs. Roland, Administrative Assistant said it would go for a First Reading and another Public Hearing before City Council on August 10th; and if it received First Reading approval, it would then have a Second/Final Reading by City Council on August 24, 2020.

Mr. Wilson said once approved by City Council, all the plans for the development would be subject to the site plan review process by City Staff.

Ms. Grothe said that was correct.

Site and Landscape Plans approved since the April 23, 2020 Meeting. (For Information)

There were none.

City Council Updates (FYI) since the last Planning Commission Meeting on April 23, 2020.

Mrs. Roland went over the updates that were listed on the Agenda.

Staff Announcements:

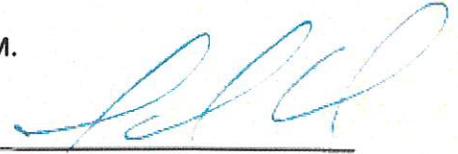
- Mrs. Roland said the Mayor and City Council had recently re-appointed Board Member Stone to serve a second term on the Planning Commission; and there were two vacant Planning Commission positions on the Board; and she thought the Mayor and Council would look at those either the end of July or early August.
- Ms. Roland also included in the meeting packets an email to all the Commissioners regarding the on-line Continued Education Training available by the ACOG; and it was very inexpensive; which the City would pay for.

Dr. Stone asked if Ms. Rosario or anyone else had any updates on comprehensive planning process.

Mr. Livingston informed the Planning Commissioners they met with the consultants recently within the last two weeks to discuss a brief process and he said they had a think tank. They're working on putting

together a think tank of local residents and business owners that would guide and help the consultants make some decisions or test any ideas that were presented by the consultant before it's actually presented to the general public. And so they're working through that process. They were also trying to figure out how to have online engagement, as well as in-person engagement, for the planning process with COVID-19, that has made actual in person engagement difficult or challenging. So right now they were having conversations about how to do engagement.

- There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:09 P.M.



Jared Wilson, Chair