

**Auburn Planning Commission
May 5, 2014 – Packet Meeting
MINUTES**

The Auburn Planning Commission (PC) met on Monday, May 5, 2014 at 12:00 p.m. in the Auburn Public Library at 179 East Thach Avenue.

PRESENT Wayne Bledsoe, Sarah Brown, Phil Chansler, Marcus Marshall, Charles Pick, Matt Rice, Emily Sparrow, Mark Yohn

ABSENT Warren McCord

STAFF PRESENT Forrest Cotten, Matt Mosley, Katie Robison, Tyler Caldwell, Jeff Ramsey, Alison Frazier, Dan Crowdus, Megan McGowen, Matt Dunn

Mr. Cotten read the following statement for the record:

“The main business of the Packet Meeting is for the Commission to have an opportunity to ask preliminary questions of staff about the applications that have been scheduled for the subsequent regular meeting. No action is taken at the Packet Meeting. Therefore, it is expected that the primary content of the Packet Meeting will consist of questions being asked by the Commission and answers being provided by city staff.”

OLD BUSINESS

CONSENT AGENDA

Robertson Annexation

PL-2014-00196

Mr. Cotten stated the request was for a recommendation to City Council for annexation of approximately 1.6 acres located on Alabama Highway 147 North, north of Ensminger Road. There were two distinct areas proposed for annexation. The first was a 60 foot strip approximately 600 linear feet long that comprised 0.99 acres with no homes or structures. This strip connected to the second area proposed for annexation, which was approximately 1.5 acres with one home located on it. The subject properties were located outside of the area defined as the optimal boundary as articulated in Comp Plan 2030. As such, staff recommended denial.

NEW BUSINESS

Renew Opelika Road Zoning Implementation

MS-2014-00006

Mr. Cotten stated the request was for a recommendation to City Council for approval of amendments to Article III (Establishment of Zoning Districts), Article IV (General Regulations), Article V (Detailed Use Regulations), Article IX (Administration and Enforcement) of the *City of Auburn Zoning Ordinance* for the purpose of establishing the Corridor Redevelopment District (CRD) zoning district and accompanying regulations.

The proposed changes were intended to create the new zones required for the implementation of the recommendations from the Renew Opelika Road plan. The existing zoning on the Opelika Road Corridor suffered from limited permitted uses, restrictive building setbacks and other development standards. The Renew Opelika Road plan identified multiple implementation measures that could be enacted either partially or wholly by changes to the existing zoning.

To this end, new zones were designed for the corridor, replacing the existing Redevelopment District (RDD), Comprehensive Development District (CDD) and Commercial Conservation (CC) along the corridor only. The new proposed zones were the Corridor Redevelopment District-Urban (CRD-U) and

Corridor Redevelopment District-Suburban (CRD-S). These zones were intended to promote the redevelopment of older commercial corridors. The CRD-U zone was designed to help transition from the more urban areas downtown to the more suburban portions of the corridor. The CRD-S promoted redevelopment of the newer portion of the corridor and focuses on aesthetic qualities. These zones may eventually be used, partially or wholly, in other commercial corridors throughout the city.

The new zones would also allow more uses to be permitted by right on the Opelika Road corridor. The zones would have similar allowances to the CDD zone from a commercial standpoint, except that they would have some restrictions on the use of residential directly on the corridor. Many of these uses were currently not allowed by right or not allowed at all on most of the corridor. The uses proposed in the CRD-U zone which would be allowed by right were typically those commercial uses that were not road-service in nature and do not occupy extremely large lots like a community or regional shopping center. In the CRD-S zone, these large lot uses were proposed to be permitted by right, as were fast food and banks in the road service use categories.

Additionally, new standards were proposed to have the buildings move closer to and better address the street. This included reduced setbacks and bufferyards. It also allowed for more flexibility in the location and use of bufferyards. The new requirements would require access from adjoining sidewalks and for the building to have a façade fronting the street. The proposed regulations also required cross-access to be provided, where possible.

The standards for mixed-use developments were also being modified to remove what was known as the “mixed-use penalty.” This requirement reduced the amount of residential density down to 80 percent of the allowable density for mixed use projects. Since the City wished to promote mixed use developments, the regulations were being removed from the Zoning Ordinance. Staff also recommended that the standards for when a master development plan is required for a mixed-use development be relaxed from any mixed use project to only those with 10 or more dwelling units or ones 5 acres in size or larger.

Finally, the special development standards for veterinary offices were being modified to allow more flexibility. The current standard required 200 feet separation between the outdoor run of a veterinary office and any residential property. After doing research on comparable communities, this seemed to be excessive. Instead, staff proposed that the distance be reduced to 50 feet, but also suggested increasing other requirements that would reduce any potential nuisances.

Ms. Sparrow initiated discussion regarding the change in suitability for certain uses on Opelika Road.

Ms. McGowen explained that special development standards would mitigate impacts of uses that were introduced to the table of permitted uses. Additionally, the change of certain uses from conditional to permitted would speed up the review and permitting process.

Renew Opelika Road Zoning Map

MS-2014-00007

Mr. Cotten stated the request was for a recommendation to City Council for rezoning of properties along Opelika Road and at the East Glenn Avenue and North Dean intersections from Redevelopment District (RDD), Comprehensive Development District (CDD), and Commercial Conservation (CC) to Corridor Redevelopment District-Urban (CRD-U) and Corridor Redevelopment District-Suburban (CRD-S).

Lincoln Heights Lincoln Heights

PL-2014-00198

PL-2014-00199

Mr. Cotten stated the requests were for preliminary and final plat approval for a lot consolidation (25 lots into one) located in the 900 and 1000 blocks of West Glenn Avenue in the University Service (US) zoning district. A 29-unit multiple family development was proposed for the consolidated lot, which would have frontage on both West Glenn Avenue and Railroad Avenue. Staff recommended approval.

The Grove at Auburn II

PL-2014-00280

Mr. Cotten stated the request was for a waiver in order to encroach 2.26 feet into the five foot minimum bufferyard when averaging buffer width. The subject property was located at 1017-1045 Railroad Avenue in the University Service (US) zoning district and included the parcels that comprised the Lincoln Heights preliminary and final lot consolidation requests. The applicant proposed encroachment into the fifteen (15) foot landscape buffer in three places along the northern property line, resulting in 592 square feet of total encroachment. In order to encroach into the uniform fifteen (15) foot buffer, the applicant averaged the bufferyard and included additional buffer in three places, totaling 860 square feet of additional bufferyard. One caveat of averaging the bufferyard is the maintenance of a minimum of five (5) feet of buffer against a property line. Staff concluded there would be no discernable impact to adjacent properties by granting the waiver and recommended approval.

Southern States Bank

PL-2014-00278

Mr. Cotten stated the request was for a recommendation to City Council for conditional use approval for a road service use (bank with drive-thru) and to fill in a portion of the floodplain. The subject property was located at 815 Opelika Road in the Commercial Conservation (CC) zoning district. Banks with a drive-thru are found on various parcels along the Opelika Road corridor. The proposed location should not have a negative impact on traffic because of its location at the intersection of an arterial street and collector street. The site plan showed a right-in/right-out access to the property utilizing the existing curb cut on Opelika Road. A new curb cut was proposed on North Dean Road. The applicant wished to fill in the floodplain in order to install additional parking spaces. Staff recommended approval of the road service use. However, staff recommended denial of the request to fill in the floodplain because the parking spaces were not required and the proposed fill was greater than five (5) feet in a portion of the area proposed to be filled. Ms. Robison noted the staff comment regarding the potential need for a setback variance for the drive-thru canopy, but said the reason the distance requirement could not be met was because the intersection was chamfered. Because of this, staff recommended removing the condition. The Future Land Use Map showed this area under a Corridor Redevelopment classification. This classification promoted the redevelopment of the existing area with the help of incentives, reduced setbacks, shared parking and possible City investments in infrastructure. The intersection of North Dean Road and Opelika Road was also shown as a neighborhood center in the Renew Opelika Road plan. Because the adjacent Dyas property, which was vacant for a period of time, had become occupied with the same use as was the previous use of the property (auto dealership), the designation of neighborhood center in the Renew Opelika Road plan would need to be revised. Staff would initiate this change in designation with the Planning Commission in the coming months.

Discussion took place regarding filling in the floodplain and the possibility to fill only a portion of the overall proposed area.

Greenbelt Fast Food 3

PL-2014-00286

Mr. Cotten stated the request was for conditional use approval for a road service use (fast food restaurant with drive thru), including a waiver of 10 feet to a 15 foot bufferyard requirement. The subject property was located at 2031 South College Street in the Comprehensive Development District (CDD) zoning district. The proposed conditional use request was consistent with the intent of the zoning district and the general purpose and goals of the Zoning Ordinance. The proposed use also conformed with the existing Future Land Use Plan. Fast food restaurant uses were found on multiple parcels along the South College Street corridor. The site plan proposed to use cross access with the Dunkin' Donuts parcel to the north as well as the War Eagle Supper Club property to the south of the subject property. The site plan showed a new turn lane off of South College Street leading to a right-in/right-out curb cut to the property just south of the subject property. Staff recommended approval of the conditional use and waiver requests. The vacant property would, in all likelihood, be developed as a road service use and the bufferyard required between like uses on a corridor was five (5) feet.

Cigar and Fine Spirits

PL-2014-00287

Mr. Cotten stated the request was for a recommendation to City Council for amended conditional use approval for the expansion of an existing commercial and entertainment use (tobacco shop, package store, and lounge) located at 1849 Ogletree Road, Suites 100-200, in the Limited Development District (LDD) zoning district with an overlay of the Planned Development District (PDD) designation. In August 2011, the City Council granted the original conditional use approval. The applicant wished to expand so that the total size of the unit would increase to approximately 3,000 square feet. Staff recommended approval.

Cotswolds, Phase 1D

PL-2014-00332

Mr. Cotten stated the request was for a waiver to Article III(F), 4d.(6), Final Plat, of the Subdivision Regulations regarding the time a development must be complete. The applicant is requesting to be allowed to extend the bonding period twelve months. The final plat was recorded in May 2012, which allowed the developer to begin selling lots. Currently, the subdivision was approximately 78% completed. There was a subdivision completion bond in place that was sufficient to cover the outstanding improvements. Staff recommended as a condition of approval that the bond be reevaluated to ensure compliance with current standards. This was the first bond extension request for this phase of The Cotswolds Subdivision.

OTHER BUSINESS

CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATION

STAFF COMMUNICATION

ADJOURNMENT- With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:07 p.m.

Mark Yohn, Secretary

Sarah Brown, Chair