

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF FORT MILL  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
February 16, 2016  
112 Confederate Street  
7:00 PM**

Present: James Traynor, Hynek Lettang, John Garver, Jay McMullen, Chris Wolfe, Tom Petty, Planning Director Joe Cronin, Assistant Planner Chris Pettit

Absent: Ben Hudgins

Guests: Judy Allie (QuikTrip), Brian Smith (Urban Design), David Meyer (QuikTrip), Kevin Granelli (Taylor Morrison), Alan Kerley (Taylor Morrison), Patrick Murphy (R. Joe Harris & Associates).

Chairman Traynor called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Mr. Petty made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 19, 2016, meeting, with a second by Mr. Wolfe. The minutes were approved by a vote of 6-0.

Chairman Traynor stated that he had a conflict of interest for Old Business Item #1 and would be recusing himself from discussion of that item.

Planning Director stated that he had heard from Mr. Hudgins in advance of the meeting, and that Mr. Hudgins would be unable to attend the meeting due to a work commitment.

**OLD BUSINESS ITEMS**

Chairman Traynor recused himself from discussion of this item due to a conflict of interest and left the room at 7:01 pm. In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, Mr. Wolfe served as acting Chair.

- 1. Commercial Appearance Review: QuikTrip:** Assistant Planner Pettit provided a brief overview of the request, the purpose of which was to consider an appearance review for QuikTrip's proposed gas station/convenience store located at the corner of Highway 160 and Springfield Parkway. Assistant Planner Pettit reminded the commission that the item was previously reviewed at the Planning Commission's December, 2015 and January, 2016 meetings and that the applicant had subsequently submitted revisions based on the staff and commission comments.

Assistant Planner Pettit took the Planning Commission through the staff report, noting how the applicant addressed the comments from the previous meeting. Regarding the building height, Assistant Planner Pettit noted that the applicant had revised the drawing for the primary structure to show an average 20' minimum height. Acting Chairman Wolfe stated that the applicant's revisions help to meet the intent of the COD-N overlay requirements.

Assistant Planner Pettit provided the Planning Commission with details on the applicant's proposed monument signage, noting that it meets the size and location requirements of the zoning ordinance. Acting Chairman Wolfe questioned whether or not the COD-N overlay required the signage materials to match the principal structure. Assistant Planner Pettit noted that the code did not explicitly have a requirement on signage materials, but that the Planning Commission did have the discretion to determine whether the sign meets the intent of the COD-N overlay district. Acting Chairman Wolfe stated his desire to see brick brought in to the base of the sign to tie it together with the principal structure.

Assistant Planner Pettit discussed the revised landscaping plan, noting that the applicants met the minimum requirements of the zoning ordinance and that the applicants provided a tree survey and appropriately provided for the replacement of two significant trees that would be removed during land development. Mr. McMullen commended the applicant for providing deciduous trees along pedestrian pathways, however noted that providing a variety of species would be preferable over a singular species due to the threats provided from disease. Mr. McMullen noted his preference to hold off on approving the landscape plan until the Planning Commission's subcommittee could finalize their design guidelines for landscaping.

Given that a subcommittee had not yet finalized designs for COD-N lighting and internal walkway guidelines, Assistant Planner Pettit noted that those items would hopefully be ready to be finalized at the Planning Commission's March meeting. Assistant Planner Pettit did note that the applicant's had provided a pedestrian pathway from Springfield Parkway to Avery Plaza via internal sidewalk connections as requested by the Planning Commission, but did not show the use of distinguished surface crosswalks across driveways. Judy Allie, representing QuikTrip, noted that they would be happy to utilize the distinguished surfaces through their crosswalks in the driveways. Mr. McMullen discussed the location of the sidewalks along the northern portion of the site and questioned whether anything could be done to move the sidewalk away from the back of curb of Springfield Parkway. Ms. Allie noted that the grade would make it extremely difficult to bring the sidewalk off the back of curb. A discussion occurred on the safety of the sidewalk along Springfield Parkway, future development to the north, and whether the submittal met the intent of the code.

There being no further items listed in the staff report to discuss, Acting Chairman Wolfe asked if there were any other comments. Hearing none, Acting Chairman Wolfe called for a motion. Mr. Garver made a motion to approve the commercial appearance review as submitted, conditioned upon the lighting, signage, landscaping, and crosswalk materials being brought back before the Planning Commission for a subsequent approval. Mr. Petty seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 4-1, with Mr. McMullen opposed.

## **NEW BUSINESS ITEMS**

- 1. Annexation Request: Talkington Property:** Planning Director Cronin provided a brief overview of the request, the purpose of which was to review and provide a zoning recommendation on an annexation request for 161 acres on S Dobys Bridge Road. Planning Director Cronin reminded commission members that this request had initially been reviewed in 2014, but was later withdrawn after concerns were raised about potential traffic impact on S Dobys Bridge Road. A subsequent request was deferred by the Planning Commission in 2015 until the applicant could complete a TIA.

A TIA was completed by Kimley-Horn in January of 2016. The TIA identified several off-site improvements on S Dobys Bridge Road, as well as near the intersection of Dobys Bridge and US 521 in Lancaster County. Planning Director Cronin added that if all recommended improvements were completed, the project would not result in a downgrade in Level of Service (LOS); however, the unsignalized access across from the Lynnwood Farms subdivision would be downgraded from a LOS C/D to LOS F.

Planning Director Cronin stated that the property was located more than 5 miles from the town's only fully-staffed, 24-hour fire station, which would impact the ISO rating and response times for future residences on the property. The town had originally planned to convert an existing residence near Dobys Bridge Park (which is currently used as a temporary station) into a second full-time station. A second station at this location would be within 5 miles of the property; however, council has yet to make a final decision as to whether they would prefer to add on to the temporary station, or build a new station.

Planning Director Cronin stated added that the property was located in an area designated on the future land use map as "low density residential," with a recommendation of two or fewer homes per acre. Though a proposed development agreement would limit overall density at 2.01 units per acre, the requested zoning designation of R-5, with a minimum of 5,000 square foot lots, was not necessarily designed as a low density district, and perhaps R-10 or R-15 would be better suited for this area.

Based on the requested zoning designation, adverse traffic impact to existing subdivisions, and the absence of a permanent fire station within 5 miles of the property, staff recommended in favor of denial.

Kevin Granelli of Taylor Morrison spoke on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Granelli stated that the applicant was proposing to donate a 23 acre site to the town, and that the flexibility offered by the R-5 designation would allow the developer to offset the lost density from those 23 acres elsewhere on the property.

Mr. Wolfe stated that the impact to traffic levels on Dobys Bridge Road was his primary concern; however, he also had concerns about the impact to the Fort Mill School District, as well as the absence of a fire station within 5 miles of the property. Chairman Traynor stated that he didn't think the R-5 designation was consistent with the rural character of that section of Dobys Bridge Road, and expressed similar concerns about fire coverage.

Mr. Garver made a motion to recommend in favor of denying the annexation request with a zoning designation of R-5, as well as the development agreement presented by the applicant. Mr. Wolfe seconded the motion. The motion to recommend denial of both ordinances was approved by a vote of 6-0.

## ITEMS FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION

2. **COD/COD-N Design Guidelines Update**: Planning Director Cronin stated that a subcommittee made up of Chairman Traynor, Mr. McMullen and Mr. Petty met the previous week to begin putting together recommendations for design elements within the COD-N overlay district. These elements include crosswalk design, pedestrian lighting, site lighting, fences, retaining walls, landscaping and signage. The subcommittee will meet at least once more, and final recommendations are expected to be submitted in March,
3. **Historic Preservation Guidelines**: Planning Director Cronin informed members of the Planning Commission that the town had entered into a contract with a consultant for the purpose of developing design guidelines for new construction and rehabilitation projects in the town's historic district. Commission members were invited to participate in stakeholder meetings, which are scheduled to be held on March 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> at town hall.
4. **Upcoming Training Session**: Planning Director Cronin reminded members of the upcoming training session, which will be held on Thursday, February 25<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 to 8:00 pm at the Fort Mill School District Office on Deerfield Drive. The session has been certified by the state for 1.5 CE credits.
5. **York County Comprehensive Plan Meeting**: Planning Director Cronin also reminded members that York County will be holding a drop in meeting on Thursday, February 25<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 7:00 pm at Banks Trail Middle School. This will be the final public meeting held in conjunction with the county's comprehensive plan update.
6. **York County Housing Freeze and Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance**: Chairman Traynor asked staff if they had received any information about the pending housing freeze that was recently proposed by York County. Planning Director Cronin stated that the only information staff has seen is what was published in the Rock Hill Herald.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Cronin  
Planning Director