

**MINUTES
TOWN OF FORT MILL
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
November 16, 2021
112 Confederate Street
6:30 PM**

Present: James Traynor, Dan Stout, Hynek Lettang, Chris Wolfe, Ben Hudgins, Matthew Lucarelli, Planning Director Penelope Karagounis, Planner Nick Cauthen, Planner Alex Moore

Absent: Andy Agrawal

Guests: See Attached Sign-in Sheet

Chairman James Traynor called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, November 16, 2021. Chairman Traynor gave the opportunity to the Planning Commission to review and comment on the October 19, 2021, meeting minutes. Commissioner Wolfe made a motion to approve the minutes and Commissioner Stout seconded the motion. The minutes of the October 19, 2021, Planning Commission were approved by a vote of 6-0. Commissioner Agrawal was absent.

OLD BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1. Commercial Appearance Review – Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital:** Mr. Cauthen provided a brief overview of the request, the purpose of which was to review and consider granting commercial appearance review approval for a rehabilitation hospital. The site is part of the Pleasant Vista MXU district. The Planning Department recommended in favor of the request. Staff noted only phase 1 was under consideration at this time. Staff also noted this project had been deferred from the previous meeting due to concerns over building materials from the Planning Commission. Staff presented updated exterior elevations which featured more brick than previously submitted. There were also 2 options for the roof screen wall.

The applicant presented a sample board with brick and EIFS. EIFS is limited to the interior courtyard which is not visible from the street. The brick colors will be blended along the façade as depicted in the staff report.

Mr. Lucarelli asked about if the metal screen wall on the roof was corrugated metal. The applicant stated there are different styles. The proposed style is a 3 panel look that is flush. Mr. Lucarelli also asked about the height of the screen wall. The applicant stated the screen wall will be approximately 12 ft. in height to hide the mechanical equipment which is approximately 9 ft. Mr. Lucarelli asked if the equipment could be moved further back on the roof to reduce the height of the wall. The applicant responded it would be very difficult to push them back due to the configuration of the building but that will certainly be

considered.

Mr. Wolfe asked if other buildings used this wall system for screening. The applicant stated 90% of the buildings that he designed use this screen wall. Mr. Wolfe also asked about the durability of the wall. The applicant stated these walls are used in Florida and are secured with steel posts welded to the roof joists and are very durable.

Mr. Lettang noted the colors looked very good, but he would not accept the corrugated metal roof screen wall. Mr. Stout agreed.

Mr. Wolfe asked about the aesthetic appeal of the detention ponds. The applicant noted they will be dry ponds. Mr. Lucarelli noted that planting street trees beside the pond could enhance the appeal.

Mr. Wolfe asked if trees will be saved on the site. The applicant stated there are areas of undisturbed buffer where the trees will be kept.

Mr. Wolfe asked if the internal signage would be internally lit. Staff noted the ordinance allowed for that outside of the corridor overlay but signage was in the purview of appearance review. Mr. Hudgins said the more appealing signs have a hard surface with lit letters versus the entire face glowing.

After no further questions or comments Chairman Traynor asked for a motion.

Mr. Hudgins made a motion to grant commercial appearance review approval as submitted. Mr. Wolfe seconded the motion and added an amendment with the condition for staff to have the ability to approve minor modifications to the site plan and elevations if needed. Mr. Lettang added an amendment to refrain from using corrugated metal for the screening wall. Mr. Wolfe and Mr. Hudgins agreed to the amendments. The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0.

2. Commercial Appearance Review – Star Investment Group (Bojangles):

Mr. Traynor noted the Board is responsible for appearance review only and the use is allowed by the zoning ordinance. The Planning Commission's responsibility is to make sure the project meets the appearance review requirements.

Chairman Traynor offered David Cordes, a citizen concerned about the project an opportunity to speak. Mr. Cordes noted he lives in the Masons Bend subdivision. The concerns of he and his neighbors are the increased demand on the traffic circle, the propensity of the drive-thru line to potentially back up into the highway, and the potential issue of cars attempting to make a left turn into the Bojangles from Sutton Road even though it is a right-in only. He noted there will be a break in the median to allow full access for the existing property across the street on Sutton Road. Mr. Cordes asked if the access from Sutton Road to the Bojangles could be eliminated to prevent the anticipated illegal left turns.

Mr. Traynor reiterated the scope of the Commission is the appearance of the project. He asked staff which party would be best served to address Mr. Cordes' concerns. Staff noted SCDOT is the party responsible, and they have approved the ingress/egress as currently proposed. SCDOT is trying to narrow the right-in, right-out as much as possible to try and eliminate left turns into the Bojangles. The TIA required for the project also analyzed the drive-thru stacking and it was found there was ample room due to the dual stacking. The Commission expressed concerns over the potential cluster this project will create from a traffic standpoint.

Mr. Wolfe asked about the parking requirements for the Bojangles, he noted based upon some research of other local Bojangles that this location will have significantly fewer parking spaces. Staff noted the parking requirements will be confirmed once the occupancy numbers are verified by the building department, but the requirements are met given the information given.

Mr. Stout stated he would like to ask the applicant if the layout could be flipped, and he also had concerns about the proximity of the elementary school less than a mile away.

After no further questions or comments Chairman Traynor asked for a motion. The Commissioners agreed the agenda item should be deferred due to the absence of a representative to address their concerns of the project.

Mr. Lettang made a motion to defer the commercial appearance review request due to the absence of the applicant. Mr. Stout seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0.

3. **Preliminary Plat: Design Resource Group (Patterson Pond)** Senior Planner Alex Moore provided a brief overview of the request, the purpose of which was to review and consider granting approval of a preliminary plat. The request was submitted by Design Resource Group (DRG) on behalf of Land Investment Resources, LLC.

Moore stated that the proposed preliminary plat, known as Patterson Pond, is located on W. Hensley Road and consists of approximately 8.12 acres. The property is zoned R-5, One-Family Residential District. R-5 is a legacy district. Thus, in this instance the town's zoning ordinance indicates that such legacy districts exist to allow for consistency in the future development of such areas. There will be no new R-5 zoning districts in the future. Additionally, the boundaries of such districts cannot be expanded.

Senior Planner Moore then went into the specifics of the preliminary plat. He indicated that this would be an age-targeted community. Moore then noted that this project had originally come before Planning Commission as a sketch plan in July 2020. During that review, Planning Commission expressed some concern with the plan which proposed 24 lots. Since that time the applicant has modified the plan to reduce the project to 19 lots. With this reduction in density there has been an increase in open space from 1.64 acres to 3.15 acres (38%).

Moore then stated that the transportation technical memorandum (TTM) from 2020 indicated that a TIA was not required. Thus, with the reduction in the number of lots to 19 from 24, the findings of this TTM stand.

Senior Planner Moore then presented the landscaping plan for this project. He stated that the R-5 zoning district requires that a 35' wide landscaped buffer be placed at the perimeter of the project. This buffer may be comprised of undisturbed wooded areas or planted material consisting of a minimum of 9 evergreen trees and 20 evergreen shrubs for each 100 linear feet. With this project, the proposal is to implement new plantings within this buffer consisting of the required trees and shrubs. Additionally, there will be a 6' tall, opaque fence along much of the perimeter of the lots. The placement of this fence will allow the developer to reduce the width of the buffer by 25% to 26'3".

Moore summed up the proposed Patterson Pond Preliminary Plat is consistent with Town of Fort Mill standards. Should Planning Commission choose to approve this Preliminary Plat, it is requested that Staff be permitted to review and approve the required civil construction drawings. Final Plats will then come back to Planning Commission for review. Civil construction plans will also be subject to review by SCDOT for encroachment permitting so that access to W. Hensley Road may be obtained. This review may necessitate a revision to the entrance alignment and/or other design features.

Moore also stated that the review by Planning Commission of the Preliminary Plat needed to consider the proposed street names of Fordham Court and English Arbor Drive.

Planning Commissioner Hynek Lettang asked for clarification on a portion of the project located within the northern cul-de-sac of English Arbor Drive. Moore stated that the area in question consisted of Lot 7.

Planning Commissioner Chris Wolfe then had some questions regarding the project. First, Mr. Wolfe asked about the entrance of the proposed subdivision in relation to the existing 12' wide driveway easement on the adjacent property to the immediate west. Moore stated that this respective driveway easement would remain and that this was the reason that the ingress/egress point for Patterson Pond had been shifted as far as possible to the east. Mr. Wolfe then asked about the overall density of the project.

Moore noted that the project now consisted of 2.3 dwelling units per acre and that the maximum density within the R-5 zoning district is 3 dwelling units per acre. He also indicated that the smallest lot as proposed within Patterson Pond consisted of approximately 6,000 square feet.

Mr. Wolfe asked what the common open space located along Fordham Court would consist of. Moore responded that he would allow the applicant to speak as to what this open space area would consist of. He did note that the preliminary plat indicated that this open space was currently of an undetermined use. The project developer, Mr. Philip Hayes, interjected that this section would consist of a pet park and that it consisted of approximately 2,000 square feet.

Mr. Wolfe then asked about recreational opportunities for children within this project. Mr. Hayes addressed this inquiry from Mr. Wolfe by noting that there would be open space in the area adjacent to the stormwater pond. Mr. Hayes indicated that his intention was to construct a pavilion within this section of open space. Additionally, he stated that this would be an age-targeted community. Thus, the implication was that if the HOA determines in the future that there was more of a need for a children's recreational use, changes could be made. Mr. Hayes additionally noted the proposed walking trail within the community. Such a use would be conducive to the recreational needs of all ages.

Mr. Wolfe then asked Mr. Hayes if he would be willing to make the project age-restricted rather than only age-targeted. This would be less impactful to the school district.

Mr. Hayes responded that he understood Mr. Wolfe's position. However, he had asked this question of the builder. Their response was that they simply did not want to restrict themselves to one age-group.

Mr. Lettang then asked Mr. Hayes what the price point for these homes would be. Mr. Hayes responded that these would be \$500,000 homes.

Planning Commissioner Dan Stout then asked for clarification on whether the stormwater pond would be wet or dry. Mr. Nick Bushon with Design Resource Group responded that the pond would indeed be a wet pond. The purpose of this was to create a more scenic component to be included within the project's open space.

Planning Commissioner Matt Lucarelli asked if this pond could possibly include a fountain for an additional point of interest to coincide with the adjacent gazebo and trail. Mr. Bushon responded that he imagined there would be definite potential for this. Conversely, he indicated that with the pond also serving to replace a portion of existing wetlands on the site that this would need to be handled with care as US Army Corps of Engineer approvals had been obtained.

Mr. Wolfe then stated that this iteration was an improvement over what they saw within the sketch plan submittal in 2020. He indicated that he liked the trail and the lessened density.

Mr. Lucarelli then asked a question regarding the buffer fence adjacent to the southern end of English Arbor Drive included a retaining wall. Senior Planner Moore responded affirmatively.

Mr. Lucarelli asked if it might be possible to push this a bit closer to the property line to allow for an expansion of the trail system within the project. Mr. Hayes responded that the difficulty with such a proposal manifests itself with the amount of buffer plantings that are required to be installed at this location. Mr. Bushon then presented a colored rendering which illustrated the totality of the project buffers.

Mr. Stout then asked about the height of the retaining wall at this location. Mr. Bushon indicated that this retaining wall would be approximately five feet tall. Then, around the backside of the project, closer to the BMP area, the wall could be up to ten feet tall.

Mr. Lucarelli then asked what the average home size would be within the neighborhood. Mr. Hayes stated that the average home size would be from 2,800 square feet to 3,200 square feet.

Ms. Penelope Karagounis, Town of Fort Mill Planning Director, then interjected that Ms. LeeAnn Clark, Town of Fort Mill Stormwater Manager was in attendance if anyone had specific questions for her about the impact of this project. Charmain James Traynor asked Ms. Clark if she was confident that this particular wet pond would be an attractive amenity within this project. Ms. Clark responded that if a wet pond was designed and constructed correctly that it could be very nice. As an example of a well-done pond, she cited the wet pond at Kingsley in Fort Mill.

Mr. Wolfe asked if there was language that needed to be added by Planning Commission to ensure that this pond would be attractive rather than an eyesore. Chairman Traynor indicated that it would be expected that town staff would see that the pond be appropriately designed during the civil construction review stage.

Ms. Clark responded that the design parameters for wet ponds would preclude negative outcomes. However, she noted that at the preliminary plat stage there was little information to evaluate this proposed wet pond. A much more detailed review would occur at the civil construction phase.

Chairman Traynor asked if the HOA would be maintaining all the open space areas. Mr. Hayes responded affirmatively and then stated that he would like to make an additional point. He noted that the property in its current state is very overgrown and contains a dilapidated home and that there have been police calls there in response to vagrants. Additionally, the property is ridden with mice and rats and poses a fire hazard. Thus, for the record he believes that they are taking something that is an extreme eyesore for the community and turning it into something that is an asset.

Mr. Stout then asked what type of surface would compose the walking trail. Mr. Hayes indicated that though he had not finalized this, he anticipated that the surface would consist of gravel.

Chairman Traynor asked if there were any other comments.

Mr. Lettang noted that this project as currently configured was a very nice application of the R-5 zoning district regulations. Planning Director Karagounis then stated that she believed that this property was the last undeveloped R-5 property in the town of Fort Mill.

Mr. Lucarelli asked if there was any comment on the proposed street names of Fordham Court and English Arbor Drive. Planning Commission members indicated that the two proposed street names of Fordham Court and English Arbor Drive were acceptable.

There being no other comments or questions, Chairman Traynor entertained a motion. Mr. Lucarelli made a motion to approve the Patterson Pond Preliminary Plat and street names as submitted. Planning Commission Member Ben Hudgins seconded the motion. Then, by a vote of 5-1, Planning Commission voted to approve the Patterson Pond Preliminary Plat.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 pm.

PC MEETING
NOVEMBER 16, 2021
SIGN-IN SHEET

Name	Affiliation
BRAD SMITH	Thomas: HUTTONS ENGRS.
PHIL HAYES	LAND INVESTMENT RESOURCES
David Cordes	Mason's Bend Homeowner
JOSEPH FERRELLI	Encompass HEALTH
CHRIS PETTIT	TOWN OF FORT MILL ASST. TOWNMGR.
DUSTIN SILVERSTEIN	PRESIDENT
Jennifer Greenon	Design Resource Group