

PRESENT: S.N. Bridge, Chairman
J. Shomo, Vice-Chairman
T. Byerly
T. Cole
J. Curd
D.L. Cobb, Director of Community Development
R. L. Earhart, Senior Planner and Secretary

ABSENT: W.F. Hite
K. A. Shiflett

VIRGINIA: At the Regular Meeting of the Augusta County Planning Commission held on Tuesday, August 12, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room, Augusta County Government Center, Verona, Virginia.

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DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Mr. Bridge stated as there were five (5) members present, there was a quorum.

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MINUTES

Mr. Byerly moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on July 8, 2008. Mr. Curd seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

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Dellie or Berta May Proffitt - Rezoning

A request to rezone from General Agriculture to Single Family Residential with proffers approximately one acre owned by Dellie or Berta May Proffitt located in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Cambridge Drive (Rt. 1502) and York Avenue (Rt. 1503) in Stuarts Draft in the South River District.

Ms. Earhart explained the request. She stated the applicant has submitted the following proffer:

1. The minimum square footage of single family dwellings built on this property shall be 1,400 square feet.

Jim Brenneman, Brenneman Engineering, stated if the property is rezoned, it will then be divided into three (3) separate lots approximately one third of an acre each that will be compatible with the existing neighborhood. Mr. Brenneman stated public sewer will need to be extended, but he has not submitted the plans to the Service Authority at this time as he is waiting on approval from the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Shomo asked Mr. Brenneman if he was extending the sewer line.

Mr. Brenneman answered yes.

Mr. Curd asked who will be responsible for paying for this extension and how far will it be extended.

Mr. Brenneman stated the developer will be responsible for the costs. He stated it will be extended 238 feet to the manhole, and there will be laterals to each house.

Mr. Curd asked if laterals will extend to each of the three (3) lots.

Mr. Brenneman answered yes.

There being no one else desiring to speak, Mr. Bridge declared the public hearing closed.

Mr. Curd stated his only concern was the public sewer, which has already been addressed. He moved to recommend approval of the request with the proffer.

Mr. Byerly seconded the motion.

Mr. Bridge stated he would like to recommend that adjacent lots in this area should also be rezoned to residential.

Ms. Earhart stated the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors can initiate that rezoning. She stated it may be something Mr. Bridge would like to discuss with Mr. Beyeler, Supervisor of the South River District. She stated from a staff perspective there are some incompatible uses that could occur in this neighborhood with the current General Agriculture zoned lots.

The motion carried unanimously.

Fishersville Small Area Plan

Ms. Earhart presented the Fishersville Small Area Plan to the Commission. She stated small area plans were a recommendation of the County's Comprehensive Plan and Fishersville was the first study to be conducted. She explained other small plans will follow, such as another small area plan (i.e. Weyers Cave), topic plan (i.e. Interstate I-81 interchanges), or a village plan (i.e. Churchville or Middlebrook). The idea of the small area plan is to give citizens a better view of the area. She stated it does not supercede the Comprehensive Plan. She stated that it compliments it. Ms. Earhart explained the Planning Commission may move to approve the new land use map to replace the current Fishersville map that is in the County's Comprehensive Plan. She stated this plan covered what was designated as an Urban Service Area or Community Development Area between the cities of Staunton and Waynesboro. Ms. Earhart explained the area covers approximately 16.6 square miles. She stated this area is certainly growing, and the question that the Plan addresses is how the County will accommodate this growth. Ms. Earhart explained the Plan gives a more in-depth view of land use and transportation recommendations. Ms. Earhart further stated the biggest changes in the Fishersville Small Area Plan compared to the County's Comprehensive Plan are the Mixed Use Category and the density range for the Medium Density Residential category. She said that Fishersville Plan recommended a decrease in density from 3 - 6 to 3 - 4 units an acre in the Medium Residential Category. She stated the County's Comprehensive Plan did not define densities for the Mixed Use land designation. She explained under the Fishersville Small Area Plan, there are two types of Mixed Use designations. The first is Neighborhood Mixed Use. Ms. Earhart stated this use will consist of 4 - 6 dwelling units per acre with some limited business development (15% or less). Ms. Earhart stated these areas are shown in light blue on the Land Use Map, and gave examples of Teaverton, Village Green at the Lake, and the Crescent Development property that was recently rezoned. Ms. Earhart stated the second type of Mixed Use will be Community Mixed Use. She explained this area is designated as a dark blue color on the Land Use Map. She explained this use will consist of a higher residential density and more business development (approximately 40% or less). Ms. Earhart gave the land off of Route 250 and Sanger's Lane as an example of this type of use. Ms. Earhart further stated the Plan gives a more detailed road and thoroughfare plan, and a greenways concept plan with the idea that the community will be connected. Ms. Earhart concluded by stating the Fishersville Small Area Plan Public Hearing is really on three (3) separate items and the Commission will need to make a recommendation on each to the Board of Supervisors. (1) Amend the County's Comprehensive Plan to include the Fishersville Small Area Plan as an amendment, (2) text amendments in the Comprehensive Plan to reflect the changes recommended in the Fishersville Small Area Plan, (3) adoption of a revised Planning Policy Area/Future Land Use Map.

Mr. Byerly asked if the citizens' input was consistent.

Ms. Earhart answered consistency in terms of the people who participated, but there were some who did not support the growth called for in the Plan.

Mr. Cole asked in regards to the Ordinance Amendment changes, if this Plan will further define the need for Ordinance changes, or if this Plan will complicate the Ordinance Review Project.

Ms. Earhart answered not necessarily. She stated there will be changes regardless of this adoption. She stated there was a suggestion for a Planned Unit District for projects less than 60 acres. She explained previously, the Mixed Use land designation was vague, in that it did not give the public an idea of what type of development would be coming to any particular area. She stated there was some flexibility taken out from the developers standpoint, but that it will give citizens a better idea of the types of development coming to any particular area. She stated she feels this will have more of an impact than the Ordinance changes.

Mr. Curd stated he feels the Plan is a great idea and the ideas that were supported were excellent. He commended Jeremy Sharp on his work on developing the Plan. He agreed it was a good idea to reduce the density to 3 – 4 units per acre in Fishersville. He asked in regards to greenways, what can the County do to convince current landowners to connect their properties to the proposed greenways.

Ms. Earhart answered it will be the political will. She stated there are some localities that purchase the land from the landowners for parks. She explained the key concept to the greenways system is connectivity, and she can see this more once a park is established.

Mr. Curd stated all the County can do is recommend landowners to “open up”.

Ms. Earhart stated by having it on the Plan, there will be deliberate thought that will need to be given at the rezoning stage. She stated there is a lot of talk about linear parks.

Mr. Curd commented the Plan is very well thought out, and he feels a lot of good ideas came from the meetings and discussions.

Mr. Bridge stated he feels this is a great plan, but he voiced concern with spending. He asked Ms. Earhart if she feels the County will implement the concepts the Plan is recommending if it is adopted.

Ms. Earhart stated the Plan will be effective in giving the community an idea of what to expect in terms of development in Fishersville. According to the County’s Comprehensive Plan, the County wants 80% of its growth in the Urban Service Areas. With this Plan, the County will have to make this area attractive for growth, and in turn keep the development out of the rural areas. She stated she understands Mr. Bridge’s concerns with the spending, but if the County can concentrate its growth and development to certain areas, she stated this will be more cost effective than allowing growth to occur over the entire 970 square miles of the County.

Mr. Bridge asked if a developer develops in the Fishersville area, will they be required to follow these components if the Plan is adopted.

Ms. Earhart stated the Comprehensive Plan remains as a guide to be used in the Planning Commission's and Board of Supervisors' recommendations and decision making.

Mr. Byerly stated there should be a partnership between developers and the County in regards to cost sharing. He stated this partnership will be more cost effective for developments.

Mr. Bridge stated he agrees, but that he does not want to make a recommendation on an idea that will not be cost effective.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Bridge declared the public hearing closed.

Mr. Shomo he stated he feels the developer should be responsible for the majority of the costs of these developments as opposed to the taxpayer.

Mr. Bridge stated he is talking about major infrastructure improvements.

Mr. Byerly stated this is a limiting factor, as development is driven by the market.

Mr. Shomo stated this cannot be a burden placed on the taxpayer.

Mr. Cole stated developers will do what ensures a favorable return. He stated he feels this Plan will be more attractive to developers in that it is a conceptual plan that will give them an idea of where the area is headed.

Mr. Curd moved to recommend approval of the Fishersville Small Area Plan as an amendment to the County's Comprehensive Plan; approval of the revised Planning Policy Area/Future Land Use map incorporating the recommendations of the Fishersville Small Area Plan; and approval of the text amendments to the County's Comprehensive Plan reflecting the changes made as part of the Fishersville Small Area Plan.

Mr. Cole seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

"An Ordinance Amending the Subdivision Ordinance of Augusta County Relating to Fire Flow Requirements."

This ordinance amends §21-7. Water and sewer generally by adding a new paragraph:

- G. Adequate fire hydrants will be installed by the developer and/or builder. Placement of hydrants and adequacy of fire flow shall be designed in accordance with §24-2 of the County Code.

Ms. Earhart explained staff wanted the fire flow requirements to be a part of the Subdivision Ordinance, but when the revisions to the Subdivision Ordinance were adopted in 2006, it was felt there was more research that needed to be done in regards to fire flow. She stated the Fire Flow Ordinance is basically two parts. She stated the Planning Commission will act on the first part, which is an amendment to the Subdivision Ordinance to include the language above. She stated this is something that the fire chief has been doing administratively with the Augusta County Service Authority, but this amendment will put the language and requirements into the County Code. She stated the closer buildings are together, the higher the fire flow requirements. Ms. Earhart stated there will be a provision if the fire flow cannot be met in the entire subdivision it can be reduced at no more than two fire hydrant locations. This amendment will also contain requirements for commercial and industrial sites. She stated the second part of the Fire Flow Ordinance is part of the water and sewer section of the County Code, and therefore does not need to be recommended by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Bridge asked if these standards have been approved by the Fire Chief and the Augusta County Service Authority.

Ms. Earhart answered yes. She stated there are some critical areas in the County, but the Service Authority has identified the areas that need improvements.

Mr. Curd asked if existing subdivisions are required to meet these standards.

Ms. Earhart stated these are for new plats and projects.

Mr. Curd asked if there was anything the Fire Chief or the Augusta County Service Authority could do if there is a current subdivision that does not meet the current standards.

Ms. Earhart answered the Service Authority is working on projects now with the Board of Supervisors on a case by case basis.

Mr. Byerly asked Ms. Earhart to explain a dry hydrant.

Ms. Earhart explained this was where a hydrant would be hooked up to a water source other than a County line, such as a pond. She explained this source would certainly be more difficult to access in inclement weather. She stated this was the concern with the development in Weyers Cave that proposed using a dry hydrant instead of making public water system improvements.

There being no one else desiring to speak, Mr. Bridge declared the public hearing closed.

Mr. Curd moved to recommend approval of the amendment to the County's Subdivision Ordinance.

Mr. Byerly seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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OLD BUSINESS

Ordinance Review Project

Ms. Earhart reminded the Commission of their joint worksession with the Board of Supervisors held on July 30, 2008. She explained drafting of the Ordinances will be the next step in the project if it is authorized to be continued. She stated the Board of Supervisors will have to approve the next phase of the project. After the revisions are drafted, adoption will be the final step. Ms. Earhart provided the Commission with a list of items that the consultants felt will need to be changed or considered in the Ordinance. She explained some highlights of the review process that have been brought to the attention of staff from the consultants. Ms. Earhart reviewed some of the concerns voiced by the developers and stakeholders during the meetings on the project.

Mr. Curd stated he feels Phase I of the review project was money well spent in that it saved staff time and resources. He stated the County should move forward as expeditiously as possible.

Mr. Cole asked if there was a contingency on revisions to the draft.

Ms. Earhart stated at some point the County will have to give the consultants a direction, but revisions are included in the price.

Mr. Bridge stated he feels the worksession was a step in the right direction and he feels the County should move forward with the project.

Mr. Byerly stated the County has hired a creditable consulting group and he too agrees the County should move forward with the project.

Mr. Curd moved to recommend the drafting phase of the Ordinance Review Project be authorized by the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Shomo seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

A. CODE OF VIRGINIA – SECTION 15.2-2310

08-47 Orville L. or Nancy J. Cupp

Mr. Bridge voiced concern about the site being located in a Community Development Area and slated for low density residential development. He moved to recommend to the Board of Zoning Appeals that the site be kept neat and orderly in order to be compatible with the surrounding residential area.

Mr. Curd seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.

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Chairman

Secretary