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Marshall Kennemer

Phil Odom

Durand Standard

Samone Norsworthy

May 26, 2020

The Liberty Consolidated Planning Commission met on Tuesday, May 19, 2020, in the Historic Courthouse, 100 Main St., Hinesville, GA via ZOOM and telephone. Tim Byler, Chairman, called the meeting to order. A motion was made by Durand Standard to accept the minutes from the March 17, 2020 meeting and the motion was seconded by Marshall Kennemer. Motion passed unanimously. Chairman Byler asked for a motion to accept the final agenda. Phil Odom made a motion to approve the final agenda. The motion was seconded by Samone Norsworthy and passed unanimously. The public was notified of the meeting and the agenda was posted in accordance with Georgia Law.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

John Hodges

Lynn Pace

Phil Odom

Tim Byler

Durand Standard

Samone Norsworthy

Marshall Kennemer

ABSENT:

Sarah Baker

Alonzo Bryant

LCPC STAFF PRESENT:

Kelly Wiggins, Executive Assistant

Jeff Ricketson, Executive Director

Nirav Gandhi, Planner II

Gabby Hartage, Zoning Administrator

Mardee Sanchez, Engineering Director

Chairman Byler asked the public to disclose prior to speaking at the podium if they had contributed more than \$250.00 to any elected official who would be voting on these zoning matters.

**1.0 OLD BUSINESS (None)**

**2.0 NEW BUSINESS**

### 3.0 REZONING PETITIONS AND OTHER ZONING-RELATED ITEMS

#### LIBERTY COUNTY

**3.1 Rezoning Petition 2020-011-LC.** A petition was submitted by Nathaniel Jones, owner, to rezone a 2.47-acre portion of property from AR-1 (Agricultural Residential District) to B-2 (General Commercial District). Property is located on E. Oglethorpe Hwy and is further described as LCTM-Parcel 121-077 (portion thereof).

Nirav presented this rezoning to the Planning Commission. Nirav stated that Mr. Jones plans to divide the property into 2 commercial parcels.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval.

MOTION: Durand Standard

SECOND: John Hodges

VOTE: Unanimous in favor

**This rezoning will be heard by the LCBOC on June 2, 2020 at 6 PM.**

#### HINESVILLE

**3.2 Variance 2020-012-H.** A variance application has been filed by Jon M. Dixon, owner, for a lot coverage variance in order to extend and cover a deck on the side of the residence at 950 Gulfstream Road, further described as LCTM-Parcel 045C-068. Property consists of 8,320 sq. ft. and is zoned R-4 (Single-, Two-Family Dwelling District) in Hinesville.

Gabby presented this zoning petition to the Planning Commission. The owner is proposing to close in a 9 X 37 ft. deck. A lot coverage of 25 percent is allowed. With this enclosure the owner will be at 31 percent lot coverage. The owner has stated that he would like to enclose this area for an exercise room for his wife for her physical therapy.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

Commissioner Pace stated that generally she would not approve of this but since it does not affect the neighborhood, she is willing to go along with this variance.

MOTION: Phil Odom

SECOND: Marshall Kennemer

VOTE: Unanimous in favor

**This variance will go before the Hinesville on June 4, 2020 at 3 PM.**

#### HINESVILLE

**3.3 Special Permit Use 2020-013-H.** A special permit use has been filed by Shawn Brown with Extreme Audio, applicant, to have a special permit use for doing miscellaneous installation of car accessories (e.g. audio, custom wheels, tinting) at property currently owned by the Ameris

Bank at 102 W. General Screven Way further described as LCTM-Parcel 056C-131. Property is zoned C-2 (General Commercial District) and consists of 0.86 acres of land, more or less.

Gabby presented this rezoning to the Planning Commission. The applicant will use the property for the installation of car related items, such as: radios, window tinting, car rims, etc. They will also install a building on the property to perform the installation to vehicles.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval with standard conditions and the following special condition: Prior to the installation of the bay, the site will have to go before the Design Review Board for approval.

Corey Weeks and Shawn Brown, owners, stated that they have outgrown the space they are operating in and would like to move to this building because it is very close to their existing location.

James Rogers with Ameris Bank stated that he was just present to represent the seller if there are any questions.

Marcus Sack stated that he feels Mr. Weeks hit the high points. Marcus stated that the parking at this location will help the owners with their business as well.

MOTION: Durand Standard to approve with standard and special conditions.

SECOND: Phil Odom

VOTE: Unanimous in favor

**This Special Permit Use will go before the Hinesville City Council on June 1, 2020 at 3 PM.**

**3.4 Rezoning Petition 2020-014-H.** A rezoning petition has been filed by Melanie Thompson, CEO, on behalf of the Hinesville Housing Authority, to rezone 11.76 acres of land, more or less, from R-4 (Single-, Two-Family Dwelling District) to R-A-1 (Multi-Family Dwelling District) for a replacement of existing buildings with new one-story and multi-story apartment buildings on property off E. G. Miles Pkwy and Yellow Pine Street, further described as LCTM-Parcel 057A-038.

Gabby presented this rezoning petition to the Planning Commission. Gabby stated that the projects will be built in phases.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval with standard and the following special conditions:

- A more detailed traffic impact study shall be submitted with site plan.
- Mitigation measures as outlined in the traffic impact study shall be incorporated into the site plan including, but not limited to, a center turning lane.

Commissioner Odom stated that several years back the State did a safety study and asked if this was included. Jeff stated that study did not cover this area. Jeff Ricketson stated that this is a high priority in the long-range transportation plan in the City of Hinesville. Commissioner Odom asked if there were plans for GDOT to conduct a safety study in this area. Jeff stated that at this time there is not any funding in place for a study. Jeff stated that he wanted to reinforce the requirement of the center lane to be installed on E.G. Miles in front of the development. The staff's recommendation is totally dependent on them being able work out the placement of the center lane. The traffic engineer himself stated that would be almost nearly impossible. They would have to work with the City and State to get this center lane installed.

Ben Marshall with M and A Design gave an overview of the development. Commissioner Pace stated that she was concerned about pedestrian traffic from parcel to parcel. Is that a problem? Mr. Marshall stated that they will have sidewalk connections for the pedestrians. Carlen Williams, developer, stated that she has several team members on the call as well. Carlen stated that she is available. Chairman Byler asked for any questions for the Engineer or Architect at this time. There were none. Chairman Byler moved on to the public that had called and signed up to speak at the meeting. Britta D'Angelo lives at 543 Wellington Way and stated that she is concerned for the quality of life and the removal of the tree line. She is also concerned about traffic. She also asked how long the traffic study will take and she would like an environmental study.

Margit Velasco spoke against the development. She stated that their neighborhood is already difficult to come and go from. They are very fond of the tree canopy and the animals that live in there. She appreciates the 50-foot buffer zone but does not feel like that is enough. A development of 123 units is too much for this area. She also stated that a traffic light is needed. Denise Williams spoke in favor of this project and feels that this is a good idea. She has been a resident within the Housing Authority with two daughters. She has since moved to another neighborhood and it is located next to low income housing and it has not affected the value of her home. She states that there is a large need for housing and is proud to support the Cedar Walk Development.

Douglas Nunan stated that he is against the development and is a resident of Arlington Park for 17 years. He has the same opinion of Mrs. Velasco. He stated that he was also worried about the wildlife that lives there.

Bruce Myers stated that he is against the development. Mr. Myers asked if any of the Commissioners lived in the area and stated that if they do not live there, they should not be able to vote. He stated that poor people need a place to live but at the same time he guarantees that none of the Commission would allow a 200-unit development in their backyard. This should be a win-win for a good solution. He states that picking this parcel of land makes no sense to him. He states if they put 200-unit low income houses in there, it will change the character of the neighborhood. He states he grew up poor and he knows that poor people commit crimes. Mr. Bruce asked why you people are trying to ruin his neighborhood. Highway 84 is already set up. A 50-foot buffer is a joke. Mr. Myers stated that the Planning Commission should go by the Golden Rule. Chairman Byler stated that if any of the Commissioners lived in Arlington, they would have to recuse themselves from the vote.

Gloria Dozier stated that she is a resident of Regency apartments with the Housing Authority. She is also a member of the Liberty County CHDO. Many people have spoken about what is best for the residents. She states that she is here to speak from experience. This project is important. People are trying to survive off the wages they earn and find affordable housing. She stated that she is grateful that the Hinesville Authority can provide her with HUD housing and is grateful for the community. She stated that she does not understand why this is an issue since the HHA already owns the property.

Joe Ford, Chairman of the Hinesville Housing Authority. Joe stated that the HHA was created in Hinesville in 1959 and called for housing to be available to anyone for a place to stay regardless of race, age, social economic status, or background. Currently the HHA has 205 units with no vacancies. Mr. Ford stated that they currently have 1300 people on their waiting list. He states that the new affordable housing blends in well with the higher-ranking homes. He states that the HHA feels this project will enhance the value for everyone's property. He understands that there are neighbor's that do not want this near them, however, there are still people that need a place to stay and would appreciate our consideration of approval.

Lynn Lampi stated that he lives on Wellington Way and wanted to know which streets would be used by this project for entrance access to the project. Jeff stated that Gassaway would remain



the main access street, but access could also be gained by Yellow Pine or Arlington Drive. Mr. Lampi stated that at the beginning of the workday and the end of the workday, traffic is backed up and hard to get in and out. Mr. Lampi stated that the entrance to Yellow Pine is a mistake and will get jammed up. He also stated that he is concerned about property values.

Pam Donald stated that she agrees that people need housing but not in this area. She states she also came from low income housing and she has found that people stay there for 20 to 25 years when it set up to be a transient place. You are supposed to come there to get better to and to move on. Some people homestead in those and they are high crime areas. She also concurs with Dr. Bruce Myers. Ms. Donald stated that there are a lot of retirees that live in their neighborhood and a lot of them suffer from PTSD. They appreciate the quietness and she is concerned for the emotional state of the veterans that are there and they use these buffer zones as sanctuaries. Ms. Donald stated that with 125 units there will be much more than 125 cars which will increase the traffic issue as well.

Chairman Byler stated that there has been a preliminary traffic study performed and there will be a requirement for a new traffic study and our decision will be based on the traffic study being performed. Gabby stated that the preliminary study showed 900 additional trips but split up during the day and would require a decel lane.

Petra Brooks lives on Arlington Drive. She states that no one disputes that everyone deserves a safe place to live. However, Arlington has become somewhat of a retirement community. It is a sanctuary and very quiet. We all know each other, and it is a green space. She states that they all love their trees. She feels there is not enough space at this parcel for this development. The traffic is horrible when attempting to take a left turn. She said many times they turn right and go down the road and turn around to stay safe.

Robert Brooks stated that the entrances and exits to Arlington and Windhaven subdivision with the additional units will clog up traffic. He also feels like with these units the crime will increase. He feels this development will ruin their quality of life. He does not understand why someone would pick this area to add 125 units in the middle of two established neighborhoods. Sherry Landers stated that she lives in Northwest Woods and would like to know if there will be buffers for her area as well. She is not against affordable housing, but she does not think that this area in the middle of two other subdivisions is the best place to put an additional living quarters. Eventually when they start construction, she will not be able to get into her subdivision by Yellow Pine because they may close Yellow Pine for construction. She asked where the sewage will go. She agrees with Dr. Bruce and Mr. Brooks.

Telbert Roberts stated that he lives on Brockington Circle and he agrees with all his neighbors that have spoke against it. He states that we can talk to the police and bus drivers to see how hard it is to get in and out of this subdivision. Mr. Roberts stated that OMI will need to expand eventually and wondered where they will go. He states they should try to locate in another area. Tony and Patricia Ragland stated that they are against this development.

W.T. Barrett states that he is a retired veteran of Desert Storm and Vietnam and agrees with the traffic issues. He states he noticed that they are building three sections and the problem he has is that he has lived here for so long and is concerned about the noise, traffic, and value of home. It is a wonderful neighborhood as it is now and feel like they are being pushed out of it and they spent a lifetime getting what they have.

Melanie Thompson, the applicant, stated that she is the CEO for the HHA and is very excited about the opportunity to realize the new possibilities for Hinesville and Liberty County. She stated that it made sense to use this existing land to update and provide housing with over 1400 people on the waiting list. Cedar Walk was built around 1954 and existed before Arlington Subdivision. Currently this property houses 29 people on 11 acres. We submitted a tax credit rezoning application last year, but we were not properly zoned at that point, so we withdrew. We heard the concerns from Arlington park, and we reduced the number of units to house

people to assure the privacy could be maintained and agreed to leave the buffers to show that we are good stewards. But as a housing authority it is our main goal to provide housing for people. Ms. Thompson said that they took their time to redevelop their plan to address all the concerns to make a wonderful design that we could be proud of. We respected the community, but we also had to give credence to why we exist and our purpose to serving others. We are proud of this opportunity and project.

Commissioner Norsworthy asked how many parking spaces are counted in this project and how many vehicles per unit are allowed. Ben Marshall stated that based on 123 units, the required number of parking spaces is 216 and we are showing 220.

Commissioner Pace stated that from a planner's perspective it is in a good place for housing like this. Its near services, its near public transportation. She stated that she likes the phases and feels the people involved have done a very good job planning this neighborhood.

Commissioner Kennemer stated that he agrees with Commissioner Pace but is still majorly concerned about the traffic. He states that the turn lane should be installed before they start construction.

Commissioner Norsworthy stated that she agrees with Commissioner Kennemer but along with him the traffic issues are still a great concern. She thinks that the amount of buildings on this space make it tight and worried about the greenspace but does think it is a good plan.

Commissioner Odom added if this plat far exceeds the 20 percent minimum requirement for greenspace but feels this will be better for the community in the long run.

Chairman Byler stated that E.G. Miles has been a problem for a long time. He pointed out that this is contingent upon the traffic study and the turning lane.

MOTION: Lynn Pace made motion to approve with Special condition.

SECOND: Phil Odom

VOTE: All in favor with Commissioner Norsworthy against.

**This rezoning will be heard by the Hinesville City Council on June 4, 2020 at 3 PM.**

**3.5 Variance 2020-015-H.** A variance application to the 35 ft. building setback has been filed by Jessica Manhollan with Security Vault Works, Inc., applicant. The property is the Crossroad Shopping Plaza and is located at the intersection of E. General Screven Way and W. Oglethorpe Hwy. It is further described as LCTM-Parcel 057B-021. Property owner is Hinesville Center, LLC. This variance is for a new drive-up island ATM machine. The actual ATM machine is encroaching approximately 3.2 ft. into the 35 ft. required building setback along E. General Screven Way.

Gabby presented this variance to the planning commission.

**RECOMMEDATION:** Approval

MOTION: Samone Norsworthy

SECOND: Marshall Kennemer

VOTE: Unanimous in favor

**This will go before the Hinesville City Council on June 4, 2020 at 3 PM.**

#### **4.0 SITE PLANS, PRELIMINARY PLATS & FINAL PLATS**

**4.1 Preliminary Plat for Auburn Ridge Phase 2.** Request for preliminary plat approval by Dryden Enterprises for a 46-lot single family subdivision on 20.12 acres in Liberty County.

Mardee presented this preliminary plat to the Planning Commission.

**RECOMMENDATION: Approval with standard and the following special conditions:**

1. Prior to final plat approval, a recombination plat of the four properties shall be recorded.
2. No adjustments to the drainage area abutting lots #33-35 shall be allowed which require a drainage easement on these lots.

Commissioner Norsworthy asked if there would be a bridge built over the wetlands or is a road being built through it and Mardee replied that the road is being built through it. Commissioner Odom asked who would be retain ownership of the wetlands and would the wetlands be separated as another parcel. Mardee stated that the HOA will own the wetlands and the ponds but there will be easements for the county to maintain.

Marcus Sack with M.E. Sack Engineering stated that he feels that there is no need for the special condition and the language is not correct. He stated that its not a special condition. Its already a rule. Mardee stated that maybe the language does not explain. It is just more to make the developer aware of these conditions and that the three lots are at the bare minimum. Marcus stated that is true but not uncommon.

MOTION: Durand Standard made a motion to approve with only special condition #1.

SECOND: Phil Odom

VOTE: Unanimous in favor.

**This preliminary plat will be heard by the LCBOC on June 2, 2020 at 6 PM.**

**4.2 Final Plat for the Columns at Independence North Phase 1.** Request for a final plat approval from Liberty Properties and Holding Co., Inc., for a 27-lot single-family subdivision on 12.22 acres in Hinesville.

Mardee presented this final plat to the Planning Commission.

**RECOMMENDATION: Approval with standard and the following special conditions:**

1. Prior to consideration by the Hinesville City Council, the following shall be submitted:
  - A. Bond for primary improvements - \$26,463
  - B. Bond for secondary improvements - \$43,632
  - C. Bond for maintenance - \$48,194
  - D. Acceptable record drawings
2. Prior to acceptance of the improvements being dedicated to the City, the improvements shall be satisfactorily installed.

3. Certificates of occupancy shall not be issued for lots 10 – 12 or 23 – 27 until Gambrell Road is no longer a dead-end.

MOTION: John Hodges with standard and special conditions.

SECOND: Phil Odom

VOTE: Unanimous in favor

**This final plat is tentatively scheduled to go before Hinesville City Council on June 4, 2020 at 3 PM.**

**5.0 INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**6.0 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**7.0 OTHER COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**7.1 Director's Report**

Jeff Ricketson, Executive Director, presented the Planning Commission with an update of last month's actions. Jeff first thanked the staff and the Planning Commissioners for helping to get these virtual meetings organized. Jeff informed the Planning Commissioners that the RV Ordinance is still parked at this time with the LCBOC. The City of Hinesville approved Jim Johns variance and the well site for Griffin Park. The assisted living center was approved by the Hinesville City Council also.

Chairman Byler thanked the staff and Commissioners for operating under these circumstances.

**8.0 ADJOURN**

MOTION: Marshall Kennemer

SECOND: Phil Odom

VOTE: Unanimous



\_\_\_\_\_  
**Tim Byler, Chairman**



\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**



\_\_\_\_\_  
**Jeff Ricketson, Secretary to the Board**