

SPALDING COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
March 29, 2016

The Spalding County Planning Commission held its regular monthly meeting on March 29, 2016 at 7:00 P.M. in Room 108 of the Spalding County Courthouse Annex. Members present were: John Youmans, Chair, presiding; Bruce Ballard; Walter Cox and Frank Harris. Sonny Eubanks was not present.

Also present were: Chad Jacobs, Community Development Director; Newton Galloway, Zoning Attorney and Yvonne Langford to record the minutes.

Mr. Youmans called the meeting to order, introduced the members of the Planning Commission and invited those present wanting to address the Board regarding any matter to sign in on the appropriate form.

Application #FLA-16-01: SW North Griffin, LLC has requested a future land use map change from Village Node to Community Crossroads for the following: 3470 Jackson Road (2 acres located in Land Lot 79 of the 2nd Land District).

Application #16-02Z: William H. Shapard, Jr., Sally Shapard Peek, Emily Shapard King, Robert P. Shapard III, Owners – SW North Griffin, LLC, Agent – 3470 Jackson Road (2 acres located in Land Lot 79 of the 2nd Land District) – requesting a rezoning from R-2, Single Family Residential and AR-1, Agricultural and Residential, to C-1, Highway Commercial.

These two applications were discussed jointly and voted separately.

Melissa Griffis – Rosenzweig, Jones, Horne & Griffis – 32 South Court Square – Newnan, Georgia
Ms. Griffis said this application and site plan was originally prepared with the intent of the Village Node zoning. It did not work and they revised the plan. All that is under consideration now is for the location of a Dollar General on this corner. With the Village Node issue their understanding is they need a master site plan. The owners were not in the position to address all of the acreage they own but are prepared to address this corner. Colin Edwards who is with the firm that is the developer for Dollar General is present. Mark Peek is also present representing the Shapard Family. Mr. Edwards and Mr. Peek will speak and if there are any questions, they are all prepared to answer them.

Colin Edwards – 4151 Ashford-Dunwoody Road – Atlanta, Georgia
Mr. Edwards said they are the developers regarding this corner and the Dollar General stores around Georgia. They have been working on this corner for almost a year with the family and for approximately six months with Spalding County and the Planning Staff. They have tried to develop the property with the Village Node zoning but have not been able to develop a satisfactory plan for this tract. They have developed a plan they feel is a fair compromise with the “bells and whistles” of a Village Node but under the C-1 designation. Mr. Edwards provided a rendering of the proposed Dollar General facility. He noted it was not the average suburban rural Dollar General store. It is a four sided brick building. They have added parapets to shield the equipment on the roof and false windows and accents to break up the elevations. They used the architecture style that is in keeping with the Village Node concept. Mr. Edwards reviewed the proposed site plan. He noted this location is not served by sewer which is a requirement of the Village Node zoning. They want to develop this as a quality project. Dollar General is excited about this area and would like this to be an example for this intersection as a quality development. They want this to be an example to encourage other development to be held to the same standard.

Mark Peek – 754 East College Street – Griffin, Georgia

Mr. Peek said he is an attorney and works and lives in Griffin. He reviewed the history of the acquisition and ownership of this property. The family purchased the property 38 years ago. One of the owners lives 1.9 miles from this property via the road. He has lived in this area for 55 years. The family is very “wed” to the area and the community. During their ownership of the property, they have witnessed the changes to include the two food/convenience stores added, Heron Bay, Sun City, and the curb on 155 rounded out. What they have not seen over the years is any large developer wanting to develop this area or anyone wanting to build a Village Node type project. There has been no Starbucks, no doctor’s offices, no Barnes and Noble, drycleaners or anything to go into that Village Node or walkable area. With 300 houses in the area, there is not a lot of walking. The thing that is important to the family is that they own another 50 acres, and they are not looking to put a “junky” store on the corner. They want something very nice. They tried to develop under the Village Node but it did not “pan out”. They want to do these two acres as commercial. If that is not going to work, they want some help with this corner waiting to be developed. They have two old convenience food stores and non-conforming use mobile home parks sitting there. They do not need to leave this property to fallow for another 38 years for development to “leap-frog” over other development and open space between them before they get here.

Others that had signed the list to speak had no further comments.

Chad Jacobs gave the staff review. He gave the history of this property and its development into the Village Node zoning. They have tried to work with the applicants to keep the Village Node, but there are the issues of water and sewer and the master plan. The design of the proposed store is fantastic. Their intent is to do a quality development. One of the concerns with development is “piece meal” development. Even though they like the building plan, they are still recommending denial. Their concerns are with regard to this area 10 and 20 years from now. You will still have all the Village Node in this area which will then have a two-acre crossroad commercial hole in the middle. The economy is beginning to show improvement. He reviewed the permits that have been recently issued. The County Commission approved zoning in the eastern part of the county for a warehouse operation that will bring between 300 and 400 trucks per day and 500 jobs. This will be the beginning of development in the eastern part of the county.

Each of the members of the Planning Commission commented on this application. Mr. Cox wanted to know if the plan presented could be considered a master plan for this area. Mr. Jacobs said the plan that was submitted is considered to be a more suburban type plan than a Village Node. The overall plan does not fit the Village Node concept. Mr. Cox said he would like to understand the water and sewer issue. Is it realistic to have the Village Node concept in this particular area? There are not a lot of houses in this area, and it appears it will not happen in the near future. Mr. Jacobs said he would not have imagined Heron Bay and Sun City Peachtree when he came to the county 12 years ago.

Mr. Harris said he has never been a big fan of the Village Node for Spalding County because it totally ignores the demographics here. It may work well in other areas and it might eventually work in Spalding but you are looking at a totally different climate here. We have lost a lot of manufacturing employers and probably will not get them back. If we are going to support our county, we are going to have to make available the facilities for people to build structures that will add to the tax digest. We are going to get people in our industrial parks, but you are not going to get people with the same type of employment that the mills provided. He has no problem with this particular piece of property and recommending that the future land use plan be changed. The 2004 plan was very optimistic but in today’s economy it is unrealistic.

Mr. Ballard said he was around in 2004, and at that time, the plan was a good plan. There is more emphasis and sustainability for the Village Nodes to “take off” around the Heron Bay and Sun City Peachtree areas. This area was a secondary location in 2004. He commends the Shapards for trying to work through the process the way it was intended based on the zoning. He understands there are limitations there with the water and sewer issues. There are a limited number of homes in the area and

walkability is limited. They have planned a project that could have the Village Node type concept when it becomes a viable need in the area. He considers this a good faith effort by planning a nice building.

Mr. Youmans said he considers this to be a nicely planned building. He was on the Planning Commission in 2004 and things do not always work out the way you think. He feels the way this is planned it will fit in with the Village Node concept. Currently, there is very little infrastructure on the ground. He does have a concern regarding the accessibility for trucks to enter and access the property. A lot of effort has been put on the design of the building and he assumes they have considered that in the design.

Mr. Jacobs said they will work with the applicant to get the best possible with the C-1 zoning, but this is not just these two acres. His concern is the balance of the property in the larger tract. He is concerned with both the micro and macro levels.

Mr. Galloway said if there is commercial on three corners, the Village Node is gone.

Discussion continued regarding the non-conforming uses in the area. It was further noted that there will be changes regarding the footprint of the proposed building because there are different requirements regarding construction in C-1 zoning.

MOTION

Mr. Harris made a motion to approve Application #FLA-16-01. The motion passed on a second by Mr. Ballard with Mr. Ballard, Mr. Cox, Mr. Harris and Mr. Youmans voting for the motion.

MOTION

Mr. Ballard made a motion to approve Application #16-02Z. The motion passed on a second by Mr. Harris with Mr. Ballard, Mr. Cox, Mr. Harris and Mr. Youmans voting for the motion.

S/D #09-011: Consider extension of preliminary plat for The Lakes at Green Valley – Griffin-Spalding Development Authority, Owner – expires March 30, 2016.

Mr. Jacobs said this is the usual request to extend a preliminary plat. There is a lot of activity in The Lakes at Green Valley and the recommendation is for approval.

MOTION

Mr. Cox made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harris, to approve S/D #09-011. The motion passed with Mr. Ballard, Mr. Cox, Mr. Harris and Mr. Youmans voting for the motion.

S/D #06-03: Consider extension of preliminary plat for Holliday Pass Subdivision – Henry H. Chapman, Owner – expires April 25, 2016.

Mr. Jacobs said this plat had been through 4 previous extensions. The recommendation is for a two-year extension.

MOTION

Mr. Cox made a motion to Approve S/D #06-03. The motion passed on a second by Mr. Ballard with Mr. Ballard, Mr. Cox, Mr. Harris and Mr. Youmans voting for the motion.

Amendment to UDO #A-16-01: Article 2. General Definitions – Section UUU, VVV, WWW and XXX – amend definition of yard, front yard, side yard and rear yard.

This is an amendment to clarify the definition of yards. There could be a misinterpretation of the location of the front yard.

Mr. Galloway said there is the potential for a misinterpretation that the front yard could mean just the setback. This could create an issue regarding location of accessory buildings. This revision is to clarify that interpretation.

MOTION

Mr. Harris made a motion to approve the Amendment to UDO #A-16-01. The motion passed on a second by Mr. Cox with Mr. Ballard, Mr. Cox, Mr. Harris and Mr. Youmans voting for the motion.

MINUTES

Mr. Ballard made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2016 meeting. The motion passed on a second by Mr. Cox with Mr. Ballard, Mr. Cox, Mr. Harris and Mr. Youmans voting for the motion.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Ballard and a second by Mr. Youmans with Mr. Ballard, Mr. Cox, Mr. Harris and Mr. Youmans voting for the motion.

John Youmans – Chair

Yvonne M. Langford - Recorder