

SPALDING COUNTY APPEALS BOARD
Regular Meeting
December 12, 2013

The Spalding County Appeals Board held its regular monthly meeting on December 12, 2013 at 7:00 P.M. in Room 108 of the Spalding County Courthouse Annex. Members present were: Michelle Cannon, Chairman, presiding; Ed Brown; Curtis Keys; Robert Lattimore and Bill Slaughter.

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

Ms. Cannon called the meeting to order and invited anyone present that was not the applicant and wanted to address the Board on any of the applications to come forward and sign the request form.

Application #13-12S: New Salem Baptist Church, Inc., Owner – 4651 Fayetteville Highway (34.82 acres located in Land Lot 110 of the 4th Land District) – requesting a Special Exception to allow a church, synagogue, chapel, or other place of religious worship including educational building, parsonage, church-related nursery or kindergarten, and other related uses meeting development standards in the AR-1 District.

Mike Barnes – 551 Lakeside Drive – Williamson, Georgia

Mr. Barnes is the minister of the New Salem Baptist Church. The New Salem Church had a fire on December 26, 2012 that destroyed their entire facility. They want to build a new church on this property that was gifted to them in January of 2013. They want to continue to grow and serve the community and build a facility that will allow them to reach their goal.

Farron Payton – 107 Kingston Court – Did not speak

Rev. Dan Jones – 105 Windsor Drive

Rev. Jones is the minister of the Lighthouse Baptist Church 2477 Highway 92 which is a church in the same vicinity of the proposed church. He said it is not his desire to argue with other Christians. What he has to say does not have anything to do with meanness or anything like that. It has to do with ethics. The Lighthouse Baptist Church is almost right next door to this property and he feels it is wrong. New Salem and Lighthouse are both Baptist churches and belong to the same associations, South River Association. They are both Southern Baptist Churches. It does not seem right to him to build this church next door to the Lighthouse Church. The Lord says in the Bible he will fight our battles and he is going to let him fight the battle here tonight if there is a battle. He is leaving it to the board members because he thinks they are intelligent with common sense and ethics. He asked them to pray about their decision because their church has been there since 1980. He asked the board to deny the application.

Wes Walden – 124 Briarcliff Road

Mr. Walden is a member of the Lighthouse Church. He thanked the board members for the opportunity to speak. He had a poster with the Lighthouse Church identified and the location of the proposed church identified. The tract was initially a 65-acre tract which has a tract cut out for this church. He also identified the property they currently have. The tract that burned was 1.96 acres. He identified two other tracts; one was 1.75 acres and the other was 4 acres. He does not see why that is not adequate space for them to build. He is a taxpayer in Spalding County and pays between \$4,000 and \$5,000 in taxes a year not including his vehicles. He discussed the loss in revenue when the 34 acres is removed from the tax digest. His concern was that when that revenue is lost it will have to be recuperated somewhere and it will have to come from the residents of Spalding County. He has no animosity against this church or any of its members. He asked the Board to deny the request.

Kathy Walden – 124 Briarcliff Road

Ms. Walden said her husband had covered everything she wanted to say.

Wanda Steele – 167 Davidson Drive

Ms. Steele had concerns regarding the traffic impact. She drives this route everyday going to work. There is a lot of work going on in the area that will generate additional traffic.

Ms. Cannon said the staff report will answer some of her concerns. When Mr. Jacobs completes his report, if Ms. Steele has other concerns, she can address them at that time.

Chad Jacobs said the location of the church will be on Highway 92 which is the east/west corridor on the north side. This request is for a special exception on a master plan they have submitted for a total of 78,800 SF at full development of the church. This will be done in two phases. The first phase will be 28,800 SF and phase II will be 50,000 SF. If anything changes, they will have to make application again. In addition to the square footage mentioned, there is also a recreation field and outdoor pavilion that is factored in the overall site plan. The request is compliant with the requirements for a church. It meets all the minimum requirements for acreage and setbacks. The staff recommendation is for conditional approval with the conditions as follows:

1. Site lighting shall be designed so that it will not glare into adjacent residential areas or public rights-of-way;
2. An acceleration/deceleration lane shall be provided at the church entrance provided GDOT concurs;
3. Any addition or expansion of the use not in compliance with the submitted plan shall require an additional special exception;
4. Temporary buildings that were approved for use at 776 Vaughn School Road shall be removed at the time a certificate of occupancy is issued for the subject property.

Mr. Jacobs discussed the traffic count for this highway.

Mr. Barnes said they will build the facilities as they have the need. They may never build Phase II. At the suggestion of the people, he talked with at the county they prepared a site plan for the total build-out of the property.

Mr. Jacobs said anytime they have a church that applies for a permit to build, they always recommend they do a master plan for the entire tract, and if they are able to complete their facilities without changes, they do not have to make application again. It is easier to look at the entire plan rather than in pieces. It also helps the county to plan services and infrastructure throughout the county.

MOTION

Mr. Slaughter made a motion to approve Application #13-12S with the conditions as recommended by staff. The motion passed on a second by Mr. Brown with Mr. Brown, Ms. Cannon, Mr. Hardwick, Mr. Keys, Mr. Lattimore and Mr. Slaughter voting for the motion.

MINUTES

Mr. Brown made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lattimore, to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2013 meeting. The motion passed with Mr. Brown, Ms. Cannon, Mr. Hardwick, Mr. Keys, Mr. Lattimore and Mr. Slaughter voting for the motion.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Brown and a second by Mr. Lattimore with Mr. Brown, Ms. Cannon, Mr. Keys, Mr. Lattimore and Mr. Slaughter voting for the motion.

Michelle Cannon – Chairman

Yvonne M. Langford - Recorder