

**Statesboro Planning Commission
Minutes
February 12, 2008**

The February 12, 2008 meeting of the Statesboro Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Sharon Tracy at 5:07 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. Other Planning Commission members present were Ray Hendley, Wyatt Johnson, Lewis Stewart, and Norman Wells. City staff members present were Jim Shaw, Planning Director, and Bruce Waldron, City Planner.

Mr. Johnson moved to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2008 meeting as presented. Mr. Stewart seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

The first item of new business was Application RZ 08-02-01; Mattie M. Lewis requests rezoning from R-4 (High Density Residential) to CR (Commercial Retail) and a special exception for a commercial storage facility for 204 Martin Luther King Drive.

Mr. Shaw provided the Commission a summary of the staff report. He stated the property is split by a zoning district line. The southern portion that contains an auto repair business is zoned CR. The northern portion which is undeveloped is zoned R-4. The applicant is requesting to rezone all of the property to CR to allow the construction of a self-storage facility. The storage use will require approval as a special exception. He stated the properties to the north contain residential uses and the property to the east is part of Elm Street Church of God. The properties to the west contain a mix of residential and commercial uses. He stated the existing R-4 zoning provides a transition between the residential and commercial uses in the area. Rezoning this property would eliminate that transition. The self-storage facility itself may not be compatible with the existing residential uses. Lighting and activity occurring as part of the business could have a negative impact on the adjacent properties. If the rezoning and special exception requests are approved, conditions should be included to limit the hours of operation, regulate the lighting, and increase the buffer requirements. He stated staff recommends denial of the rezoning and special exception.

Mattie Lewis, the applicant, presented information about her request. She stated she has tried to rent or lease the muffler shop since her husband's death four years ago, but has been unsuccessful in generating enough income to take care of her needs. The self-storage business is something she can take care of herself. It should not cause any problems for the residences in the area.

Mr. Stewart asked if any plans had been drawn for the proposal. Ms. Lewis said the storage company had drawn a plan.

Mr. Johnson stated he had mixed feelings about the request. He asked if a plan had been provided with the application. Mr. Shaw stated a plan was not provided and was not required for this request. Mr. Johnson stated he doubted the property would ever be developed with any of the R-4 permitted uses. He stated he was disappointed a concept plan was not provided to give the Commission members an idea of how the development would look. Ms. Lewis said if given the time, she would be able to have a plan drawn.

No one spoke against the request.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to table the request until the applicant provides a concept plan of the proposed development. Mr. Stewart seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The second item of new business was Application V 08-02-02; Marlin Nesmith requests an 8 foot variance to the 25 foot front yard setback to permit construction of a front porch at 306 Gentilly Road.

Mr. Shaw provided the Commission a summary of the staff report. He stated the property is a nonconforming lot because it is approximately half the minimum lot size of 15,000 square feet. The main part of the house complies with the front setback requirement, but is right at the 25-foot minimum. The applicant has undertaken significant renovations to the house and did obtain a permit prior to beginning the work. During the project it was decided to replace and expand the front porch. The building inspector did not realize it was not included on the original permit and did not stop its construction. The porch extends eight feet from the front of the house, so it is 17 feet from the front property line. He stated the limited size of the lot relative to the zoning district, the placement of the existing structure, and the impact of a previous road widening project limit the options for additions to the house. He stated staff recommends approval of the requested variance.

Garland Nesmith, the applicant, presented information about his request. He stated he and his wife live next door and bought this house with the intention of remodeling it for him and his wife to live in. The old porch needed to be replaced and he wanted one large enough for his grandchildren to use. He stated he was unaware of the setback requirement until notified by the City staff.

No one spoke against the request.

Mr. Stewart made a motion to approve the variance as presented. Mr. Hendley seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The third item of new business was Application RZ 08-02-03; Clark O'Barr on behalf of Bird Lane LLC requests rezoning from PUD / R-4 with a density of 6 units and 24 bedrooms per acre to PUD / R-4 with a density of 8 units and 21 bedrooms per acre for the property at 4 and 6 Bird Lane and 5 Lanier Drive.

Mr. Shaw provided the Commission a summary of the staff report. He stated the majority of the property was rezoned in September 2005 to PUD/R-4 with a density of six units and 24 bedrooms per acre. The property between Bird Lane and Lanier Drive was annexed and rezoned to the same classification last year. The property to the north is zoned R-4 and has been developed at a density of approximately twelve units per acre. The property to the south is zoned R-10. When that property and the subject property were first discussed for annexation, the staff recommended that the density of development decrease from north to south. He stated the property has been sold in the past year and the new owner wishes to develop it differently, which led to this request to change the density from six units and 24

bedrooms per acre to eight units and 21 bedrooms per acre. The application form states 28 bedrooms per acre, but the applicant subsequently submitted a different unit and bedroom count. Staff modified the request to match it. The applicant has stated that he wants the 28 bedrooms per acre.

Mr. Shaw stated the last concept plan submitted for the request shows 42 townhouse style buildings and a clubhouse. Sidewalks are provided throughout the development. Vehicular access will be from a dedicated entrance off Lanier near the northern property line. Access will also be provided through one of the entrances into the development to the south. Steps have already been taken to legally close Bird Lane and it will be eliminated as part of this development. He stated a rendering of one of the buildings was submitted with the application. It indicates the building exteriors will utilize a mix of materials and colors as well as a variety of architectural features to differentiate the individual units. He stated staff recommends approval of the zoning change with the following conditions:

1. The development will be limited to 8 units and 22 bedrooms per acre.
2. The design of the development will be in substantial compliance with the submitted site plan.
3. The design of the residential buildings will be in substantial compliance with the submitted rendering.
4. Seventy-five percent of each building façade shall be covered with brick, stone, synthetic stone, or comparable material.

Clark O'Barr with Maxwell-Reddick and Associates, the applicant, presented information about the request. He stated he is requesting eight units and 28 bedrooms per acre. The reason for the additional units and bedrooms is to offset the additional cost incurred by constructing a nicer development than typically found. The development will have mostly two-story buildings, unlike the three-story buildings at many of the other recent developments. However, the developer does not want to limit himself to only two-story buildings. This project is still in the conceptual stage and the developer does not want to be too limited with what he can do on the property.

No one spoke against the request.

Mr. Stewart made a motion to approve the rezoning with the conditions recommended by staff. Dr. Wells seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Dr. Tracy asked if there was any other business for the Commission's consideration. Mr. Shaw stated applications have been sought from people interested in serving on the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The group will meet about eight times this year to discuss and make recommendations on policy issues related to the plan. He said any Commission members who are interested would have their names submitted without the need for an application. Dr. Tracy and Mr. Stewart stated they were interested in serving.

There being no other business for the Commission's consideration, Dr. Tracy adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.