

**Statesboro Planning Commission
Minutes
July 10, 2007**

The July 10, 2007 meeting of the Statesboro Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Sharon Tracy at 4:00 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 member present was Jim Shaw, Planning Director.

Mr. Stewart moved to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2007 meeting as presented. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

The first item of new business was Application RZ 07-07-01; Fionn E. Thomas requests a zoning change from R-15 (Single-Family Residential) to O (Office and Professional Office) for a 0.55 acre lot located at 219 Savannah Avenue.

Mr. Shaw provided the Commission a summary of the staff report. He stated this property is part of a 1.3 acre parcel that extends to Crescent Circle. There has been a dental office on the front portion of the property for a number of years and it is assumed to be a legal nonconforming use. There are other offices adjacent that are on property zoned Office. To the northwest, at the corner of South Zetterower, are retail commercial uses on property zoned CBD. The zoning makes a logical transition from CBD to Office to R-15. Gordon Street is the dividing line for commercial and residential uses at this end of Savannah Avenue and is the logical dividing line for the Office and R-15 zoning districts. He stated staff recommends approval of the rezoning.

Alesha Thomas stated she was present to answer any questions. There were none.

No one spoke for or against the request.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve the zoning change. Mr. Stewart seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The second item of new business was Application SE 07-07-02; Denna Hughes and Rena Woodcock request a special exception to allow a beauty salon in the O (Office and Professional Office) zoning district and a variance to reduce the required number of parking spaces from 18 to 15 for the property located at 304 South Zetterower Avenue.

Mr. Shaw provided the Commission a summary of the staff report. He stated this property has been used for offices the past few years. The owners of the salon next door have purchased the property and wish to move their salon to it. The Office zoning district does not specifically allow beauty salons and similar uses, but there is a provision for special exceptions for uses found to be compatible with other uses in the area. He stated the subject property is a through lot that has frontage on South Zetterower and Donaldson Street. Only the front half is zoned Office. The back half is zoned R-15, so activities

related to the salon, if approved, would be limited to the front portion of the property. There is a small parking area in front of the building with four parking spaces. The layout of the lot does not meet the Zoning Ordinance requirements, but because it was allowed previously, it can continue to be used. There is a parking area to the rear of the building that has room for twelve spaces, although they are not marked. The applicants have stated the salon will have six chairs or stations, which requires a total of eighteen parking spaces. The property is short two spaces. He stated staff feels the salon should be limited to five chairs if the parking remains as-is. If additional parking is constructed in front of the building, additional chairs could be allowed. He stated staff recommends approval of the special exception to allow a salon on the property, but recommends against the parking variance.

Deena Hughes, co-owner of the property and business, stated she was present to answer any questions.

Mr. Stewart asked why eighteen parking spaces were needed for six chairs. Ms. Hughes said she thought they would only need two for each chair to accommodate one client coming and one going. Mr. Shaw stated it would provide spaces for the beautician and two customers since there is often overlap. Dr. Wells asked if there would be a problem with a limit of five chairs. Ms. Hughes said there would not be a problem, but they would like the option to expand their parking in the future to allow more chairs. Mr. Shaw stated it would not require approval of the Commission or City Council. All that would be necessary is for Ms. Hughes or a contractor to obtain a building permit for enlarging the parking lot and for every three additional parking spaces, another chair or station would be allowed.

No one spoke for or against the request.

Dr. Wells made a motion to approve the special exception for the salon and deny the parking variance. The motion was seconded by Mr. Stewart and it carried unanimously.

The third item of new business was Application RZ 07-07-03; Scott Joyner requests a zoning change from PUD (Planned Unit Development) with a maximum density of 2.4 units per net developable acre to PUD with a maximum density of 3.4 units per net developable acre, and a change the previously approved conditions to increase the maximum number of dwelling units from 45 to 65, reduce the minimum heated floor area of each dwelling unit from 1,750 to 1,600 square feet, and reduce the requirement of a two-car garage for each dwelling unit to an average of a one-car garage per dwelling for the entire development for a 27.02 acre tract on the west side of Cawana Road, west of Bradford Place Subdivision.

Mr. Shaw provided the Commission a summary of the staff report. He stated the applicant wants to modify the plan and conditions that are part of the rezoning approved for this property by the City Council in May 2007. There are some significant differences between the site plan provided with the previous request and the one provided with this request. First, it is based on a recent survey that shows the property totals 27.02 acres, rather than

24.78. Second, it shows the pond covers 6.90 acres to the edge of the water. Staff had previously estimated it covered 8.33 acres, including the side slopes. Third, the plan indicates 2.23 acres of the pond will be filled and left as open space. Fourth, wetlands covering 3.08 acres have been identified. Fifth, the large shared parking area in the southwest portion of the property has been eliminated and the area left as open space.

Mr. Shaw stated the proposed layout of the street and houses is very similar. Houses are shown along both sides of the internal street, approximately 30 feet from the back of the sidewalk or back of the curb. The houses will be 20 to 25 feet apart. He stated the net effect of all the changes is minimal. The land gained by partially filling the pond is more than offset by the wetlands that have been identified. The conditions previously approved for this property reflect those placed on the Beasley property to the north when it was annexed and rezoned. The intent was to make that development and this one compatible with Bradford Place. No arguments supporting the requested conditions have been presented. Staff is unaware of any changes in the area since the last consideration of this property in May or of the Beasley property in January. Modification of the conditions is not justified. Staff recommends denial of the requested rezoning.

Joey Maxwell, of Maxwell-Reddick and Associates, Inc., was present to represent the applicant. He stated that he thought this should be a conditional use variance application rather than a rezoning. The property was annexed and rezoned with conditions, and they are asking for a change of those conditions. After the earlier approval, the property was studied in greater detail to determine how it could be developed within the established conditions. They are proposing to fill a portion of the borrow pit and terrace the property from Cawana Road to the borrow pit. The end result will be 5:1 slopes that are developable. Mr. Maxwell stated the primary request is to increase the density. The developer originally requested a minimum house size of 1,600 square feet and still wants the minimum set there. Changing the garage requirement so that some houses have either a one or two-car garage or a carport provides diversity and avoids a cookie cutter design. The developer will still install a six foot high fence along Cawana Road. The terracing of the property will place the houses lower than the road, which coupled with the fence, will mean that only a portion of the rooftops will be visible. He stated the developer has gone out of his way trying to accommodate the concerns previously voiced by Bradford Place residents and the City Council and feels the requested changes are warranted.

Dr. Wells asked if storm drainage would be a problem for this property. Mr. Maxwell stated the existing ditch along Cawana will be maintained and will carry away the off-site storm water so that it does not reach the property. Any rainfall that falls on this property will be routed to the pond and then discharged at the required rate.

Mr. Stewart asked if the 20 to 25 feet mentioned earlier was between the houses themselves or from the property line. Mr. Maxwell stated it is between houses. Mr. Stewart asked if that was too close. Mr. Maxwell stated the aggregate side yard setback for the R-15 zoning district is 25 feet, so the separation they are proposing is similar to what could exist in an R-15 subdivision.

Dr. Tracy asked if anyone else wished to address the Commission regarding this item. Laura Regassa, 1039 Bradford Way, was present. She stated that it appeared nothing had changed since the first application. She is still concerned about the density that is proposed. Lowering the minimum house size to 1,600 square feet would not be an issue if the lot sizes matched those in Bradford Place. What has been proposed is not comparable. Residents are concerned about the lack of garages. With the fence along Cawana that is proposed, the residents will see roof after roof. The increased density means increased traffic on Cawana Road. She stated the conditions approved previously were a fair compromise and were not exactly what the residents wanted or exactly what Mr. Joyner wanted. Her fear is that if this is approved, the Beasley Brothers could come in and ask for the same density for their development. She asked that the Commission deny the request.

Dr. Wells asked who they expected to purchase these houses. Mr. Maxwell stated these will be single-family residences, but no one can control who buys them.

Mr. Maxwell asked to address some of the concerns that were raised. He stated the additional density when compared to Bradford Place is because of the availability of sanitary sewer service. With the availability of sewer service, comes an additional cost. The City has plans to extend sewer service to this area, but the property owners that connect to it will have to pay their share of the cost. In addition, Mr. Joyner has to pay the full cost of the internal infrastructure. He needs the increased density to pay that cost. On the other hand, the Beasley's are participating in the City's subdivision incentive program, which will pay for some of their infrastructure costs. He stated that Mr. Joyner has to pay the full cost because the City does not want this development in the incentive program. They have had to find a way to make this project economical.

Dr. Wells asked how many bedrooms each house would have. Scott Joyner stated each would have three bedrooms or more. Dr. Wells stated that if college students did live in these houses, parking could be an issue. Mr. Maxwell stated they have no way to prohibit someone from buying one of these houses for their children who are students or renting to students. The City has a limitation in place on the number of non-relatives living in a residence, but the developer is required to make the houses available to anyone.

Mr. Johnson stated there had been a lot of discussion about this when it was annexed. He thought compatibility with Bradford Place was one of the most important considerations and the proposed increase in density is significant. This would magnify any traffic problems on Cawana Road.

Mr. Maxwell asked the Commission to keep in mind that the Beasley brothers own 2,000 acres all around Bradford Place, which they plan to develop over time. Eventually Cawana Road will be impacted. He asked if we are going to stop annexing land and stop development in that area. He said there should be some variety rather than all R-25 lots. The amount of development that will occur in that area will tax the roads and utilities. Improvements will be necessary. The city is growing and we don't want to create eyesores. Mr. Joyner does not want to create one. This property is a good transitional

property from the commercial bypass to R-25 to R-40. We are attempting to have a progression of density.

Mr. Stewart asked if all of the property on the west side of Cawana was Bulloch County. Mr. Shaw stated the Beasley brothers had annexed 20 acres on the east side, immediately north of Bradford Place, along with 9.69 acres on the west side.

Mr. Stewart made a motion to deny the request. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The first item of other business was Appointment of a Consultant Selection Committee. Mr. Shaw stated a request for proposals for preparation of the comprehensive plan had been released and ten proposals were received. A committee is needed to review the proposals and meet next week to discuss them and chose the consultants that should be invited to make presentations. The committee will attend the presentations and then rank the consultants. After that the work of the committee will be complete as the staff will be responsible for negotiating a contract. Dr. Tracy, Mr. Stewart, and Mr. Johnson volunteered to serve. The committee members agreed to meet on Wednesday, July 18, at 1:30.

The second item of other business was Planning and Zoning Training. Mr. Shaw stated the training that had been discussed previously is scheduled for Tuesday, July 31, at 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers. He stated that he had just been informed of a change of instructors and there was a possibility the City would ask to postpone it so Scot Wrighton, who had previously been scheduled, could be rescheduled. He said everyone would be contacted as soon as possible.

The third item of other business was Consideration of Changing the Meeting Time. Dr. Tracy stated she will have a class on Tuesdays this fall that will not end until 4:45. She asked if the meeting could be moved to 5:00 or a different day. The Commission members had no objection to moving the meeting time to 5:00 p.m.

There being no other business for the Commission's consideration, Dr. Tracy adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.