

Planning Commission



Minutes of the Thursday, December 19, 2019 Regular Meeting

Members of the Planning Commission

Briton Williams

Chair

Leonard Carter, Jr.

Timothy V. Key

Larry Watts

Bob Clark

JoAnn McKie

Dr. Christine Crawford

1. **Call to Order**-The regular meeting of December 19, 2019, having been duly publicized, was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call**-Members present were Chairman Briton Williams, Commissioners Timothy Key, JoAnn McKie, Larry Watts, Dr. Christine Crawford, Bob Clark, and Leonard Carter. Also in attendance were Libby Hodges, Director of Planning and Development, Rachelle Moody, Interim City Administrator, Public Safety Chief John Thomas, Councilmembers Presnell and McGhee, and members of the press and public.
3. **Approval of Minutes**-The minutes from the Regular Meeting and Study Session of November 21, 2019 were approved as written.
4. **Confirmation of Agenda** -There were no changes to the agenda.
5. **Application RZM19-004, Rezoning** - A request by the City of North Augusta to rezone ± 2.43 acres, Tax Parcel Number 007-07-07-003 (formerly 007-07-07-001, 007-07-01-002, and 007-07-07-003) located at 311 W. Martintown Rd. from R-14, Large Lot, Single-Family Residential to P, Public Use.
 - a. Public Hearing
 - b. Consideration of the Rezoning Request by the Commission
 - a) Recommendation

Chairman Williams read the application summary for Application RZM19-004, Rezoning a request by the City of North Augusta to rezone ± 2.43 acres, Tax Parcel Number 007-07-07-003 (formerly 007-07-07-001, 007-07-01-002, and 007-07-07-003) located at 311 W. Martintown Rd. from R-14, Large Lot, Single-Family Residential to P, Public Use and opened the public hearing at 7:08 PM. Mr. Williams asked Mrs. Hodges if she had any information she would like to share.

Mrs. Hodges reiterated to the Commission that the review criteria for the rezoning is slightly different because it is being rezoned to the P, Public Use category. She said the information is supplied in the hand out and she prepared slides to show what criteria will be reviewed in order to grant, recommend, or not recommend the rezoning. Mrs. Hodges explained that the Inter-jurisdictional Analysis, Financial Analysis, Special Purpose Districts, and Measures to Facilitate Siting are the only criteria that are required to be reviewed for the P zoning.

Chairman Williams asked for questions from the Planning Commission for Mrs. Hodges. There were none.

Chairman Williams asked if the applicant had any comments.

Rachelle Moody, Interim City Administrator, spoke on behalf of the City stating they are requesting the property to be rezoned P, Public Use so that they may relocate Fire Station No. 1 to this property. She explained that the current location on Buena Vista Avenue is outdated and they have out grown the location by being unable to keep the ladder truck at the station which is needed in this area so that it may reach the new high-rise buildings and a variety of other structures in the area. Ms. Moody stated they determined that the location on Martintown Road is the best location for coverage services.

Chairman Williams asked for questions from the Planning Commission for the applicant.

Chairman Williams stated two years ago there were four properties that were being considered and questioned if any of the sites were revisited. Ms. Moody answered no. Chairman Williams questioned if the proposed location would provide coverage to the Rapids area. Ms. Moody answered yes and deferred to Chief John Thomas, of Public Safety, for further explanation. Chief Thomas explained because of the current location, the coverage radius is approximate $\frac{1}{2}$ river and into Georgia. If the fire station is moved to this proposed location all of the fire stations will be 1.5-miles apart and it would be an exceptional thing for them to have.

Commissioner Watts asked if this would put the fire station close to the geometric center of the City. Chief Thomas replied yes stating that one of the goals in looking at the properties is to be able to access US-1, Martintown Road, and Georgia Avenue.

Chairman Williams invited comments or questions from the public.

The following members of the public spoke:

Karen Powell stated she is not asking to deny the rezoning request but to ask that the Commission postpone the rezoning in order to obtain additional information in regards to the project.

Mike Hitchler spoke about neighbor input and potential impacts to the surrounding properties.

Dave Leverette spoke about delaying the process and response times.

Fred Ilardi spoke about the purchase of the property and how that decision was made.

Steven Bryant spoke about public input process and public involvement. Additional remarks centered on the Comprehensive Plan and criteria for rezoning.

Eric Presnell spoke about fire response and the purchase of the property.

Ken Powell asked that the public be involved in the design of the station and asked to delay the rezoning.

Steven Bryant spoke a second time about future land use map.

Zach McIntire requested public input on the future station.

Ms. Moody addressed some of the residents' concerns the review criteria for the rezoning including project funding, site selection and the best location for access not only the river front, but the big box stores and the older neighborhoods in the area. Ingress/egress is sufficient, the 1000-foot notification radius was used so that a larger number of people were notified within the area than the required 200-feet. The expectation is that the fire station will be a nice landscaped piece of property with a good looking building similar to Fire Station 3 will be utilized on this site. Ms. Moody noted the liability associated with current fire station leaks and not providing apparatus' protection and accommodation for the ladder truck in the area of town where it needs to provide coverage where it would be in demand most.

Chairman Williams questioned what equipment is not currently being covered in Fire Station. Ms. Moody explained that the equipment is currently under cover but when it is in the fire bays the fire bays have leaks, water gushes down the sides, drenches the apparatus, and other materials, which has caused wear and tear over time.

Commissioner Watts stated after hearing from the public there is a concern, architecturally speaking, and questioned in what respect will the public's input be addressed. Ms. Moody replied that the City is open to input from residents and a public input session is anticipated for late January or early February.

Chairman Williams questioned Chief Thomas about the ISO ceiling. Chief Thomas explained ISO is what we are governed by and what the tax payers pay in insurance premiums. When the station is built, ISO will return and we will be up for a type of study to tell us if we will be reclassified.

Mrs. Hodges reiterated that the decision the Commission is making tonight is only a recommendation and it does not serve to actually rezone the property yet and the recommendation is using the review factors that were discussed earlier.

There being no further comments, Chairman Williams closed the public hearing at 8:03 p.m.

Commissioner Key stated that, based on the information, he feels that the decision is now more political and he cannot refute that the proposed location is not a good location, but the city has not done its due diligence in providing enough information.

Commissioner McKie concurred with Mr. Key stating the two items she is also concerned about are the design. She said she would feel more comfortable making a decision if there were possibly a sketch and some space of trees provided for review.

Commissioner Clark stated we are here not to vote on what the fire station looks like but whether the land should be rezoned.

Commissioner Watts stated he believes this piece of property does lend itself to where it would be easy to exit the property on to Martintown Road. He said he does understand where the citizens are wanting to see a nice building that is going to compliment the town and neighborhood.

Commissioner Carter stated the comments he is hearing is that the public wants to be involved. Mr. Carter stated regardless of the recommendation that there should be something put in place that there is a public forum for input from the public sector.

Commissioner Crawford stated if this location provides some improved coverage in our city and potentially can impact insurance ratings in the city we will defer to our citizens and protecting them.

Chairman Williams concurred with Commissioner Carter.

Commissioner McKie stated if Chief Thomas says this is the place the fire station needs to be then we need to go by what his expertise is not ours.

There being no further questions or comments Chairman Williams invited the Planning Commission to make a motion.

Commissioner Crawford motioned to recommend that the City Council approve Application RZM19-004, Rezoning a request by the City of North Augusta to rezone ±2.43 acres, Tax Parcel Number 007-07-07-003 (formerly 007-07-07-001, 007-07-01-002, and 007-07-07-003) located at 311 W. Martintown Rd. from R-14, Large Lot, Single-Family Residential to P, Public Use. The Commission voted 5 to 1 to recommend approval to the City Council. Commissioner Key abstained.

6. **Application RZT19-006, Text Amendment** – A request by the City of North Augusta to amend North Augusta Development Code Article 3, Zoning Districts, and other articles as needed to remove references to signs from the text.
 - a. Public Hearing
 - b. Consideration of the Text Amendment application by the Commission
 - a) Recommendation

Chairman Williams read the application summary for Application RZT19-006, Text Amendment a request by the City of North Augusta to amend North Augusta Development Code Article 3, Zoning Districts, and other articles as needed to remove references to signs from the text.

Chairman Williams opened the public hearing at 8:33 p.m. and asked Mrs. Hodges if she had any information she would like to share.

Mrs. Hodges explained since Article 13 has been adopted by City Council this text amendment is a related text amendment that takes any mention of sign items throughout the remainder of the Development Code, mostly focusing on Article 3, in the overlay districts where we have taken those requirements and put them in Article 13.

Chairman Williams closed the public hearing at 8:34 p.m.

After further discussion, all comments and questions were addressed.

Chairman Williams invited the Planning Commission to make a motion.

Commissioner Carter made a motion to accept Application RZT19-006, Text Amendment a request by the City of North Augusta to amend North Augusta Development Code Article 3, Zoning Districts, and other articles as needed to remove references to signs from the text. Commissioner McKie offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

7. **Application PDM19-003, Hammond's Ferry Planned Development, Minor Modification** – A request by HF Developers, LLC, for a Minor Modification to the Ordinance creating the Hammond's Ferry Planned Development.

- a. Consideration of the Minor Modification of the Planned Development ordinance by the Commission
- b. Recommendation

Chairman Williams read the application summary for Application PDM19-003, Hammond's Ferry Planned Development, Minor Modification a request by HF Developers, LLC, for a Minor Modification to the Ordinance creating the Hammond's Ferry Planned Development and asked Mrs. Hodges if she had any information she would like to share.

Mrs. Hodges explained when the modifications were done, two meetings ago, there was an inadvertent change. She said the applicant has requested that we repair it with this modification.

Chairman Williams asked for questions from the Planning Commission for Mrs. Hodges and there were none.

Chairman Williams invited the Planning Commission to make a motion.

Commissioner Crawford made a motion to approve Application PDM19-003, Hammond's Ferry Planned Development, Minor Modification – A request by HF Developers, LLC, for a Minor Modification to the Ordinance creating the Hammond's Ferry Planned Development. Commissioner Clark offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

8. Business Meeting

- a. Election of Officers

Commissioner McKie made a motion to nominate Britton Williams to continue as chair for 2020. Commissioner Watts offered a second the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Williams made a motion to nominate Bob Clark as vice-chair for 2020. Commissioner Key offered a second and the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

- b. Adoption of Calendar

Commissioner Key made a motion to adopt the Calendar for 2020. Chairman Carter seconded the motion and the motion passed with a 6 to 1 vote with Commissioner McKie voting against.

9. Staff Report

Mrs. Hodges thanked the Commissioners for, what she felt, was a very successful study session and hopes that next year these sessions can be used very effectively.

Mrs. Hodges presented the November Performance Report.

Mrs. Hodges announced that the Code Enforcement Officer will be going to another job with the City. She stated the position has been advertised.

10. Adjourn

With no objection, Chairman Williams adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Libby Hodges, AICP, Director
Department of Planning and Development
Secretary to the Planning Commission

