

Planning Commission



Minutes for the Thursday, October 21, 2021, Regular Meeting

Members of the Planning Commission

Dr. Christine Crawford

Chair

Bob Bigger

Leonard Carter, Jr.

Bob Clark

Timothy V. Key

JoAnn McKie, Vice Chair

Larry Watts

CITIZEN ASSISTANCE: Individuals requiring special assistance or a sign interpreter to participate in the meeting are asked to please notify the Department of Planning and Development 48 hours prior to the meeting at 803-441-4221.

1. **Call to Order** – 7:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call** – Present at the meeting were Chairman Dr. Christine Crawford, commissioners Larry Watts, Bob Bigger, Bob Clark, Len Carter and Timothy Key.
3. **Approval of Minutes** - October 21, 2021 Study Session and Regular Meeting
4. **Confirmation of Agenda** - minutes were good with no changes
5. **Application MW21-003** – Highland Springs Elementary/Middle School Landscaping Waiver—A request by Aiken County Public Schools for a waiver from the landscaping requirements of Article 10, Landscaping of the North Augusta Development Code on TPN 023-05-01-003, zoned P, Public Use.
 - a. Consideration of Application MW21-003 by Commission.

Mr. Paradise said the school district wanted to see about some waivers on the land where school is being built. It is 51.2 acres and what the city requires for the landscape will not work for this acreage. The landscape ordinance is not designed for

50 acres. Chairman Mrs. Crawford said they would have to agree the criteria is acceptable and they will go thru each one.

Mr. Roger Davis architect for the school district presented the following things that they think will best fit for the landscape on this large piece of property.

1. Eliminate the small trees along Old Sudlow Lake because what you plant you have to irrigate and this site is too large. The large trees will stay as is.
2. Eliminate all rear buffer on lots 21 & 22 in front of Old Sudlow. There are power lines overhead and in the easement.
3. Eliminate the buffer planting on lot 8 near retaining wall and side because it sits 30 feet below school.
4. To waive shrubs and trees leading to Old Sudlow Lake Rd. because it is an extremely long road.
5. Waiver to not plant trees and shrubs in back of school in parking lot. It would be too much to maintain.
6. Waiver to plant on street trees on the access dr.

All the large trees will stay on property. There were no comments from anyone. Commissioner Larry Watts stated that it is very expensive to keep up with the care of plants and landscaping. The Aiken county schools have a hard keeping up with school grounds landscaping. It is a waste of tax payer's money to purchase landscaping due to not have enough staff to care for it. Plus, cut grass looks better than dead shrubbery. Chairman Mrs. Crawford read the 5 conditions that have to be met to consider this plan on landscaping. Tim Key made the 1st motion and Len Carter 2nd motion and it was unanimous vote.

6. **Application PP21-003** – Forrest Bluff, Section 1— A request by McKie Property Development, LLC for approval of a Major Subdivision Preliminary Plat for 29 single-family residential lots and 37 townhouse lots on TPNs 006-10-09-002, zoned R-7, Small Lot, Single-Family Residential.
 - a. Consideration of Application PP21-003 by Commission.

Recusal from Mr. Bigger. Mr. Paradise stated is 51.53 acres for single family residential and townhouses. It was called Highland Bluff but has been changed since. The applicant has provided a traffic study and will take any questions. Mr. Jason Whinghter with Ivey Properties LLC. I'm here to answer any questions that anyone may have regarding this project. Larry Watts asked about access to the property and was told it is thru Knollwood only not another way to access. They are asking for public comments and questions. Ross Douglas brought up concerns in his neighborhood and how the new subdivision will effect it. Mr. Douglas is concerned that will it not be safe to walk, run or kids walk to school as it is now. That a traffic study was done during covid and it didn't show the real amount of traffic that the area has now. Also it would be adding more roads in the area for the neighborhood which would add more traffic. Also that the Greenway has flooding now when it

rains and if the trees are cut down it will make this worse. He wants to know why it can't be a continuing Knollwood neighborhood with fewer houses and larger lots instead of the plan they have now. He would like for everyone to consider his concerns and hope that they make the right decision for this neighborhood. Mr. Larry Hammett spoke with concerns about the elevation of the other lots and if there would be a barrier wall or privacy fences. Also concerned about the drainage problem because of the elevation on some of the lots.

Mr. Mason Raines spoke about the concerns of lot sizes. Mr. Raines compared them to trailer park lots because they are small lots. The traffic it will cause on his street Green forest would double which would create a safety concern due to the people who walk or ride bikes a lot. The concern that it would affect the Greenway and maybe it's future. Also he had that the city needs to consider the water, sewer and police coverage this area will need. In his closing remarks he asks the BZA to consider maintain the standard for Knollwood it has done for the last 30 years.

Mr. Doug Melton spoke about the promise of an another exit in Knollwood and ask the commission to honor that. He is concerned about the traffic and the safety of people walking. Green forest is the street used to get to Greenway and that makes it busy now. He asked the city to deny the waiver at this time until there is another exit for Knollwood. Gena Russo she expressed her concerns with traffic with the schools and how hard it is to get out on the road now. Gena Russo thinks the traffic study done was done at a time when people were not going to school or work so it is not very accurate. Jason Whinghter is back to discuss the concerns the citizens had regarding this project. The traffic study was done by the City of North Augusta & DOT code requirements. The did adjust what was needed due to traffic being slower because of covid and people working from home. The elevation on the lots will be below and flat. There will detention ponds and retaining walls to keep flooding or water flowing into Knollwood. They will also replant to keep a buffer. The homes and townhomes will have HOA's to help maintain the grounds. The lots will be 7000 square foot as required. The discussion is to get another road to get out of neighborhood. Chairman Mrs. Crawford asked for a motion Commissioner Mr. Key gave the first motion to approve, Mr. Clark gave 2nd motion to approve and Mr. Carter gave a motion of no but 4 approved.

7. **Application CONPL21-002** – Big Pine Subdivision— A request by JLA for a sketch plan review of a proposed Major Subdivision for 122 single-family residential lots on TPN 002-12-01-002, zoned R-10, Medium Lot, Single-Family Residential.

- a. Consideration of Application CONPL21-002 by Commission.

Mr. Paradise stated it is 69.9 acres proposed for a subdivision. It will have a couple of creeks and a bridge. It is an R-10 with medium lots. He has been talking with storm water division. It will also go thru another subdivision. He needs to know what his obstacles are before beginning his project. Mr. Watts asked about it being inside the

city limits. It is in city limits and comes thru at Big Pine. Alexander Reynolds spoke about the road being used is Chanticleer Rd. for subdivision. It will have a lot of open space and some left as conservation. The plan left the sensitive areas alone. It is 122 homes and R-10 zone. It fits in the development code. Only wavier is for max block link for Big Pine Rd and another connecting road. The development will have 2 cul de sacs. Mrs. Reynolds stated we don't want to cross the creek to disturb anything but it can be done if needed. There will be no development in the wetlands. The goal is to stay out of the creek and only have one crossing that being the bridge. It will be designed to what the zoning is on the property. The commissioner stated that they are still dealing with only one way in and out and said there are other subdivisions that are the same way. Chairman Mrs. Crawford stated that they are compassionate about connectivity & also traffic impact with a traffic study which they need see. Mrs. Reynolds said they wanted to get feedback on their plans before going forward. They have also looked at crossing the creek but were looking at the impact that would have on the land. Mr. Dan Holloway spoke that this project is a conservation subdivision. The area is zoned for R-10 which is houses and the lots would be 50 foot lots. But also that connectivity is the issue they need to know before going forward with this plan. The discussion came up about townhouses being the best idea but it is not zoned for them. Mr. Paradise stated that it would need to be a R7 or R5 zoned for townhouses plus need variance for lots.

8. Staff Report

- a. September Performance Report: Mr. Paradise stated that the Development rewrite was starting up. The staff was meeting with consultants. The staff would be discussing the conditional uses and maybe doing away with the. For example, if a neighborhood or highway or lake is that it is a conditional use but not really cause everything along that corridor is conditional use. Mr. Paradise stated we are looking for things to be particular to specific use. Mr. Paradise stated we are also looking to stop conditional use. By stating these are the conditions either meet them or don't. There are 5 chapters that were sent out to department heads to get their comments. This project and comprehensive plan are ongoing.

9. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm

As Approved November 18, 2021

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "T. Paradise".

Thomas L. Paradise, Interim Director
Department of Planning and Development
Secretary to the Planning Commission