

# Planning Commission



Minutes for the Wednesday, April 19, 2023, Regular Meeting  
Council Chambers, 100 Georgia Avenue

## *Members of the Planning Commission*

Dr. Christine Crawford

*Chair*

Bob Bigger, *Vice Chair*

Jesse Elliott

Timothy V. Key

Leonard Carter, Jr.

Rett Harbeson

Chelsea Waddell

*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**
3. **Approval of Minutes** – January 18, 2023 Regular Meeting was approved unanimously. March 15, 2023 Regular Meeting motion was unanimously approved with changes to Adjourn time.
4. **Confirmation of Agenda** No changes to agenda.
5. **RZT23-001**– Off-Site Signage Text Amendment – A request by the City of North Augusta to amend Article 13, Signs of the North Augusta Development Code to prohibit off-site signage.

Mr. Paradise spoke about the 2015 Supreme Court Case *Reed V. Gilbert* and its recent law change to prohibit off-site advertising. It was proposed that the development code

reflects the new law change made by the United States Supreme Court regarding *Reed V. Gilbert*.

**Public Hearing**

Chris Withers of 2012 Wellington Rd, spoke about owning an Outdoor Advertising Company. He expressed his concern that the change to prohibit off-site signage may affect his business revenue. Mr. Paradise stated that the change to the sign ordinance would not prohibit the sign regulations that are currently in place, but would prohibit Off-premise signage. Commissioner Newman asked if the change would apply to advertising for a special event. Mr. Paradise stated that signs allowed would follow the Development Code Regulations.

a. Consideration of the Text Amendment request by the Planning Commission

Commissioner Tim Key made the first motion to prohibit off-site sign, Bob Bigger made the second motion. No oppositions.

6. **PD23-001** – The Hive Planned Development Major Modification – A request by McKnight Properties, Inc., Panther Residential Management, LLC, and Stanley Martin Homes, LLC for a major modification to the Planned Development formerly known as Hamrick Farms. The request affects ±174.5 acres zoned PD, Planned Development, TPNs 001-20-01-004, 005-14-04-010, 005-17-01-012, and 001-20-01-007, roughly bound by I-20, West Martintown Road and Knobcone Avenue.

Mr. Paradise provided background about parcels dating back to November 3, 1986, when it was annexed into the City of North Augusta and zoned Planned Development General with Thoroughfare Commercial uses permitted as allowed in 1977 ordinance. April 17, 2006 City Council adopted ordinance 2006-03 to approve General development plan for Hamrick farm development. On February 2, 2022, Planning Commission approved a resolution to amend a General Development Plan for Hamrick Farms development to remove wording that place an age restriction on multifamily parcel. Mr. Paradise stated that although the plan is already approved, the developers are requesting the following changes:

Changes to the Planned Development Narrative have been provided by the applicants to clarify ownership, phasing, traffic volume and the development program for consistency with the proposed changes to the ordinance.

Delete the requirements for:

- L. 1. The annexation of Tracts D and G must be complete before any development permits that affect those tracts can be approved. (Already annexed)

Agenda for the Wednesday, April 19, 2023, Regular Planning Commission Meeting

- L. 2. Design guidelines for homes to be constructed in Tract A to be included in the covenants and included with preliminary plat submission
- L. 3. Homes constructed in Tract A will not be constructed on concrete slab foundations and vinyl siding will not be used as an exterior wall material.

Tract A will be revised to allow quadplex/townhome residential instead of single-family detached residential with an increase in density from 4.0 dua to 5.7 dua.

Tract B will delete duplex and quadplex residential and only allow single-family detached. The dwelling unit per acre will decrease from to 2.5 per acres from 3.0 per acre.

Tract C remains Single-Family Residential at 3.0 dua, but the area increases from 42.2 acres to 43.9 acres. Staff would request that the type of residential be defined as either detached single-family, attached single-family or both.

Tract D remains Single-Family Residential and the density is reduced from 3.0 dua to 2.6 dua. It also decreased the area from 18 acres to 14 acres. Staff would request that the type of residential be defined as either detached single-family, attached single-family or both.

Tract E remains multi-family with no change

Tract F remains Retail, Restaurant, Office, Financial, Commercial at 10,000 sf per acre. However, the acreage decreased from 27.3 acres to 27.1 acres

Tracts G & H are deleted

Greenspace is decreased from 34.1 acres to 33.2 acres.

Commissioner Key asked if the green space being reduced affected the ratio, Mr. Paradise stated that it did not.

Mr. Paradise reiterated the Recommendation of Staff for better understanding.

Bobby Bagwell of 6566 Reservoir Rd, Appling Ga, spoke as the representative of the three entities involved in the development. He stated the recent discovery of dated Planned Development language in documentation and expressed a need to clarify it. He stated that phases B, C and D will all be single family detached dwellings and townhomes will be relocated in order to not build on a crawl space foundation for construction reasons. He noted they are well beneath exceeding the maximum threshold allowed by PD by about 100 units.

## Agenda for the Wednesday, April 19, 2023, Regular Planning Commission Meeting

Sean Smith of 452 Ellis Street, Augusta Ga, stated that he is employed by Cranston Engineering and would assist with answering questions.

Commissioner Tim Key asked to view a Topo Map of the area. Mr. Paradise directed Commissioner Tim Key to view Topo Map on screen.

Bagwell stated that there is Topo in area and that they will build a bridge to access phase A. He requested that vinyl siding be allowed and wants to agree to use a high-quality siding but is willing to have a discussion of alternative construction methods.

Commissioner Jesse Elliott asked if the concrete slab foundation would be for the single family detached dwelling as well.

Smith stated that the vinyl siding and crawl space was specific for phase A, as Phase B, C and D are already allowed. He stated it would apply to 92 units and would have to be graded and perched.

Chairman asked for Mr. Paradise to elaborate on policies in the city policy and reasons for the connector.

Mr. Paradise stated that development that was approved in 2006 and as amended, has Pinion Rd as one of the access exit/entry points and that the road has already been approved and it connects to a state owned and maintained roadway. He states that the connection is a requirement and is supported by policies pertaining to interconnectivity and the need to keep dead end streets and cul-de-sacs to a minimum.

In particular, Mr. Paradise cited the following sections from the Comprehensive Plan and Development Code:

### Comprehensive Plan

6.2.3. The use of cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets should be minimized.

Cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets can impair connectivity between neighborhoods and other destinations. These street designs should only be used when sites are physically restrained by natural resources such as bodies of water, elevation changes, or to conserve other natural areas.

6.2.4. Connect the streets of new development with the street network of existing development. In new development, leave stubs for future connection.

When new development and redevelopment occurs, its street network should connect with the existing street network in as many instances as possible. This will help integrate new and existing neighborhoods, improve walkability and accessibility, and allow for

more efficient transportation systems. New development that is not adjacent to existing development shall leave at least two stubs within the street network for future connectivity between neighborhoods.

#### Development Code

##### 14.2.3 Connectivity and Cul-de-Sacs

The street system shall balance the public goal of connectivity with market demands for privacy. While this Article does not ban cul-de-sacs, cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets shall be reserved for situations involving unique topography, environmental restrictions or similar considerations. Wherever possible, cul-de-sacs should be designed as closes

##### 14.2.5 Residential Design

In residential subdivisions, the road system shall be designed to serve the needs of the neighborhoods while addressing the needs of the citywide circulation pattern necessary to functionally move traffic.

14.8.3.2.2 Many residential developments do not have access to existing or planned collector and arterial streets and are required to utilize existing subdivisions for access. To minimize the impact of new development on existing neighborhoods and to ensure adequate access and emergency access to new developments from a variety of locations, access will be permitted from existing and planned streets of different classifications with limitations.

14.8.3.2.4 New residential and commercial development shall connect wherever possible to existing development that has provided stub out street connections to a property line.

#### a. Public Hearing

Donald Bridges of 1002 Longleaf Ct, North Augusta SC, stated that he wanted to object to the use of Pinion Rd, as it is a major modification. He stated that Pinion Rd is not suited for heavy travel and would be disastrous. He also stated that Pinion Rd would only make Five Notch Rd congested.

Steve Walk of 1001 Spruce Ct, stated that he is concerned about the safety and environmental change that using Pinion Rd as an access point will cause. He continued by saying that a traffic study needs to be done before the access point of Pinion Rd is created. He noted the petition given to commissioners and requests a different solution outside of using Pinion Rd.

## Agenda for the Wednesday, April 19, 2023, Regular Planning Commission Meeting

Jean Norris of 1013 Pinion Rd, stated her concerns were safety and wanting to live in a quiet neighborhood. She also spoke about her traffic concerns on Pinion Rd.

Jeff Wheeler of 2004 Wellington Rd, He spoke about his traffic concerns and expressed interest in a traffic study for Knobcone Rd. He asked for clarification on the vinyl siding for the townhomes in the Hive, Noise Pollution and buffers.

Ramona Walk of 1001 Spruce Ct, stated that she has crime concerns. She inquired about a Wetland Delineation Study for the Hive and wanted to know was the green space in the development due to wetland. She spoke about her concern to protect her well water and if there was a study done on Indian artifacts in the area.

Steve McLemore of 2013 Wellington Rd, inquired about a traffic study and what impact the traffic may have on area. He expressed concerns that there would be an influx of children enrolling in the local schools.

Katie Cheeks of 1016 Pinion Rd, inquired about an ecology study and A Relic Trillium plant possibly being in the area. She expressed concern about runoff from grading and perching, as well as the number of cul-de-sacs in development.

Laurie Hamilton of 1004 Spruce Ct, expressed concerns about headlights facing neighbors' home and the desire to keep the wells safe during cutting and grading of development. Hamilton stated that the area may be protected but was uncertain. She was also concerned with traffic.

Richard Sams of 2010 Wellington Rd, spoke about not clearing cutting but leaving a green space in development near townhomes. He expressed concerns about access point on Knobcone and it being highly traveled.

Wendy Heath of 2014 Wellington Rd, stated that she was concerned about the design of the homes in development and the ability of future residents seeing her backyard and the number of homes in development.

Representative for Paul McCarty of 2018 Wellington Rd, inquired about the option to tie into public utilities and the ability to purchase a buffer. Also spoke about prohibiting commercial traffic to use Pinion Rd.

Bobby Bagwell explained that the Pinion Rd Access point has been a part of this development since 2006 in rebuttal. He stated that the developers are open to recommendations from the city if there is another access point and

Agenda for the Wednesday, April 19, 2023, Regular Planning Commission Meeting

the desire to cooperative with the public. He stated that they have received a wetland delineation on the project and have followed all protocol to protect wetlands on site. He stated that they also performed a geotechnical phase one environmental study on the site. He continued by saying Aiken County Board of education was informed of the project and was given files showing the master plan including the number of residences. He stated that Aiken County ensured him that they would be prepared to accommodate the growth this project would bring. He stated that they would preserve the green space and provide as many buffers possible. He explained that the development is well beneath the capacity of units allowed.

Commissioner Rett Harbeson stated by reading the agenda that Phase A, B, C and D has a total of 298 units (table 6-2).

Bobby Bagwell spoke about the price points of the different homes in development ranging from \$300,000 to \$400,000 in today's economy.

Commissioner Tim Key clarifies if the idea is mass grading and spoke to Mr. Paradise to confirmed if the project followed guidelines of mass grading.

Mr. Paradise stated that there are currently no restrictions on mass grading in the city of North Augusta and the developers have been working with the city's engineering department to generate a plan that the city can approve. He states the ordinance only prohibits the vinyl siding and slab on grade in section A.

Bobby Bagwell stated that they are willing to use an alternative to vinyl siding.

Sean Smith stated the green space is a combination of a 100-year flood plan, power easements and wetlands. He stated they are spanning the wetlands with bottomless arch crossings. He stated that if Trillium is found, they have a plan in place to replant it near the buffer. He states that phase 1 is placing a traffic signal at the intersection of West Martintown and Knobcone Rd before any homes are built. He stated that there will also be a right-hand turn lane from West Martintown onto Knob cone. He explained that phase 2 will require an additional left turning lane from Knobcone into the development. There will also be an additional right-hand turning lane into development and should address traffic increase and safety. Smith stated that a traffic study has been performed and approved by SCDOT, but doesn't include the residential. He stated that they are using the current approved traffic study and adding in the residential traffic, but will take a few months to complete.

Agenda for the Wednesday, April 19, 2023, Regular Planning Commission Meeting

John Engler of 3320 Gwyns Lane, Augusta, spoke about his 5-year history on this development and the desire to be cooperative and make the project a first-class facility. He also stated it he didn't believe the cars will travel from the shopping center in the development through Pinion Rd to exit.

Chairman Christine Crawford stated to public that the preliminary plats and information requested will be available on the City Website.

Mr. Paradise stated that Pinion Rd requires an encroachment permit from SCDOT, but as of now there is no permit and there are no plans to need one. He states that the access point will be created in the latter part of the development and curb cut permit will be submitted to SCDOT at that time. He states that the curb cut for Pinion Rd is desired due to transportation safety, public safety and efficiency of government issue. He states that having Pinion Rd will decrease traffic on Martintown Rd. and make it easier for public service to access the bottom area of the development by keeping the emergency vehicle out of the congestion on Martintown Rd and shorter response time.

- b. Consideration of the Planned Development Major Modification request by the Planning Commission

(Quadruplex townhome in section A, willing to delete requirement of concrete slab not unwilling to delete the barrier of vinyl siding, section B change from duplex and quadruplex to single family detached, Section C and D change from single family residential to single family detached residential. No change to section E. Section F acreage change from 27.3 acres to 27.1 acres, Section G and H deleted, Green Space change from 34.1 acres to 34.2 acres and no change L2.)

Tim Key made first motion for approval with conditions recommended by staff, 5 approved, Commissioner Carter opposed.

- c. Recommendation to City Council

Commissioner Carter stated he doesn't think the access point should be on Pinion Rd.

Commissioner Key spoke about his history with living in the City of North Augusta. He spoke about accepting change and managing it. He stated that interconnectivity doesn't bring down the cost of homes. He stated the right



Agenda for the Wednesday, April 19, 2023, Regular Planning Commission Meeting

thing will always be done in North Augusta and he doesn't think the top of the development will drive down through Pinion Rd.

7. **PP22-004** – Highland Springs School Major Subdivision Preliminary Plat – A request by Nahh, LLC and the Aiken County Board of Education to subdivide a portion of ± 51.2 acres, zoned P, Public Use, located off Belvedere Clearwater Road and Old Sudlow Lake Road, TPN 023-05-01-003 for the purpose of creating the new roads Buchanan Parkway, Fountainhead Drive, and Opportunity Circle.

Tinden Hildebrand spoke about the need to subdivide in order to create streets to access the school. He stated that the streets have been dictated by SCDOT and are designed to SCDOT and City of North Augusta's standards.

- a. Consideration of the Major Subdivision Preliminary Plat by the Planning Commission

Commissioner Tim Key made a 1<sup>st</sup> motion with conditions recommended by staff, Len Carter seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

8. **MW23-002** -- Martintown Ridge Block Length Waiver – A request by Stanley Martin Homes for a waiver from NADC §14.4, Street Types and Design, Table 14-2, Block Length for the Martintown Ridge major subdivision. The application affects ±23.5 acres located off West Martintown Road, TPN 106-00-00-041, zoned R-7, Small Lot, Single-Family Residential.

Bobby Bagwell speaks background of project and the reasoning for design of project due to topo.

- a. Consideration of the Waiver request by the Planning Commission

Commissioner Tim Key made first motion with conditions recommended by staff, Commissioner Jesse Elliott seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

9. **PP22-009**– Martintown Ridge Major Subdivision Preliminary Plat -- A request by Stanley Martin Homes for Major Subdivision Preliminary Plat approval for Martintown Ridge. The project proposes 89 single-family detached homes. The application affects ±23.5 acres located off West Martintown Road, TPN 106-00-00-041, zoned R-7, Small Lot, Single-Family Residential.

Agenda for the Wednesday, April 19, 2023, Regular Planning Commission Meeting

- a. Consideration of the Major Subdivision Preliminary Plat by the Planning Commission

Commissioner Key made first motion with conditions recommended by staff, Commissioner Jesse Elliott seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

**10. CONPL23-001** – Valvoline Sketch Plan Review – A request by Andujar Construction, Inc. for a sketch plan review of a proposed Valvoline oil change center in the River Commons Planned Development, ±0.84 acres zoned PD, Planned Development, located on Knox Avenue, TPN 006-20-18-001.

- a. Consideration of the Sketch Plan by the Planning Commission  
Mr. Paradise stated that the Planned Development of area doesn't call for Automotive Service in area so Valvoline needs a PD modification.

Holden Brinson of 2439 McDowell St, spoke about the PUD being initially too broad and now needing a modification.

Commissioner Bob Bigger asked for Clarification on the entry ways of the business with concerns of traffic entering Kroger (Knox Ave) parking lot.

Mr. Brinson states that traffic will enter on west of the building and exiting the slope and rear of the property.

Mr. Harbeson spoke about parking, the number allowed in PD and reassuring it would be subjected to a landscape inspection.

**11. Staff Report**

- a. March Performance Report  
Mr. Paradise states the Arts Augusta Regional Transportation study is now updating their bicycle pedestrian plan. Georgia Ave traffic study is going forward and Development Code is still in progress.

**12. Adjourn 9:43pm**

Agenda for the Wednesday, April 19, 2023, Regular Planning Commission Meeting

As Approved May 15, 2023

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. Paradise'.

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