

# Planning Commission



## Minutes for the Wednesday, June 19, 2024, Regular Meeting

Municipal Center – 6:00 p.m., 100 Georgia Avenue, Third Floor – Council Chambers

The Planning Commission meeting will be streamed for public viewing online at:

- “City of North Augusta – Public Information” on [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com)
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### *Members of the Planning Commission*

Dr. Christine Crawford

*Chair*

Bob Bigger, *Vice Chair*

Chelsea Waddell

Jesse Elliott

Rett Harbeson

Lisa Christie

Erin Slade

*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** 6:00pm
2. **Roll Call** All members were present except Jesse Elliot and Rett Harbeson.
3. **Approval of Minutes** – May 15, 2024 Regular Meeting

Bob Bigger made a motion to approve the minutes. Chlesea Waldell made the second motion. It was approved unanimously.

4. **Confirmation of Agenda** There were no changes to the agenda.
5. **RZM24-004** – Rezoning – A request by WSM Ventures, LLC to rezone approximately 0.25 acres located at 10139 Atomic Road, TPN 007-16-04-002, from R-10, Medium Lot Single-Family Residential to GC, General Commercial.

Tommy Paradise stated that the property has been vacant for a number of years and Take 5 Oil Change is now looking to extend their business onto the parcel. Mr. Paradise stated that the applicant is wanting to rezone the parcel from R-10 to General Commercial.

David Berry of 1028 Glendel Circle in Spartanburg, SC approached the podium. He stated that his company has been looking at the parcel for sometime. He stated they have 5 other stores in the CSRA and is proposing North Augusta be the home of their next store opening. He stated that the company would be filing for a Special Exemption Permit that would be contingent on the rezoning being approved. He continued by stating that the building is approximately 1600 sq ft. He stated that the vehicles would enter through the rear and exit out the front of the business. He stated they would hire up to 10 employees. There will be approximately a 40ft buffer between the paved area and the property line to the rear adjacent property.

Chairman Crawford asked if the parcel would be used for employee parking.

Mr Berry concurred and stated that the parking would serve the customers as well the employees.

Lisa Christie asked if the proposed entry would be located on Atomic Rd.

Mr. Berry concurred. He stated that there would be access on Martintown rd as well.

Erin Slade asked if the development would be paved entirely or would there be a landscape buffer recommended by staff.

Mr. Berry stated that the side of the building near of Atomic Rd would be paved. The rear would be employee parking and the rest would be paved.

Mr. Paradise responded to Mrs Slade by saying that it would have to meet the current development code standards for landscaping as well.

Public Comments were opened.

LaStacia Reese of 10127 Atomic Rd approached the podium. She stated that she resides near the subject parcel and is concerned with noise and light pollution, as well as traffic.

Mr. Paradise stated that Ms. Reese is a member of the Planning and Development Staff for the City of North Augusta. He stated that Mrs. Reese is not and will not be involved with the application due to her place of residence and the possible conflict. He stated

that Ms. Reese is speaking in the capacity of a private citizen and an affected resident and no capacity of a city employee.

Mr. Barry approached the podium to address Ms. Reese's concerns. He stated that his company has not completed a lighting plan but will have one completed in the near future. He stated that there will be one pole light and lighting packs on the wall for employee safety. He stated as far as noise, there is a small air compressor in an enclosed closet that is operated 6-8 times a day for 20-30 seconds each time. He stated there is also a bell located inside the store to alert employees of customers but will not be able to be heard outside of the business. He stated that the developer's goal is to add a left turning lane for customers to use to enter the business from Atomic rd. He also stated that the business hours are 7:00a.m to 8:00p.m. Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 6:00pm on Saturday and 9:00am to 5:00pm on Sundays. The peak hours are 10:00am to 4:00pm.

Public Comments were closed.

a. Consideration of the Rezoning request by the Planning Commission

Bob Bigger asked if the Planning Commission was only approving the rezoning and the applicant would have to come back before the Planning Commission to have the Site Plan approved or would they be allowed to build if it met the Development Code regulations.

Mr. Paradise stated that the project would be Staff Approved and would not come before the Planning Commission for approval.

Mr. Bigger stated that the lot is fairly small and would not be hard to develop and it makes sense to him to make the lot more accessible rather than it being vacant.

Mrs. Slade asked if the Planning Commission could add a recommendation to add a screen of greenery to help delineate the commercial from the residential.

Mr. Paradise responded to Mrs. Slade by stating requiring the applicant to add a screen of greenery would be placing a condition on the rezoning and Conditional Zoning is not allowed in the state of South Carolina.

Ms. Waddell asked that Staff keep nearby residents in mind when approving the Site Plan and try to accommodate them as much as possible.

**b. Recommendation to City Council**

Bob Bigger made the first motion for RZM24-004 to rezone from R-10 to General Commercial as recommended. Erin Slade seconded the motion. The vote for recommendation was unanimous.

6. **RZT24-002**– Text Amendment – A request by the City of North Augusta to amend Table 5.1, Use Matrix of the North Augusta Development Code to permit private non-profit organizations to operate in the Public Use zoning district as a Special Exception.

Mr. Paradise stated that there was discussion about the different options the city may have to partner with non-profit organizations, where they would align in the mission and may be allowed to use City facilities and be located on city property. He stated that a Special Exception would allow the public the comment to the Board of Zoning Appeals before a decision is made. Allowing private non-profit organizations as a Special Exception would also allow the city government entities to partner with them and have a bigger impact.

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

There were no comments made from the public or members of the Planning Commission.

**b. Recommendation to City Council**

Bob Bigger made the first motion for RT024-002 Article 5 of the uses and use conditions for an amended text amendment to permit private non profit organizations to be located in the public use zoning district as a Special Exception. Chelsea Waddell made the second motion. The vote for recommendation was unanimous.

7. **PD23-003** – Planned Development General Development Plan – A request by CSRA Development Company, LLC for approval of a Planned Development General Development Plan affecting ±70.82 acres located between Compassion Way and Old Plantation Road near I-20, Tax Map Parcel Number 001-19-02-005 zoned PD, Planned Development and a portion of Tax Parcel Number 002-08-01-002 zoned R-14, Large Lot, Single-Family Residential. The proposed project is a mixed-use development consisting of townhomes and commercial uses.

Mr. Paradise stated that the subject parcel is already zoned Planned Development. There is a portion of the Planned Development that consists of the R-14 zoning district. He stated that the Martintown Corridor Study called for a connector road from Compassion

Way to Old Plantation Rd, but after studying the topography and wetlands of the area, Staff realized that it would not be feasible. He continued by stating that the proposal includes 141 single family attached homes with access from Old Plantation Rd. The plans also call for a 25 foot natural or vegetated buffer on all sides and the rear property lines that adjoin residential uses. The buffer on the western side of the property will be a minimum of 25 ft. A pavilion area, fire pit and playground will be constructed near the entrance and amenities will also include a walking trail and fishing pond. Mr. Paradise continued by stating that the commercial section will be accessed from Compassion Way and will consist of a 206,000 sq ft of self storage, 40,000 sq ft of open RV storage and 90,000 sq ft of enclosed RV storage. A 50 ft buffer along the rear of the parcel will be provided where possible and the developer maintains the ability to grant exceptions to the buffer where it is necessary. Mr. Paradise stated that a Planned Development is defined as a project comprising housing of different types, densities, and of compatible commercial uses or shopping centers, office parks and mixed-use developments. A plan development district is established by rezoning prior to development and is characterized by a unified site plan for a mixed use development.

Bob Bigger stated that the subject Planned Development Plan meets the technical definition because it consists of residential and commercial, but stated that there is no accessibility from residential to commercial and asked if Mr. Paradise could elaborate on the reasoning.

Mr. Paradise stated the applicant would expound on the accessibility concerns.

Applicant Keith Lawrence of 656 Bank Creek Dr of Evans approached the podium. He stated he is proposing 141 lots on 46.5 acres of land, which is 3 units per acre. He stated the current plan presented has a 17.1% reduction from the original plan that was presented 2 years ago. There are 22 ft and 26 ft wide townhouses proposed and the 26 ft townhomes will have master bedrooms located downstairs to serve a different clientele. They will be priced at \$289,000. He continued by stating that the commercial portion will consist of self storage and will have a private connecting driveway for the residents to access the storage facility. Mr. Lawrence stated that there will be 22.1 acres of Natural Area and 16 acres of grass acres for green space. That will give the project over 52% of open space. He stated that clearing of trees and vegetation will only be where it is needed for grading. The closest townhome to the nearest single family lot is 232 sq ft and the buffer requirement for a PD against R-14 is 8 ft. The proposed buffer is 29 times the distance to the closest point required by the City of North Augusta Development Code. He stated that a standard single family residential development would allow the rear of the homes to be within 30 ft of any property line. The proposed design moves the construction as far away as possible from the current residential homes. Mr. Lawrence stated that a traffic study was completed and it showed there were no requirements for improvements to existing roadways. He continued by stating that unlike the court case

Sinkler V. Charleston, the property will not be needing to be rezoned and this was already zoned as Planned Development by the City of North Augusta. He stated that one of the key features to establishing the Circuit Court ruling in establishing a Planned Development was in order to achieve the objectives of the comprehensive plan and the locality and allow flexibility in the development that will result in improved designed character and quality of new mixed use developments and preserve natural scenic features of open space. Local governing authorities may provide for the establishment of planned development districts as amendments to a locally adopted zoning ordinance and official map of the property. The Planned Development Provisions must encourage innovative design for site planning for residential, commercial, institutional and industrial developments within the Plan District. He stated that the proposed concept plans address the key features established by Sinkler V. Charleston. Mr. Lawrence reiterated that the developer is preserving a large amount of natural green areas by clustering the development to the east side of the property. They are preserving the scenic nature of the existing pond and there are a number of unique features as well. All townhome roofs are tied into gutter storm systems to prevent any future drainage problems. He also stated that 39 additional guest parking will be placed through the development.

Bob Bigger asked if the access road to the storage facility will also be an access point for the residents to reach the commercial spaces of the development.

Mr. Lawrence stated that the residents would be able to access the commercial spaces through the self storage roadway if they have contracted a storage space for use. The Self Storage facility would have gated access. He stated that the developer would have liked to provide more connectivity but the topography of the area blocked all possibility of adding additional roadways.

Erin Slade asked Mr. Paradise and the applicant to elaborate on the design elements for the townhouses garage not meeting the requirements of the guidelines.

Mr. Paradise stated that there is a certain percentage of the front facade that the garage can be at and it is not meeting the criteria at this time.

Mr. Lawrence stated that the developer will address that issue when necessary.

Mrs. Slade asked why the commercial space was dedicated to self storage only instead of being mixed with office space.

Mr. Lawrence stated that the developers were not able to separate the parcels because of topography.

Mr. Bigger asked if the developer would be the one to build the self storage and if it was finalized to be a self storage facility.

Mr. Lawrence stated that it is not yet finalized and it is only proposed.

Chairman Crawford asked if there would be any other commercial use on the development besides self storage.

Mr. Lawrence stated that Self Storage is the only proposed commercial use.

Mr. Paradise states that he received an email from Mr. Van Monroe on Monday June 17, 2024 and he has provided each member as well as the applicant with a copy.

The floor was opened for Public Comment.

Patricia Kerko of Shoals Way Ct approached the podium. She stated that her neighborhood has 89 households and the only access out the neighborhood is Martintown Rd. She stated that exiting Martintown Rd is currently a safety issue and with the upcoming new developments in the area, she is concerned that the traffic will become unbearable. She doesn't believe the traffic studies that have been done are acceptable. She asked if the development could be delayed until an acceptable traffic and safety solution has been developed.

Joe Miano of 286 Riverwind Dr approached the podium. He reiterated Mrs. Kerko concerns. He asked where the trails and fire pits would be located on the development.

Dave Kerko of 70 Shoals Way approached the podium. He reiterated the concerns about traffic. He made a request that the Planning Commission actually visit the roadway to see the concerns.

Sterling Roberston of 25 Plantation Court approached the podium. He stated that his concern is safety. He reiterated the traffic concerns and the visibility for drivers on Martintown rd.

Chairman Crawford stated for clarification that the application they were ruling on is only for the approval of the Planned Development.

Mr. Paradise stated that streets and highways are allowed in any zone. He stated that there will only be a street in the R-14 so the parcel will not be rezoned but there will be a street that will access the Planned Development located in the rear of the subject parcel

Van Monore of 570 Plantation Dr approached the podium. He spoke about his history in residential construction. He stated that he is opposed to the development connecting to the existing neighborhood and would like the development to only use Compassion Way.

Rick Goalie of 1060 Old Plantation Rd approached the podium. He questioned the Traffic Study and if it included the entire area. He also questioned the ability of his RV accessing the roadway.

Mr. Paradise stated that at Compassion Way and Martintown Rd, there was a right-out only lane required for the developer of the apartments to construct. He continued by stating that one of the businesses located on the roadway had trouble getting their equipment onto the roadway, which caused a complaint to SCDOT. After the complaint, SCDOT re-evaluated the roadway and decided to mandate a left and right turning lane instead of the right-only turning lane.

Anthony Thuan of 115 Riverwind Dr approached the podium. He stated he concerns turning his RV out onto the roadway.

Roy Charboneba of 625 Savannah Barony approached the podium. He reiterated the traffic concerns. He stated that the new developments are destroying the peace and safety of the area.

David Kamhstan of 1053 Old Plantation Rd approached the podium. He stated that he is concerned that the residents of the development would be trapped in the development and wants to know how the developers would address getting the residents out safely. He stated he will have to move for the driving safety of his children when they are allowed to drive.

Kenny Burkhalter of 1034 Old Plantation approached the podium. He asked there would be a barrier between the new development and the existing development and how it would be maintained.

Tina Hawes of 1129 Old Plantation Rd approached the podium. She stated that it was previously discussed that there would be a red light placed on Martintown Rd. She also questioned the ability of the large vehicles maneuvering on the roadway.

Chelsea Waddell asked if Compassion Way was a state road and stated that the members of the Planning Commission did not have the ability to govern the roadway.

Mr. Paradise concurred.



Lisa Christie asked if the right turn only be constructed regardless of the development.

Mr. Paradise stated that the Martintown Corridor Study was performed and there is no right turn only requirement for Old Plantation Rd and Martintown Rd coming in the short term. He stated that Mayor Williams spoke about on the November Ballot, there will be a Capital Project Sales Tax Referendum which would address traffic concerns on near Old Plantation rd.

Chris Loyal of 580 Plantation Rd approached the podium. He stated that the city of North Augusta does not have the same lot requirements as Aiken County as allows a dense population. He believes this increases the risk for the citizens. He expressed his concerns for emergency vehicles to access the roadway.

Barbara Sweeney of 79 Shoal way ct approached the podium. She reiterated the traffic concerns.

Public Comments were closed

Applicant Keith Lawrence reapproached the podium. He stated the trails are located near the pond. (He used the pointer to show where the amenities would be located on the projector). He states that the distance from the trail to the property line is approximately 80 ft. He continued by stating that he is not applying for rezoning. He also stated that mixed-use is an option in the Sinkler V Charleston case and not a requirement. He continued that he hired a company to perform the Traffic study and his company has no input on the traffic study and it includes the entire area.. He stated the right turn will occur regardless of if his development is approved and is governed by SCDOT. Mr. Lawrence stated that there will be woods there and is willing to put up a fence to stop residents from wandering into the existing development.

Chairman Crawford stated the Planned Development consists of different types of homes and doesn't believe size makes the home a different type of home.

Mr. Lawrence stated that type of homes aren't stated in the Case Sinkler V Charleston.

- a. Consideration of the Planned Development General Development Plan by the Planning Commission

Bob Bigger asked if under the PD could someone build a Strip center.

Mr. Paradies stated that there could be a strip center associated with residential but there must be both.

Bob Bigger stated that he believes the property will increase density in some way regardless of the development. He also stated that he is concerned the development may not meet the Planned Development definition.

Chelsea Waddell reiterated Bob Bigger's concerns. She stated that she hears the public comments and shares the concerns about traffic. She also states that the roadway is governed by SCDOT and reiterates that they have no jurisdiction on the roadway.

Erin Slade asked about the November Referendum Ballot and how it will address the traffic concerns

Mr. Paradise stated that the city must first get access to the funds and then find a solution for the traffic concerns but will not be able to do so until the November Referendum.

**b. Recommendation to City Council**

Bob Bigger made the motion for approval of Planned Development based on the NADC Section 5.7. Lisa Christie made the second motion. The opposed votes were unanimous.

**8. Staff Report**

**a. May Performance Report**

**9. Adjourn 7:40pm**

Respectfully Submitted,



Thomas L. Paradise, Director

Department of Planning and Development