

# Planning Commission



## Minutes of the Thursday, December 17, 2015 Regular Meeting

### *Members of the Planning Commission*

Woods Burnett

*Chairman*

Leonard Carter, Jr.

Bob Clark

Richard Fletcher

Timothy V. Key

JoAnn McKie

Larry Watts

1. **Call to Order** – The regular meeting of December 17, 2015, having been duly publicized, was called to order by Chairman Woods Burnett at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call** – Members present were Chairman Burnett and Commissioners Len Carter, Bob Clark, Tim Key, JoAnn McKie and Larry Watts. Commissioner Richard Fletcher joined the meeting after the roll call at 7:01 p.m. Also in attendance were Scott Sterling, AICP, Director of Planning and Development; Christine DeCamp, AICP, Planner; the project applicant and his representative; and the press.
3. **Approval of Minutes** – The minutes of the November 19, 2015 Regular Meeting were approved as written.
4. **Confirmation of Agenda** – There were no changes to the agenda.
5. **Application CONPL 15-001** – A request by Metro Homesites, LLC for Planning Commission preliminary review of Gregory Landing, a proposed major subdivision plan.

Commissioner Watts recused himself from discussion of this agenda item due to a possible financial interest as he owns adjoining property and left the meeting at 7:03.

Mr. Sterling reviewed the application as outlined in Staff Memo 15-54 reminding those present that any comments made during the presentation were non-binding for both Commissioners and the applicant. The applicant is under contract to purchase two parcels (±83 acres) of land in Edgefield County, pending annexation of the property to the City. If annexation and the land transfer are successful, Metro Homesites proposes to build a ±150 single-family subdivision. Mr. Sterling noted that his preliminary review of the applicant's plan identified a problem with meeting the Development Code's 650-foot block length requirement. He also noted the applicant's desire to limit the number of stream crossings on the property. Mr.

Sterling stated that the Development Code standard requires a maximum 650 foot block length, but that the Planning Commission has the option to extend block length to 1,000 feet under certain conditions. The topography of the site and extensive presence of wetlands may provide such conditions.

David Banks, P.E., Southern Partners, Inc., the applicant's representative, briefly reviewed the development plans and pointed out the applicant's concerns and development limitations related to topography and wetlands. The cost of designing wetland crossings is prohibitive and more than two crossings may have a detrimental impact on environmentally sensitive areas on the site. Extending block lengths to 1,000 feet would eliminate the need for a third stream crossing, which would be cost effective for the developer and would also better meet the requirements of the Army Corps of Engineers.

Mark Gilliam, Metro Homesites, LLC, discussed his plans for the Gregory Lake property. He asked that the Planning Commission provide input and guidance on the best way to build a successful residential subdivision without unduly disturbing the natural areas present.

Commissioners asked questions and offered comments related to the origin of the 650-foot block length requirement; alternative street and lot configurations; connecting stub outs to adjoining land; whether any of the site exceeded DHEC's 30% steep slope guideline; the number and financial feasibility of potential wetlands crossings; utility availability (City sewer via Oak Creek, water from Edgefield County); Gregory Lake Road traffic and the subdivision entrance; and the projected price point for individual lots in the subdivision.

Mr. Banks, Mr. Gilliam and Mr. Sterling responded to all questions and comments.

**Commissioners generally agreed that the topography and natural features of this site may require block lengths that exceed the 650-foot limit and encouraged the developer to minimize wetland crossings and preserve the site's beauty as much as possible. Commissioners also suggested that longer block lengths be designed to have some curvature for both traffic calming and appearance.**

**8. Staff Reports – Mr. Sterling:**

- Referenced the November monthly report as well as supplemental reading material included in the Commission agenda packet.
- Updated Commissioners on the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. Stantec personnel are currently drafting goals and objectives for the Plan and may be ready to meet with Commissioners as soon as January.

- Reminded Commissioners that Text Amendment C from Application RZT 15-002 and related to the Planning Director's discretion might be on the next City Council agenda on December 21.
  - Thanked Commissioners for their efforts during a very busy 2015 and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.
9. **Adjourn** – Chairman Burnett in turn thanked the Planning and Development staff for their service to the Commission and to the City's work throughout the year. With no objection, Chairman Burnett adjourned the meeting at 7: 49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott Sterling, AICP, Director  
Department of Planning and Development  
Secretary to the Planning Commission