

Gastonia Planning Commission
December 7, 2017

Vice-Chairperson Bob Cinq-Mars declared a quorum and the Gastonia Planning Commission meeting opened at 5:31 pm on Thursday, December 7, 2017, in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Present: Commissioners Rodney Armstrong, Jerry Fleeman, Kristie Ferguson, Bob Cinq-Mars, and Bob Biggerstaff

Absent: Commissioners Pamela Goode, Mark Epstein, and Jim Stewart

Staff Members Present: Charles Graham, Assistant City Attorney; Jason Thompson, AICP, Planning Director; Jana McMakin, AICP, Senior Planner; and Chrystal Howard, Secretary

Item 1a: Role Call / Sound Check

Item 1b: Calls/Contacts to Planning Commission Members

Commissioners stated there were no contacts.

Item 1c: Approval of November 9, 2017 Minutes

Commissioner Fleeman made a motion to approve the November minutes as written and Commissioner Biggerstaff seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Cinq-Mars explained the rules of procedure and time limitations.

Item 2: Public Hearing – StoneWright Properties LLC (File # 8903)

Subject hearing involves a request to rezone approximately 0.58 acres from RS-8 (Residential District, minimum 8,000 sq. ft. lots) to O-1 CD (Office Conditional District). The property is located at 229 and 237 N. New Hope Road. The property is owned by StoneWright Properties LLC.

Commissioner Cinq-Mars opened the public hearing and recognized Jana McMakin, AICP, Senior Planner for the purpose of staff presentation.

Ms. McMakin stated that the rezoning request was submitted by StoneWright Properties LLC current owner of 229 and 237 N. New Hope Road. Mr. David Stone with StoneWright Properties LLC purchased properties after discussing with Planning staff the rezoning process. Ms. McMakin provided the site description and background on the subject property as presented in the agenda. Ms. McMakin referred the Commissioners to the proposed zoning conditions.

Proposed conditions:

1. Allowable uses shall be uses permitted in the O-1 district as set forth in the City of Gastonia Unified Development Ordinance.
2. The applicant must obtain driveway permit from NCDOT when changed to office use.
3. The applicant to combine two (2) lots into one (1) lot in order to share access and parking area.
4. As part of the required Type B buffer, a six (6) ft. high wood fence will be installed along the rear property line.
5. All other specifications and general provisions shall be met as required by the City of Gastonia Unified Development Ordinance.
6. In no instance shall the zoning conditions exempt a project from other development requirements.

Ms. McMakin stated discussion occurred with Mr. Stone on the different options from the office district to Office Light Commercial district. The office district met Mr. Stone's needs. Ms. McMakin briefly explained the adjoining properties and land use trends as presented in the agenda. Ms. McMakin also briefly explained the available public facilities. The Future Land Use Map in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan indicates the properties as residential use. Although the subject property is shown to remain residential on the 2025 Future Land Use Map, there is office zoning adjacent to the subject property and further north along N. New Hope Road. The applicant's request for a conditional district allows for zoning conditions to be part of the approval and a detailed site plan has also been provided showing the buffer from existing adjacent residential properties. In addition, the O-1 district predominately has uses with set hours and the office district provides a transition from the commercial uses across N. New Hope Road, the major thoroughfare

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(N. New Hope Road), and the neighborhood. Staff therefore recommends that the request be approved. No questions were asked by the Commissioners.

Commissioner Cinq-Mars recognized Mr. David Stone, 546 Basswood Way of Gastonia, NC. Mr. Stone thanked the Commissioners for their time. Mr. Stone stated that the properties were purchased for personal investment. The intent at 229 N. New Hope Road is for personal offices, their brokerage company and their investment company. The intent at 237 N. New Hope Road is also office use with hopes of a complimenting business. Long term growth will consume and use both properties within the next 5 to 10 years. The company likes historic properties and there is no intent at this time to tear down structures and do anything significantly different and will keep the structures as is. Mr. Stone reiterated a couple proposals explained by Ms. McMakin.

Commissioner Cinq-Mars inquired about the slope at N. New Hope Road onto the property. Mr. Stone stated that an incline is present and an existing driveway would be used. The next phase will address the slope and sidewalks. No other questions were asked by the Commissioners.

Commissioner Fleeman made the motion to approve the request as presented with the statement of consistency and reasonableness and Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Item 3: Public Hearing – Amending the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) (File # 8858)

Subject hearing involves an ordinance amending Section 7.6.2.G. Minor Work-Certificate of Appropriateness Required found under Section 7.6.2 HD Historic Overlay District of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to clarify and list standards for fences in the side and rear yards as specified in the Historic District Design Guidelines..

Commissioner Cinq-Mars opened the public hearing and recognized Kim Wallis, Planner for the purpose of staff presentation.

Ms. Wallis briefly introduced herself. Ms. Wallis proceeded with the background, proposed text amendment as presented in the agenda. Ms. Wallis stated that currently, there are no fence height restrictions in the side yard and no height restrictions on privacy fences in the rear yard. If approved by the City Council, this ordinance amendment would allow staff to approve side yard fences up to 3 feet and rear yard fences up to 6 feet. Additionally, it would allow subcommittee members of the HDC to review applications where the applicant submits designs for fences taller than 3 feet in the side yard and 6 feet in the rear yard. If the ordinance amendment is approved, staff will then amend the Historic District Design Guidelines as per their recommendation at the aforementioned review.

Mr. Thompson explained the delay with this amendment request and corrected the proposed effective date as December 19, 2017 if approved by the City Council. Mr. Thompson introduced Ms. Wallis and explained that she handles items that relate to the Historic District Commission. The Historic District Commission meetings are scheduled monthly. Mr. Thompson and Ms. Wallis worked together with the design guideline review and this was an outcome. In this case, this is proposed UDO amendment and the Planning Commission will provide a recommendation to City Council.

Commissioner Fleeman made a suggestion to change Commission to Historic District Commission removing any confusion and provide clarification in this UDO section.

Discussion occurred amongst Commissioner Cinq-Mars, Ms. Wallis and Mr. Thompson on the definition of a side yard and rear year and illustration. Ms. Wallis and Mr. Thompson explained the UDO definitions, Historic District Commissioner's flexibility, and the Historic District Design Guidelines. Ms. Wallis read the description for side yards in the Design Guidelines and stated that a diagram can be included in the Design Guidelines.

No further questions were asked by the Commissioners.

Commissioner Fleeman made the recommendation to approve the request incorporating comments to change Commission to Historic District Commission removing any confusion and provide clarification in this UDO section, and to include a diagram in the Design Guidelines. Commissioner Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

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Item 4: Preliminary Major Subdivision Plat – Maycroft (File # 8857)

Subject hearing involves Preliminary Major Subdivision Plat for Bowman Development Company located on the west side of Huffstetler Road.

Commissioner Cinq-Mars opened the public hearing and recognized Keith Lineberger, Land Development Project Manager for the purpose of staff presentation.

Mr. Lineberger stated he is presenting a preliminary subdivision plat for development known as Maycroft submitted by T.J. Pekorak. The property is located on the west side of Huffstetler Road south of McDade Lane and is zoned PD PRD. The developer is proposing 59 lots on approximately 21 acres. Lot sizes range from 7,000 sq. ft. to 13,000 sq. ft. with a majority of the lots in the 7,000 sq. ft. to 8,000 sq. ft. range. City water and sewer will serve the property. Curb, gutter, and sidewalks will be constructed throughout the development. A small turn lane will be constructed at the entrance of Huffstetler Road into the development. The development will also contain stormwater control facility to meet the Phase 2 storm water requirements. Staff believes the preliminary plat meets the zoning and ordinance requirements and recommends approval.

Commissioner Cinq-Mars asked Mr. Lineberger to show him the stormwater control facility location on the site plan. Mr. Lineberger indicated the location on the Commissioner's monitors.

Commissioner Biggerstaff inquired about monuments and their location. Mr. Lineberger stated that the monuments is referring to the entrance sign(s). Mr. Thompson also commented that the development of subdivisions being developed will have entrance monument signs installed identifying the name of the neighborhood.

Commissioner Fleeman made the motion to approve the request as presented and Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Item 5: Other Business

Public Hearing - Joseph P Pearson (File #8789), the rezoning request presented at the November 21, 2017 City Council meeting was approved.

Public Hearing - William F Gray (File #8872), the rezoning request presented at the November 9, 2017 Gastonia Planning Commission was appealed and will be presented at the December 19, 2017 City Council meeting.

Discussion occurred on representation for this meeting. Planning Staff will send a reminder to Commissioners prior to the December 19, 2017 City Council meeting.

There being no further business, Commissioner Cinq-Mars entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Biggerstaff made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Fleeman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Commissioner Cinq-Mars adjourned the meeting at 6:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chrystal Howard, Secretary

Pamela Goode, Chairperson