

OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

March 18, 2019

Regular Meeting

7:00 P.M. Oconee County Courthouse

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Yarbrough, Maria Caudill, Mike Floyd, Karen Hilyard, Chuck Hunt, Bruce MacPherson, Penny Mills, George Rodrigues, Steven Strickland, Brad Tucker, T.L. Turman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Chuck Steen

STAFF PRESENT: Guy Herring, Director, Planning & Code Enforcement; Gabriel Quintas, Assistant Director, Planning & Code Enforcement; Grace Tuschak, Planner; Kyle Stephens, Planner

PRESS PRESENT: Michael Prochaska, Sarah Bell

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Yarbrough called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting minutes for February 18, 2019. Motion by Penny Mills to adopt minutes as written; Second by Maria Caudill. The vote was unanimous to adopt the minutes.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Item #1. Rezone #7702, William B. Jones, A-1 and B-2 to B -2, 32.079 acres, southwest corner of intersection of US Hwy 78 and Mars Hill Road. Commercial.

Gabriel presented the staff report with staff recommending approval subject to 11 conditions.

Chairman Yarbrough asked if there were comments from the applicant.

Steven Rowland spoke in favor of the request on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Rowland stated that the applicant is requesting that all conditions be removed unless they are conditions typically imposed on a B-2 zone.

Chairman opened the floor for public comment and called for those in favor or against the request to speak.

Dennis Norton spoke against, and read a letter outlining his concerns about approval of the rezone request spurring uncontrolled growth, the proposed project's compatibility with the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, the compatibility of B-2 zoning district with the Technology Gateway Character Area, the compatibility of a proposed big box store with the TG character area, the proposed hotel having adequate parking, timing of road improvement completion, easements for any

shared driveways, sidewalks, and downzoning to B-1. Mr. Norton also asked for a copy of the letter to be included in the meeting minutes.

William B. Jones was given an opportunity for rebuttal of the comments and spoke regarding the history of the property. Mr. Jones also explained that full buildout will occur over time, that market conditions will determine the timeline, and that traffic already exists with the existing commercial development along US Hwy 78. Mr. Jones stated that the proposed development will be a stark improvement over what already exists.

Mr. Rowland spoke in favor of site driveway 3 remaining as a right in right out only (removing condition #7).

Chairman Yarbrough closed the Public Comment period.

Gabriel responded to Mr. Norton's suggestions, including but not limited to: parking requirements to be addressed at time of development permit, public works will require road work to be done by phase 1, convenience store entrance is already proposed to be eliminated in condition #7, ROW easements will be addressed at development permitting phase, alignment of the driveway with Lenru Road is unlikely to be allowed by GDOT, sidewalks will be required by the UDC, 50' buffers are shown along agricultural/residential properties, any substantial future changes to the plan will require resubmittal of the concept plan for approval by the Board of Commissioners as a rezone modification before issuance of a development permit.

The Planning Commission discussed its concerns/comments including but not limited to: development of the back portion of the property, "domino effect" of development along Mars Hill Rd., concerns about compatibility of the project with the TG character area, concerns about the applicant's request that all conditions be removed and "good faith," what kind of big box store could occupy the space, which conditions in particular are most objectionable to the applicant, retail as a "secondary use" to technology business in the TG character area, a grocery store on US Hwy 78 as "inevitable" because of heavy residential development in the area, and availability of other B-2 zoned properties.

The applicant clarified that conditions #5, #7, and the disallowed uses of car wash, new car dealers, and automotive parts, accessories, and tire stores are the most objectionable.

There being no further questions or comments from the commission, a motion was in order.

Motion to deny by Karen Hilyard; second by Steven Strickland. Voting in favor of the motion: Maria Caudill, Karen Hilyard, Chuck Hunt, Bruce McPherson, Penny Mills, Steven Strickland, T.L. Turman. Voting against the motion: Brad Tucker, George Rodrigues, and Mike Floyd. The motion passed with a 7-3 vote.

Item #2. UDC Article 2 and 3 Text Amendments

Gabriel presented a summary of the proposed text amendments to UDC Articles 2 and 3.

The Planning Commission discussed its concerns/comments including but not limited to: the version of the proposed changes that was uploaded to the website, why ceramic and glass manufacturing was removed from AG, the number of changes proposed, and the reason for the text amendments.

Steven Strickland proposed that the planning commissioners e-mail their comments to staff by April 1, 2019.

There being no further questions or comments from the commission, a motion was in order.

Motion by Maria Caudill to table the text amendments to UDC articles 2 and 3 until the April 15 Planning Commission meeting. Second by Mike Floyd.

The motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn. With no further business, the Planning Commission adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

 _____ OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIRMAN	4/15/19 DATE
 _____ OCONEE COUNTY PLANING COMMISSION SECRETARY	4/15/19 DATE