

**City of Fairburn
Planning and Zoning Commission Minutes
October 7, 2014**

Attendance

Present were Chairman Elise Stoney, Commission Members-Vice-Chair Shelby Phillips, Mark Wade, Elizabeth Echols, and Jerry Williams. Also present were Acting City Planner - Jahnee Prince and City Attorney - Valerie Ross.

Call to Order

Chairman Elise Stoney called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting opened with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call – Determination of Quorum

A quorum was confirmed for meeting.

Public Comments

No Comments

Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Williams made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Echols seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Adoption of Minutes

Commissioner Wade made a motion to approve the minutes from September 2, 2014. Commissioner Phillips seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Public Hearing:

Acting City Planner, Jahnee Prince presented the staff report for 2014-VAR-01, Variance to reduce the Georgia Highway 74 Overlay District required front landscape buffer requirement from 35' to 20' for the proposed Starbucks and Marco's Pizza.

Chairman Stoney opened the Public Hearing for 2014-VAR-01:

No one spoke in favor or opposed to the application.

Dennis Drewer, the landscape architect for the project, spoke for the applicant. Mr. Drewer stated that the Fairburn landscape standards are good but they feel the ordinance should be changed because most of the 35 feet is sodded in addition to the sod in the right of way. Mr. Drewer showed pictures of Taco Bell that showed sod and

dead azaleas, no canopy trees and stated that there is 35 feet of sod in the right of way and 35 feet on the Taco Bell property. Mr. Drewer stated that they like the City's planting requirements but claimed that Cracker Barrel did not comply and has no canopy trees. Mr. Drewer claimed that they are required to landscape both sides of Coventry Parkway, the access road to the rear of their site. Mr. Drewer also claimed that Quick Trip only has a six feet wide landscape strip and that Peachtree City and Tyrone only require 20 feet of landscaping but the amount of landscaping is not reduced, only the area is reduced.

Mr. Drewer stated that the property owner has worked hard to bring a high quality tenant and wants to follow and exceed the landscaping standards. They think that the landscaping standard should be reduced to 20 feet and the ordinance should be changed. Mr. Drewer asked the Planning and Zoning Commission to consider the variance for Starbucks and to change the ordinance on the buffer width overall, but not change the required number of trees and shrubs. Mr. Drewer stated that he was happy to answer any questions.

Commissioner Phillips asked if both tenants have to meet their own parking requirements. Mr. Drewer said yes, Starbucks has more parking because people linger there. The pizza place is more carry out.

Commissioner Phillips asked why remove the landscaping from the front instead of the back? Mr. Drewer stated that we have the road in the back, visibility would be limited if we pushed the building back.

Commissioner Williams inquired about the morning traffic impacts. Mr. Drewer stated that they'll use the existing Harris Road traffic light. Commissioner Williams asked if there had been a traffic impact study for the AM hours? Mr. Drewer stated that this had been included in the DRI study and that this property is the smallest player in the overall DRI study which was done before the property was zoned commercial.

Commissioner Echols asked whether there will be a light across from Meadow Glen. Mr. Drewer stated yes there will be a light across from Meadow Glen.

Chairwoman Stoney asked how many parking spaces would they lose without the front parking spaces. Mr. Drewer responded that there are 33 parking spaces total and that they are concerned about losing the 12 in front. He also explained the landscaping plan and that they exceed the City's planting requirements.

Mr. Richard Lester, another representative of the applicant, told the Planning and Zoning Commission that they have been working with Starbucks for 14 months and have reduced the land cost to them by 30%. During that time, Hardees and QT were built. He stated that Cracker Barrel and QT have six feet landscaping strips and that there is 35 feet of sod in the right of way but you can't put trees in the right of way.

Mr. Lester said that he could put a fast food restaurant here but he doesn't want another fast food restaurant even though they'll pay him another \$180,000. He stated that the six foot landscape strip looks better. He also stated that they have GDOT approval for a signal at Meadow Glen.

Commissioner Wade asked if this will be 55 feet from the curb? Mr. Lester said yes, 35 feet of right of way plus 20 feet of buffer and that it looks better. Mr. Drewer said your ordinance requires sod.

Commissioner Wade asked about interconnectivity between parcels, specifically referring to Hardees. Mr. Lester stated that yes, the GDOT will not allow driveways onto Highway 74.

Chairwoman Stoney asked if there was anyone else in favor or opposed. No one wished to speak. Chairwoman Stoney closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Phillips asked a question about the City's planting requirements. Acting City Planner Prince responded that the required landscaping could fit into a smaller area but pointed out that the standard was meant to be applied consistently all along the Highway 74 corridor.

Commissioner Williams asked whether the right of way width was uniform all along Highway 74. Neither the City Planner nor the City Engineer was able to answer this question.

Mr. Drewer related a story about another jurisdiction that approved a variance with a recommendation for a text amendment.

City Attorney Valerie Ross advised the Planning and Zoning Commission to not make a decision based on something happening in the future. She advised that the variance should be considered based only on the objective variance standards from the Zoning Ordinance or they should not act on it tonight.

Mr. Drewer stated that they were okay with continuing the application to the November 4 meeting.

Commissioner Williams made a motion to continue the application to the November 4 meeting. Commissioner Phillips seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Comprehensive Plan

Acting City Planner Jahnee Prince made a presentation of the City's Draft Comprehensive Plan to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Ms. Prince gave an overview of the steering committee and the 10 month process of formulating the Comprehensive Plan. She reviewed the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan and explained that the Comprehensive Plan is a 20 year plan, required by state law, that is a tool to help guide and shape the City's future growth. The Comprehensive Plan is used as a:

- Guide for land use decisions
- Guide for the City's budget
- "To do" list for city staff

The Comprehensive Plan communicates the citizens' vision to the elected officials so that they can make decisions accordingly to bring the plan to life. It creates an environment of predictability for businesses, investors, property owners and the general public. It also helps to recognize and implement important economic development and revitalization initiatives

Ms. Prince walked the commissioners through the entire public involvement process and reviewed the results of each meeting, the community survey and visual preference survey . She then explained how those results translated into the goals and objectives of the plan and how the steering committee was instrumental in distilling public input to guide the plan.

Ms. Prince explained that the plan was still in draft form and that revisions could still be made based on feedback received until the end of October. Commissioner Phillips made comments that the workshop to present the Comprehensive Plan to the community on September 9 was well attended and that the attendees gave some great comments.

She told the commissioners that the plan would be on the November 10 Mayor and City Council agenda for transmittal to the Atlanta Regional Commission and Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review. She then thanked the Planning and Zoning Commissioners and citizens who had taken the time to provide feedback on the draft plan. She asked the Planning and Zoning Commissioners if there were any questions. There were no questions.

Unfinished Business

None.

Staff Report

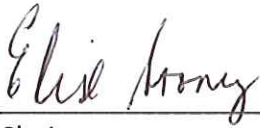
None.

Commissioner Comments

Chairman Stoney recognized the Mayor and Councilmembers Elizabeth Hurst, Lydia Glaize and Hattie Portis-Jones who had joined the meeting during the Comprehensive Plan presentation.

Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Commissioner Williams to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Echols and it was unanimously approved at 8:38 pm.



Chairman
Elise Stoney



Acting City Planner
Jahnee Prince