

SPALDING COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
August 12, 2003

The Spalding County Planning Commission held its regular monthly meeting on August 12, 2003 at 7:00 P.M. in Room 108 of the Spalding County Courthouse Annex. Members present were: Ray Browning, Chairman, presiding, Karen Mathiak, Delores Phillips, and John Youmans. Ronald Green was not present.

Also present were Lee Craig, Senior Planner, Newton Galloway, Attorney, and Yvonne Langford to record the minutes.

Mr. Browning called the meeting to order.

Amendment to UDO #A-03-12: Article 2. Definitions of Terms Used – Section 202:Z’ – add definition for Drug Abuse Treatment Program, and Article 12. C-1, Highway Commercial – Section 1203:B(6) – add provision for Drug Abuse Treatment Program as a special exception use.

Ms. Craig said Mr. Michael Brutz has a planned commercial development on O’Dell and 19/41 By-pass. He has some government buildings and a medical office there and has been approached by a group that has a drug abuse treatment and education program. The present ordinance does not allow that at this location and this proposal is to allow that in a C-1 District as a special exception. The State mandate requires a public hearing and a six-month waiting period. The required public hearing was held in March with the Board of Commissioners and the six-month waiting period has lapsed.

It was noted that with it being a special exception there should not be a problem.

MOTION

Ms. Mathiak made a motion to approve Amendment to UDO #A-03-12. The motion passed on a second by Ms. Phillips with Mr. Browning, Ms. Mathiak, Ms. Phillips, and Mr. Youmans voting for the motion.

Amendment to UDO #A-03-27: Article 6. AR-2, Rural Reserve – Section 604:A, Article 7. R-1, Single Family Residential Low Density – Section 704:A, Article 8. R-2, Single Family Residential – Section 804:A – increase minimum heated square footage.

Mr. Browning said he would like to table this amendment until a date certain because there are some discussions that will take place later this week and next week regarding this matter. Discussion was held and it was decided that it might be appropriate to wait until these meetings were held

MOTION

Ms. Mathiak made a motion to table Amendment to UDO A-03-27 until the September meeting of the Planning Commission. The motion passed on a second by Ms. Phillips with Mr. Browning, Ms. Mathiak, Ms. Phillips, and Mr. Youmans voting for the motion.

Amendment to UDO #A-03-28: Article 4. General Procedures – Section 416 – revision to add R-2A, R-3, PDD, and PRRRD to zoning checklist.

Ms. Craig said this is a “housecleaning” amendment. On the zoning checklist in the ordinance it does not include these zoning districts.

Mr. Browning expressed concern regarding the requirement for the 20-foot topo interval in particular and some of the other things do not have application on larger tracts of land. He said he does not see a need to require it on a 150-acre subdivision with 5-acre lots. It would be a benefit on a 150-acre subdivision with 1-acre lots. This is only one item and he can live with it. He does not see a need to include AR-2.

Concern was expressed regarding the exclusion of any zoning districts. Discussion was held and the Planning Commission wanted to add that Quad sheets may be used.

MOTION

Ms. Mathiak made a motion to approve Amendment to UDO #A-03-28 with a change on letter J to allow U.S.G.S. Quad sheets. The motion passed on a second by Ms. Phillips with Mr. Browning, Ms. Mathiak, Ms. Phillips, and Mr. Youmans voting for the motion.

MINUTES

Ms. Mathiak made a motion, seconded by Mr. Youmans, to approve the minutes of the July 29, 2003 meeting. The motion passed with Mr. Browning, Ms. Mathiak, Ms. Phillips, and Mr. Youmans voting for the motion.

THE HIGHLANDS

Sketch Plan Discussion: A conservation subdivision (The Highlands) of 101.186 acres off Westmoreland Road and Fayetteville Highway (for discussion only).

The Planning Commission discussed The Highlands subdivision. Ms. Craig discussed a list of corrections that would need to be made prior to the preliminary plat submission. They also had a list of suggestions that they would like to be considered.

Discussion was held with some suggestions being made.

Mr. Browning said the citizens in the area requested buffers so that the subdivision would not be as visible. If Mr. Hardy adheres to that request he will not have the flexibility to reduce the appearance of density.

Mr. Hardy said he has read the comments that were made but this is a sensitive issue with the neighbors. The design was to make the developers happy, the citizens happy and the County happy. He said he feels the topography will help with the speed of the traffic. There is a natural hill between lots 32 and 37. There will be a rise that will keep this from being the straight a way that it appears. They are going to try to keep the existing grade to maintain some speed control.

Discussion was held regarding managed meadows.

Mr. Hardy said the area behind lots 23 and 24, the western portion of the property, is mature woodlands and they feel they will be able to maintain that buffer area until you get to lots 5 & 6 at the intersection with Highlands Court which is where the meadows start. They may have to plant pine seedlings. The plan is to leave this to the owner's association.

Mr. Youmans said his impression was that they had harvested every pine tree they could and in the process had damaged most of the trees that were left. This looks bad. He would like to see a few oaks planted and not plant to the density that you would with pines. Over time this would look nice. The landscape ordinance is probably not what it should be. You do not need to plant a lot of huge trees. If you made a commitment to scatter them over the area and not plant pines or pecan trees. Use hardwoods and stay away from dogwoods. Sugar maples would be good.

Mr. Browning said he has concerns about the detention pond area. He would like to see the County office and Mr. Hardy's design staff get together, when the grading begins, and design as attractive and as safe a detention pond area as possible.

Further discussion was held regarding this and the fencing that is best for safety purposes. Mr. Hardy discussed some alternate plans that might be possible. He said they would like to disturb as little of the area as possible.

Mr. Browning said he would like to see an attractive play area.

Mr. Hardy said the play area was going to be the signature of the subdivision because it will be the first thing that is seen. The developers will have samples of what they will be doing with the preliminary plat. They are talking about the possibility of a pavilion or sheltered picnic area.

Discussion was also held regarding the type curbing that will be used.

The large area in the center was discussed with the hope that it would be developed for a play area with landscaping.

Ms. Craig said the ordinance allows 30 days for the County to get comments to Mr. Hardy. The plan is for the members of the Planning Commission to review the drawing and forward any comments to her regarding the plan. The comments from the meeting and any additional comments received will be incorporated in a letter for consideration for the preliminary plat.

Mr. Galloway said this was planned to give the Planning Commission an opportunity to catch any errors that might possibly occur. The comments tonight are comments.

MOTION

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Ms. Mathiak and a second by Ms. Phillips with Mr. Browning, Ms. Mathiak, Ms. Phillips, and Mr. Youmans voting for the motion.

Ray Browning – Chairman

Yvonne M. Langford - Recorder