

**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**August 27, 2002**

The Spalding County Planning Commission held its regular meeting on August 27, 2002 at 7:00 P.M. in the County Commission Meeting Room #108, Spalding County Courthouse Annex. Members present were: Chairman Karen Mathiak, presiding, Bill Bryant, Delores Phillips, Ray Browning, John Youmans, and Frank Harris.

Also, present were Assistant County Manager Michael E. Sabine, Zoning Attorney Newton Galloway, Senior Planner Lee Craig, and Cindy McDaniel to record the minutes.

Ms. Mathiak called the meeting to order, introduced the members of the Planning Commission, and gave the procedure for handling the applications.

**MINUTES:**

The minutes of the August 13, 2002 meeting were tabled until the September 10, 2002 meeting on a motion by Mr. Bryant, and a second by Ms. Phillips with Karen Mathiak, Bill Bryant, Delores Phillips, Ray Browning, John Youmans and Frank Harris voting for the motion.

**REZONING REQUESTS:**

**Application #02-18Z:** Johnny Dee McLeRoy, Dee B. McLeRoy, and Eric B. McLeRoy Owners – 57.302 acres off Ellis Road located in Land Lot(s) 62 & 63 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Land District - requesting a rezoning from C-2, Manufacturing, to R-2, Single Family Residential.

Applicant did not show for meeting.

**MOTION**

Mr. Bryant made a motion to table application #02-18Z until the September 24, 2002 Planning Commission meeting. The motion passed on a second by Mr. Browning with Karen Mathiak, Bill Bryant, Delores Phillips, Ray Browning, John Youmans, and Frank Harris voting for the motion.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

*Planned Development concept plan review – 1,557± acres located on Teamon Road, Smoak Road, and Jordan Hill Road (for discussion only).*

Mr. Sabine stated Jane Curtis and Brian Davison from Minerva were in attendance to present a concept plan for 1,577 acres known as the Spring Lake Community. This incorporates property that is currently owned by Springs Industries, which was inherited from Dundee Mills, that is approximately 1,106 acres along Jordan Hill Road, and property owned by several property owners incorporating the remaining 470 acres. This is a concept plan obviously subject to the comments supplied by the Planning Commission and Community Development Department to

Minerva. Minerva will proceed and then file a rezoning application. Tonight's meeting is not the subject of a rezoning application. The rezoning application will be filed after Minerva has received the comments from the Planning Commission and Community Development Department. The applicants are requesting a rezoning to Planned Development for the property that is currently zoned AR-1, Agricultural and Residential. Mr. Sabine stated there are a variety of uses suggested in the concept plan with both single-family residential and multi-family residential along with a 31.7-acre school/community village site.

Brian Davison of Minerva came forward, and stated his name.

Mr. Davison stated Minerva is currently doing a project primarily in Henry County with a portion in Spalding County. Mr. Davison stated development has started on that project with approximately 1,650 lots. Mr. Davison stated when the project was originally started, primary focus was on the Henry County land, and the Spalding County land was truly an after thought. As the project has evolved, the Spalding County Board of Commissioners allowed zoning characteristics that allowed Minerva to do housing styles that catered heavily to an active senior's market and empty nester's market. Mr. Davison stated Minerva conducted a number of market studies and found there is a massive demand in the southeast quarter of Atlanta for housing product basically for forty-five (45) years old and up who were moving out of a large family home looking for something still extremely high quality, but lower maintenance. Mr. Davison stated there is a lot of international and, particularly, national focus on the market right now. There is a huge upcoming growth in that sector as people live longer, health care is better, and the general demographics of the population in that sector of forty-five (45) to 75 - 80 years of age is growing dramatically and is expected to grow for another twenty (20) years.

Mr. Davison stated with the rising housing styles that are now evolving in the market, it allows Minerva to do a master plan community where the empty nester market isn't just a little after thought, but can do a wide variety of different product types all within a neighborhood with amenities focused specifically for that group. Recreation is a very important part of a neighborhood.

Mr. Davison stated what Minerva is trying to create is an entire master plan community with a main focal point. Mr. Davison stated Minerva was looking for something different. A combination of open space with a new lake and several parks all around the property was Minerva's focus on this property. Mr. Davison stated the land contains a perfectly self-contained lake site. Mr. Davison stated the topography has now been completed, and the lake site is roughly 197 acres. Mr. Davison stated this property, also, has an extremely low percentage of wetlands, which make Minerva's potential ability to create the lake substantially higher.

Mr. Davison stated there has been some discussion with the Water and Sewer Authority, which has not been taken much further, because Minerva wanted to see if Spalding County was interested before proceeding. With the concept of creating a reservoir as a future drinking water supply for Spalding County, initial studies have been done on the viability of the reservoir. It will service approximately 7,500 homes if full pool is maintained. The reservoir would actually serve in the range of 11,000 homes if allowed to drop down to a low point. If trying to build recreation use around the reservoir, it needs to be maintained at or close to full pool level. This

topic would probably evolve in some sort over the next year or two. This reservoir could be another backup source for Spalding County and the City of Griffin's water supply.

Mr. Davison stated septic around a lake is not a good idea. Mr. Davison stated the plan is to try to permit and construct a self-contained sewer plant to serve this property, and subject again to working with the Water and Sewer Authority, could be designed to service other areas that flow down hill onto this property. Mr. Davison stated depending on the Water and Sewer Authority, the plant could be expanded or just service this property.

Mr. Davison stated the total property is 1,577 acres with 71% as residential use, 4% as commercial use, and 25% is open space. Mr. Davison described the design layout to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Davison stated Minerva is willing to work with the school system to donate a piece of property to them to build a new school. Mr. Davison stated a new school would be a tremendous asset to the area.

Mr. Davison stated the product Minerva is looking for is residential uses sized from 1,400 square feet and up with different styles. Mr. Davison stated the apartment side is targeted for a housing concept called Active Senior's Residential. Mr. Davison stated the Active Senior's Residential is basically catering to the seventy (70) to ninety (90) plus year old residents who do not want to live in their home alone in a neighborhood, and do not want to move into a basic apartment complex with no entertainment, character, or quality of life for them. Mr. Davison stated there would be meeting areas, communal dining area, and a fitness facility. The resident would pay a fixed rent, which would include breakfast, lunch, and dinner, or they could fix meals in their own kitchen. Mr. Davison stated there would be an organized calendar of events for the residents to participate in. Mr. Davison stated Minerva's apartment complex targets active seniors; people who plan to stay ten (10) to twenty (20) years. Mr. Davison stated this is a very different product type, but he knows apartments are always very unattractive on a zoning plan.

Mr. Davison stated the commercial use envisioned for this project is very minor, and more of a neighborhood grocery on very small scale, but at some point when the mass of the neighborhood builds up, there would eventually be enough homes in the area to service a Publix or Kroger store.

Mr. Browning stated regarding the sewer, only forty (40) acres were delineated for the spray fields. Mr. Browning asked if this was the required acreage for a project this size. Mr. Davison stated for a project this size; the property is about twenty (20) acres short if done exclusively as a tertiary treatment spray field. Mr. Davison stated when land is treated to a tertiary level, this allows to spray right to the edge of the property and could be re-circulated through the neighborhood for irrigation use.

Mr. Davison stated the landscape would be so dramatic when the all the yards are irrigated. Mr. Davison stated with most of the housing products, the perimeters of the house would generally be maintained by the Homeowner's Association where the property owner would not have to maintain their front yards nor planting of trees. Mr. Davison stated the property owner could still

plant flowers and personalize their own property, but eliminates the burden of people to maintain their yards.

Ms. Mathiak asked what the ideas were on the town home concept. Mr. Davison stated he doesn't see a market for this type of housing as of yet. Mr. Davison stated he has been approached to do town homes that look like they are the traditional town homes that vary in styles, but are actually two level homes with an elevator that goes up to the second level.

Mr. Bryant asked if there are any developments of this sort further along other than the one up in Henry County. Mr. Davison stated not for the active senior. Mr. Davison stated the people building in Heron Bay have built in a number of places. Most have been built up in the northern arc of Georgia.

Mr. Davison stated he is trying to get this development set up before running out at Heron Bay. Mr. Davison stated Minerva didn't have enough in Henry County, and will run out literally in approximately three (3) years. The goal is do all the pre-engineering, lakes, work with the Water and Sewer Authority on the sewer, work with the School Board on the new school, and get everything worked out and ready as a replacement product.

Mr. Bryant asked what percentage of the development is anticipated going to the active seniors. Mr. Davison stated it is hard to say and will be market driven. The difference is there are a huge number of normal subdivisions so there is a lot of competition in that sector, but to do the senior community right, it will take a lot of money up front to build the activity center, hire an activities director, landscape it five times better than a regular subdivision, entrances are different, amenities are different, build the lake and then build all the lakeside parks. These items needs to be in place for the people to see, because they really don't want to believe the promise it would be done in five (5) years.

Mr. Davison stated if the School Board accepts the school, that sector would probably go family orientated, which would take in about 25% of the residences, and that of the remaining part, 90% to 95% would be people without children.

Mr. Sabine stated that based on research and market trends along with an article published in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution on Monday, August 26, 2002 regarding the aging population of the metro Atlanta area, his interpretation of Mr. Davison's statements would be that Minerva was estimating that 70% would be empty-nesters whether they fell into the fifty-five (55) and up category or not. Mr. Davison concurred with Mr. Sabine's statements.

Mr. Davison stated the unfortunate events of a year ago have caused people to be more focused on staying around home. Where as, the people from Atlanta who have been around ten (10), twenty (20), or thirty (30) years or their whole lives would have considered buying a place down in Florida, Arizona, or the Carolinas looking for somewhere that has a resort type feel, but still close to the schools, churches, and family.

Mr. Bryant asked what would happen if the School System doesn't want to build a school in the area. Mr. Davison stated a school/ church was the focal point for that area. Mr. Bryant asked if

Minerva was envisioning a commercial community center. Mr. Davison stated no. The only vision would be for a central core park, probably churches and nothing else if it wasn't a school. This piece of property is not logical for commercial use. At some point, the School Board may need or want this piece of property for a school. Mr. Davison stated when Minerva talks with the School Board, there would have to be some time frame put on the property.

Mr. Bryant asked what the overall time frame for this development would be. Mr. Davison stated he would love for this development to roll over immediately after Heron Bay, which would be in about 2004. Mr. Davison stated development would depend on a couple of things. Mr. Davison stated the lake would take longer than that to get approved and permitted. Mr. Davison stated there are not much wetlands and no adjoining owner issues, so the process is streamlined, but still extensive. Mr. Davison stated the best-case scenario for the lake is 3½ years, and the worse case is ten (10) years to never. The sewer plant is a two (2) year permitting process and a year construction process.

Mr. Bryant asked when the overall build out would be. Mr. Davison stated it all depends on how well the draw is. Mr. Davison stated it is very possible with the lake approved and if Heron Bay is successful in its empty nester sector, this development could easily sell up to 300 units per year, which would put it in to a nine (9) to ten (10) year build out from the time it started. Mr. Davison stated there are various phases of construction from the year 2004 to 2014.

Mr. Bryant asked about the income levels of people who possibly would live in the community. Mr. Davison stated it is really hard to target levels at that age group because people's income starts to develop, in a lot of cases, not just from their job, but also from investments, RSP's, family estates, and a lot of cases, selling of a home and moving in for a lower mortgage. This development would probably be too expensive for the bottom quarter of the population as far as economic levels go.

Mr. Youmans asked if Minerva was planning to complete this development. Mr. Davison stated Minerva plans to complete this project, but one never knows.

Mr. Sabine stated the Planning Commission should direct their comments to Chairman Mathiak and himself to compile, and send the comments from the Planning Commission and the Community Development Department back to Mr. Davison so as to have the comments prior to filing their actual rezoning application.

Mr. Bryant stated he has some concern with the density in several areas of the development. Mr. Sabine stated there is some work that needs to be done relative to the interconnectivity of the streets. Mr. Sabine stated he has, also, discussed tentatively the possible need for signalization at Teamon Road and Smoak Road along with Baptist Camp Road and Jordan Hill Road. Mr. Sabine stated additional traffic improvements have been discussed to be installed by the developer to allow this development to proceed.

Mr. Sabine stated from this point, once the comments have been supplied to Minerva, a rezoning application is filed where an unofficial public hearing is held with the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission public hearing would likely be the last Tuesday in October. The

rezoning application would then proceed, with a staff and Planning Commission recommendation, to the Board of Commissioners in November for a final decision unless the application is tabled to a future date.

Mr. Sabine stated there is a comment box in the back of the room for area property owners to put their comments.

**MOTION**

Ms. Phillips made a motion for the Community Development Department to direct a letter to Minerva on comments received. The motion passed on a second by Mr. Browning with Karen Mathiak, Bill Bryant, Delores Phillips, Ray Browning, John Youmans, and Frank Harris voting for the motion.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Bryant made a motion, seconded by Ms. Phillips, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with Karen Mathiak, Bill Bryant, Delores Phillips, Ray Browning, John Youmans, and Frank Harris voting for the motion.

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Karen Mathiak – Chairman

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Cindy L. McDaniel – Recorder