Planning Commission
June 2, 2016

CITY OF CONWAY
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 2016
CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM – 229 MAIN STREET – 5:30 P.M.

Present: Brantley Green, James Young, Chris Guidera, Brian O’Neil, Wren McMeekin
Absent: Chris Sansbury, David Jordan, Kendall Brown
Staff: Adam Emrick, Planning Director; Barbara Tessier, Secretary
Others: Frank Braxton, Jimmy Gerald, James Barfield, Neil McCoy, Kathy Ropp

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Green called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Guidera made a motion, seconded by Young, to approve the May 5, 2016 minutes as written. The vote in favor was unanimous.

III. LETTERS OF CREDIT

A. Meadow Farms

Emrick said this letter of credit was to cover the sidewalks at Meadow Farms. He said it was set to expire on June 7, 2016, and was in the amount of $26,007.50.

Emrick said the subdivision had 47 lots with only 26 units built (56% built out). Emrick said staff recommended the letter of credit be renewed for another year. He did say that the subdivision had been extremely slow to develop and unless there was significant permitting in the next year, staff would likely not recommend another extension.

Barfield, the developer, said that he had closed on some of the houses and he had contracts for two or three more.

Young made a motion, seconded by Guidera, to approve the one year extension of the Meadow Farms subdivision. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.
IV. REZONING/ANNEXATION

A. Request by Coastal Land Design on behalf of Z.V. Pate, Inc. to annex and rezone approximately 4.38 acres of property located at 1624 US Highway 501 (Church Street), (TMS# 123-13-07-020, PIN 33810020011) from Horry County Commercial Highway Commercial (HC) to Highway Commercial (HC)

Emrick said the property owner had requested to annex and rezone the property from Horry County’s Highway Commercial zoning district to the City’s Highway Commercial (HC) zoning district to facilitate the development of a restaurant. Emrick said the Comprehensive Plan had identified this parcel as Highway Commercial in the Future Land Use Map.

Emrick said staff recommended the annexation and rezoning be approved as requested.

O’Neil made a motion, seconded by McMeekin, to approve the request as presented. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

B. Request by Eleanor Bruno Wilson to annex and rezone approximately 13.4 acres of property located at the intersection of Highway 501 and Wild Wing Blvd, (TMS# 151-00-03-023, PIN 38300000320) from Horry County Commercial Highway Commercial (HC) to Highway Commercial (HC)

Emrick said the property owner had requested to annex and rezone the property from Horry County’s Highway Commercial zoning district to the City’s Highway Commercial (HC) zoning district to facilitate the development of a retail establishment. He said the site was currently a vacant, undeveloped parcel.

Emrick said it was staff’s recommendation to approve the annexation and rezoning.

Green asked if there had been any complaints regarding this proposal. Emrick said there had not been any.

McMeekin made a motion, seconded by Young, to approve the proposed annexation and rezoning. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.
C. Request by Jimmy Gerald on behalf of Gerald Land Holding LLC and Crapps Family Partnership Limited to rezone approximately 89.28 acres of property located at the corner of Medlen Parkway and Oak Street (TMS# 123-00-01-003, PIN 338000000004) from existing Low Density Residential (R-1) to Medium Density Residential (R-2) for the purposes of residential redevelopment

Emrick said this large parcel was part of the larger residential development, Elmhurst. He said it was intended to be developed similarly to those in the existing phases of Elmhurst as single family homes, but was requesting smaller lot sizes. Emrick said Midtown Village, another subdivision, was across from the subject parcel and it was zoned R-3, which was high density residential.

Emrick said the Comprehensive Plan identified the parcel as Medium Density Residential (R-2).

Emrick said staff recommended the review of the rezoning request and to make a recommendation to City Council of whether the parcel should be rezoned from R-1 to R-2.

Gerald showed the Board how and where this parcel would have connections. Gerald was asked if this parcel would still be part of Elmhurst, and he replied that it would.

Guidera made a motion, seconded by McMeekin, to approve the rezoning of the parcel from R-1 to R-2. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

II. TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

A. Consideration of an Amendment to Article 5 of the Unified Development Ordinance to prohibit the parking of Commercial Vehicles on public streets within the City of Conway

Emrick said the city had a rising number of complaints about commercial vehicle parking in residential neighborhoods. Emrick said one subdivision recently had three commercial vehicles parked on a single road within the subdivision.

Emrick said Planning staff and Police staff had reviewed multiple other municipalities to best determine how to address the issue. He said the consensus was they looked at the length of the vehicle and/or the weight. Emrick said a combination of length and weight would most likely be the most effective in addressing the issues facing the city.
Emrick said other cities limited the size of commercial vehicles in residential neighborhoods to twenty feet and 10,000 pounds. He said this would regulate tractor trailers and other large vehicles, but not overly restrict smaller commercial vehicles.

Emrick told the Board that City Council had instructed staff to look at prohibiting the parking of commercial vehicles on public streets as a potential solution to the current issues without impairing the ability of those that relied on their commercial vehicles for their livelihood.

Green asked if the Police had a problem with enforcement. Emrick said there were some issues.

Emrick said it was staff’s recommendation to amend the ordinance to include a prohibition on parking commercial vehicles on public streets that exceeded 20 feet in length and 10,000 pounds.

Young made a motion, seconded by McMeekin, to approve the proposed amendment as presented. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

B. Consideration of an Amendment to Article 11.4.9 of the Unified Development Ordinance to amend regulations of Electronic Message Centers

Emrick said the ordinance currently permitted Electronic Message Centers in Institutional zoning districts and on parcels in the Gateway Corridor fronting Highway 501 Bypass that are zoned Highway Commercial. He said the text was limited to amber, white or clear in color with only a dark background. He said images, video, and any animation was prohibited. He said all images must be static for at least three seconds before transitioning to another message. Emrick said electronic message centers currently were limited in size to 30 square feet and can be no more than 50% of the total sign area.

Emrick said in 2009, CCU had been approved for a full color LED unit prior to the adoption of the UDO. He said the sign has full color text and images, which provided a more robust venue for the university to advertise its events and programs.

Emrick said since the UDO was adopted in later 2011, technology has improved and has become less expensive. He said this ability to produce high quality digital text and images at a lower cost has increased the demand for this type of signage throughout the city, but especially along the major corridors.
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After receiving a request from Horry Georgetown Tech with a sign similar to CCU’s, City Council instructed staff to craft an amendment to the UDO to permit these signs.

In sum, Emrick said in Article 2 of the UDO, Electronic Message Centers is defined as a type of sign that presents its message through internal illumination of flashing, intermittent, or moving lights forming the letters, numbers, or symbols of the message, whether or not the message appears to move across the sign. He said although CCU’s sign met this definition, the definition failed to fully describe this type of signage. He said that CCU’s signage was not permissible under the UDO standards outline in Article 11.4.9.

Emrick said due to the newer technology and the increased demand, the city might wish to consider allowing digital signage in some areas either by zoning district or by overlay. He said removing the prohibition on images and allowing other colors could allow for a greater variety of quality signage without reducing safety or the aesthetics of the city. He said the size and location of the signage should also be considered as part of the amendment.

Emrick said it was staff’s recommendation to approve this amendment to the UDO.

McMeekin made a motion, seconded by O’Neil, to approve the proposed amendment to the UDO. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

III. PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.

IV. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

Approved and signed this ______ day of ______, 2016.

Brantley Green, Chairman