CITY OF CONWAY
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, JULY 6, 2017
COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 229 MAIN STREET – 5:30 P.M.

Present: Kendall Brown, John Thomas, Brian O’Neil, Mark Stanley, Gloria Robinson-Cooper, Brantley Green

Absent: Chris Guidera, Chris Sansbury, Wren McMeekin

Staff: Adam Emrick, Planning Director; Barbara Tessier, Secretary

Others: Miltonette Clardy, Johnson Clardy, Janice Simmons, Wayne Simmons, Herman L. Days, Steve Powell, Michelle Harrill, Pete Hughes, Randy Beverly

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Green was not present to start the meeting. Brown, acting as Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:44 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

O’Neil made a motion, seconded by Stanley, to approve the June 1, 2017 minutes as written. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

III. ANNEXATIONS

A. Beverly Homes LLC requests the annexation and rezoning of two parcels on Hemingway Chapel Road (PIN 36912010002 and 36912010004) from Horry County CFA to City of Conway Medium Density Residential (R-2)

Emrick said the reason for the request to annex and rezone to R-2 was to allow for a total of 3 lots and not 2 that would be permitted in R-1. He said these parcels were across from the New Castle subdivision and adjacent to other R-2 parcels. Emrick said the Future Land Use map showed these parcels as Low Density Residential, but since they were adjacent to R-2 parcels, it was keeping within the zoning of the surrounding area. Emrick said staff recommended approval.

Thomas asked how large the parcels were. Emrick said about one-quarter acre each. O’Neil asked Emrick if there had been any feedback on this item. Emrick said he had not had any calls. Robinson-Cooper asked Emrick if there were any traffic
issues. Emrick said there were no traffic issues. He said it was not a heavily trafficked road. O’Neil said they would be entering and exiting right onto Hemingway Street. Emrick said it was a state road and they might suggest there be shared driveways.

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

B. Venture Engineering on behalf of N.B. Hughes and Lesia Hughes, requests the annexation and rezoning of approximately 5.60 acres on four parcels located on Hwy. 544 and Todd Road TMS #150-00-06-079 | PIN 38205040048; TMS #150-00-06-035 | PIN 38205040044; TMS #150-00-06-032 |PIN 38205040047; TMS # 150-17-10-002 |PIN 38205040117 from Horry County General Residential (GR) and SF 6, and Highway Commercial (HC) zoning to City of Conway as a combination of Institutional (IN) and Mixed Use (MU).

Emrick said this annexation and rezoning included 4 parcels totaling approximately 5.60 acres across the street from CCU that would be a combination of Institutional and Mixed Use.

Emrick said the one parcel fronting Hwy. 544 and the tail piece of the larger adjacent parcel would be combined to create the Mixed Use parcel that would provide for commercial on the lower level and student housing on the upper levels. He said the Future Land Use Map would have to be amended to allow this use. Emrick told the Board it was not a major issue and could be handled through their approval if they did vote for approval of this item. He said the remaining parcels would be for student housing. Emrick said staff had not received any civil plans yet. He said staff did not know the number of buildings, parking or access at this point. He said staff did have a site plan for the parcel on Todd Blvd. that was in the package. He said it would house 16 units.

Steve Powell was present and addressed the Board. He said there would be 16 3-story townhouses housing 4 students per unit with the kitchen/living area on the ground floor and the bedrooms on the second and third floors. He said the buildings had interesting architecture. He said the exteriors would be brick on the first level and vinyl board and batten on the upper levels. Powell said this is the format they would use on the other parcels. He said they would bring in amenities later on.
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Powell said the small piece that abutted Hwy. 544 was at the crosswalk. He said CCU was largely a walking campus. He said although they would have parking on site, they didn't expect a lot of vehicular traffic going back and forth to the college. He said this development would provide current and future students the best walking distance to campus. He said the crosswalk was working out nicely.

Powell said the mixed use parcel would be the final one developed. He said right now they envisioned a three-story structure that would have commercial retail and restaurant on the bottom level. He said there were very few services available to students in that area. Powell said there would be two levels of student housing above the retail/restaurant level.

Emrick said there had been some community concerns about this annexation/rezoning. Green asked if there was anyone who wished to address the Board.

Michelle Harrill came forward. She said she had just recently purchased her home, and would not have purchased if she had known student housing was planned. She asked where she would go. Emrick explained that her property was not a part of this annexation. She asked how she would sell her house. Emrick said there would be a 15’ landscape buffer and a fence between any IN zoned property and any residential property that was adjacent to it.

Miltonette Clardy was next to speak. She said she felt there would be additional traffic. She said there was a safety concern because the students would not drive at the 25 mph speed limit. She said they did not need more traffic on Todd Blvd. She was also concerned that the neighborhood would have to pick up after the students. Clardy said there would be issues with traffic because there was no access lane from Carter Lane to 544. She said she would like the Board to consider no access onto Carter Lane.

Green asked Emrick about another student housing that had to provide secondary access. Emrick said what was provided was emergency access and not general traffic access. Green asked if the city would consider requiring some type of emergency access with a crash gate. Emrick said it was an option.

Stanley asked Emrick if speed bumps could be installed on the roads. Emrick said Carter Road and Todd Blvd. were county roads. He said the county was less likely to install speed bumps than the city was.

Green asked if this area was jointly patrolled by the city and the county. Emrick said it was patrolled by the city, county, and Coastal.
O'Neil asked if a traffic study would be required. Emrick said not by the city. He said the county could require one when the developer asked for their encroachment permit from the county to tie in the roads.

Thomas asked Powell what he meant by townhome. Powell said it was a single living room on the lower floor with 4 bedrooms and 4 bathrooms on the upper floors. He said a fire wall would separate adjacent units.

Green asked if this had to go before the Community Appearance Board. Emrick said it was not in their purview. Emrick said it would go to City Council after this meeting for two readings.

Robinson-Cooper asked who would respond to emergency calls. Emrick said once annexed, it would be the city, but that the city had a mutual aid agreement with the county and CCU.

Robinson-Cooper asked if there would be recreation on-site. Powell said not in the first phase. He said CCU encouraged on-campus activities.

Green asked when did Powell think Phase 1 would be built out. Powell said they hoped to have it completed by July of 2018. He said the rest of the build out would be in 4 more phases.

Clardy asked once the construction began, where would the access for those vehicles be. Powell said the county would require them to bond the road and repair it afterward. Powell said if they kept the road open as a secondary point of access, they would probably need to reflect that on their plan in order to get a county encroachment permit. He said the county did that routinely on road that they put traffic on and would require them to bring them up to county standards. He said the challenge was there was a substandard right-of-way there. He said that would not keep them from upgrading the road, but the county would not spend the money.

O'Neil said looking at the area using Google Maps, it appeared to be quite substantial and said it might be best to push the traffic to Todd Blvd. Powell said they might be able to make the emergency exit onto Carter Lane. Powell said even if that were to happen, Carter Lane would still be used for construction vehicles.

O’Neil made a motion to approve with the condition that Carter Lane have a crash gate exit.
Robinson-Cooper asked Emrick if staff had examined this plan and found it feasible. Emrick said the likelihood of these parcels being single-family residences was very small. Emrick said the Future Land Use map identified these parcels as Highway Commercial, which he said would impact the community. He said student housing was the market choice in this area.

Emrick said there were many calls for student housing on 544, but the number of developable lots for this purpose are dwindling. Additionally, CCU has been working on a pedestrian and traffic safety issue with SCDOT, the County and the City to develop a plan to close some of the median crossings and force pedestrians to cross only at traffic signals. There is not a plan yet, but it is in the works. This should help reduce safety concerns for student housing, but it may result in some inconvenience for residents accustomed to being able to make a left turn anywhere along 544.

Green said O’Neil had made a motion to approve the annexation/rezoning with a crash gate exit onto Carter Lane. Robinson-Cooper then seconded the motion. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

IV. REZONINGS

A. Shawn Babwah, applicant, requests the rezoning of .08 acres of a property located at 613 Wright Blvd (TMS# 137-05-11-043 | PIN from Low Density Residential (R-1) to Highway Commercial (HC)

Emrick said this was the former Small’s TV repair shop and it had been closed for a long time thus requiring the site to be brought up to city requirements in order to reopen. Emrick said the applicant bought the adjacent property, which is zoned Low Density Residential (R-1) with the intent of subdividing a portion of it and combining it with 613 Wright Blvd. This would increase the parking area and allow customers to pull out onto Hwy. 378 instead of backing out.

Emrick said some landscaping would have to be installed, and this would make 378 more attractive. He said staff recommended the rezoning.

Stanley made a motion, seconded by O’Neil to approve the rezoning request. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.
B Robert E. Todd, applicant, requests the rezoning approximately .303 acres at 1710 Fourth Avenue (TMS # 137-05-13-030 | PIN 36803040068) and the adjacent parcel (TMS # 137-05-13-019 | PIN 36803040069) from Low Density Residential (R-1) to Highway Commercial (HC) (DEFERRED FROM JUNE 1, 2017 MEETING)

Emrick said this item had come before the Board at its June 1, 2017 meeting and had been tabled. He said this was a request to rezone two Low Density Residential (R-1) parcels to Highway Commercial. Once they were rezoned, they would be combined with an adjacent Highway Commercial parcel.

Emrick said his issue with the parcels remaining zoned residential was the backing out onto Hwy. 701. He said there had been concern from the community, and that a letter signed by various residents was attached to their information packet.

Emrick said that Randy Beverly was present to answer any questions the Board might have.

Herman Days, a resident of the area, was present. He asked what they were going to do with the property. Green asked Emrick if there were any restrictions on what could be put there. Emrick said that Highway Commercial was the most flexible zoning district. Green said then that whatever was permitted in the UDO for Highway Commercial could be put there.

Beverly said he had an option to purchase the parcels and that he had no specific plans currently. He said he would not purchase the parcels if the rezoning was not approved.

Days did not think the parcel was big enough to do anything. Beverly said by combining the two parcels that were proposed for rezoning with the already zoned Highway Commercial parcel would be large enough for maybe a building with 4-5 units.

Days said he was concerned about the value of their homes. Beverly said there was no market for houses on Fourth Avenue.

Robinson-Cooper asked if they would see building plans. Emrick said the Board would not, but it would go before the city's Technical Review Committee if City Council approve the rezoning. Emrick said the TRC had to review the plans based on what the ordinance required for highway commercial sites. Green asked if it had to go before the Community Appearance Board. Emrick said it did not.
O'Neil expressed concern about runoff. He said the land sloped. Emrick said the developer would have to provide stormwater plans. O'Neil told Day they might experience less runoff issues from whatever the developer had to do for stormwater management. Green said the city would not permit the developer to allow the flow of water onto other parcels.

O'Neil made a motion to approve the rezoning request. Green asked if there was a second to the motion.

Stanley said Apple Lane was a dead end. He asked what the possibility would be of putting an exit on the opposite side of the parcels. Emrick said the primary access would be via Apple Lane and it would likely need to be improved to facilitate the development of the site.

Beverly was asked how wide Apple Lane was. He responded it was about 15-20’. Emrick said it was not as wide as 20’.

A comment was made that the parcels had been vacant a long time and this commercial venture would improve the area. Beverly said nobody would build houses on those lots.

O'Neil made a motion, seconded by Stanley, to approve the rezoning request. Robinson-Cooper, Brown, and Thomas voted nay. The motion was denied.

Emrick said this item would still go before City Council on August 7, 2017.

V. LETTERS OF CREDIT

A. Reduction and Renewal Request - Jordan Estates

Emrick said the letter of credit for Jordan Estates for sidewalks and street trees would expire on August 8, 2017. The letter of credit at this time is in the amount of $93,281.25. The developer has requested to extend and reduce the letter of credit to $13,984.38.

Emrick said although 23 of the 29 houses had been built or permits pulled, the flooding from Hurricane Matthew had required the developer to elevate the houses and it had slowed down the progress.

Emrick said staff recommended that the Board consider the request.

O'Neil made a motion, seconded by Thomas, to approve the extension for one year and the reduction to $13,984.38.
VI. TEXT AMENDMENTS

A. Consideration of an amendment to Article 8 of the Unified Development Ordinance to amend the Off-Street Parking and Loading requirements for the Central Business District and the Waccamaw River District – 1 areas of the City of Conway

Emrick said the city will be providing a majority of the parking infrastructure within the Central Business District and the Waccamaw River District -1 as an incentive for development along the Waccamaw River and Kingston Lake. This infrastructure is part of an agreement with the Burroughs Company by which the city will be given parcels of land for parking, landscaping, drainage, open space and other public uses. The city has developed a Master Plan outlining the vision for the city for these areas.

Emrick said Article 8.1.4 of the UDO sets forth properties within the city subject to parking standards articulated in Article 8. He said the current standards do not meet the vision that is outlined in the Master Plan.

Emrick said the proposed amendment would remove the requirement for parking to be provided for residential development.

Emrick said City Council had already reviewed the proposed amendment at their June 19, 2017 meeting and asked that the Planning Commission consider the amendment and make a recommendation to them.

Robinson-Cooper asked if there was enough parking. Emrick said there was plenty of parking. He said it would cost upwards of $7,000,000 to construct a parking deck and that was far too expense with the city’s current needs. He said if more apartments were to be built in the area, they would address additional parking then.

Stanley said the shop owners should be encouraged not to park in front of their shops.

O’Neil made a motion, seconded by Robinson-Cooper, to approve the text amendment. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

VII. PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.
VIII. ADJOURN

There being no further business, Thomas made a motion, seconded by O’Neil, to adjourn the meeting. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Approved and signed this 7th day of September, 2017.

Brantley Green, Chairman