

**MINUTES**  
**DALTON-WHITFIELD COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**August 26, 2019**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jim Lidderdale, Chairman  
Scott DeLay  
Tom Minor  
John Thomas  
Jody McClurg  
Mitch Sanford

**WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Lynn Laughter; Chairperson, Harold Brooker; Vice Chairperson, Greg Jones, Roger Crossen, Barry Robbins

**VISITORS PRESENT**

Diana Rico, Mitchell and Jerome Hollis, Rob Bradham, Allison Coker, Ron Johnson, Richard Planzer, Scotty Tate, and others

**STAFF PRESENT**

Ethan Calhoun  
Jean Price-Garland  
Robert Smalley  
Gary Brown

**I. GENERAL**

A. Call to Order: Chairman Laughter called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. and confirmed a quorum of commissioners was present with no absences to report. Chairman Lidderdale confirmed a quorum of members was present with no absences to report.

B. Minutes: Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion to approve or correct the July 22, 2019 meeting minutes. Mr. Minor made the motion to accept the minutes as written and his motion was seconded by Mr. Sanford which then passed unanimously 5-0.

Mr. Calhoun summarized the procedures and standards for the public hearing at the request of Chairman Lidderdale. He also informed the audience that final action would likely occur during the regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners in September.

**II. REZONING PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**A. Heard the request of Greenwood Developers to rezone from General Agriculture (GA) to Planned Unit Development (PUD) a tract of land totaling 74 acres located along the west R/W of Cleveland Highway. Parcels (11-300-12-001, 11-313-30-000) (County)**

Mr. Minor and Mr. Thomas recused themselves from this hearing and exited the commission chambers.

Mr. Calhoun oriented the audience to the subject property and summarized the staff analysis which was in favor of the requested PUD rezoning. Mr. Calhoun briefly explained the unique nature of the PUD zone district. Chairperson Laughter asked Mr. Calhoun about the proposed clubhouse and he explained that the existing single-family dwelling on the subject property is planned to be converted into a

clubhouse with an adjacent pool. Chairperson Laughter then asked if the retail area would be exclusive only to the residents within the community. Mr. Calhoun stated that the proposed retail area is expected to be inclusive to anyone wishing to do business there. Chairperson Laughter then asked if sewer was available in that area and Commissioner Brooker stated that sewer was not available on the subject property. Mr. Calhoun clarified that the board of directors for Dalton Utilities had recently voted to approve the sewer expansion necessary to serve this development. Commissioner Crossen confirmed with Mr. Calhoun that if any changes occur with this development that a new plan would be required to be submitted before any permits would be granted. Some discussion occurred about potential developer bankruptcy and what would occur with the subject property that resulted in Mr. Smalley stating that any deviation from the proposed site plan would require a staff and public review process. Commissioner Brooker asked Mr. Calhoun if he was aware of another development similar to the proposed site plan. Mr. Calhoun stated that he was unaware of another development in Northwest Georgia of this scale and residential diversity. Commissioner Brooker stated that he was concerned, as a nearby resident, what impact a development on this scale would have on the area and what this many residents would do in this area. Mr. Calhoun stated that the primary concerns of traffic impact and utility capacity were more than sufficient to handle the proposed density. He continues to state that there are a number of outdoor recreation opportunities on the subject property. Mr. Calhoun continued by noting the immediate proximity of Edwards Park which offers many active recreation opportunities as well. The Board of Commissioners nor the Planning Commission had any further questions for Mr. Calhoun.

Mitchell Hollis, a developer representing the petitioner via POA, began by stating that the staff analysis summarized the proposed development well. Mr. Hollis went on to clarify some of the uncertain details previously discussed. He began by stating that there are two access roads planned to intersect Cleveland Highway that will both be a part of the project's initial phase. Mr. Hollis described the different types of proposed residential dwellings and stated that there would be a total of 315 strictly residential units separated from the retail and loft portion of the proposed development. Mr. Hollis described various developments in other states that inspired the proposed site design. He also noted that the overall unit per acre density of the proposed development would be lesser than that of other developments in the area such as Hammond Creek, but he clarified that the proposed site design is much larger in area than those existing developments of higher density. Chairman Lidderdale asked Mr. Hollis if the proposed streets would be developed to the county's standards and deeded to the county upon completion for future maintenance. Mr. Hollis stated that the proposed roads and streets would be developed according to the county's guidelines and deeded to the county upon completion with the exception of some of the access alleyways that would be maintained by the proposed HOA. Mr. Hollis went on to state that the design plans for on-street parking over the majority of new streets and that the streets are designed to accommodate on-street parking as referenced in the typical section in the site plan. Commissioner Brooker asked Mr. Hollis how the proposed development would be maintained, and Mr. Hollis stated that an HOA would be established to oversee all property maintenance.

Commissioner Brooker went on to ask if the HOA would have appearance and upkeep standards to which Mr. Hollis confirmed that there would be appearance standards in place. Mr. Hollis stated that Tom Minor would be the drafter of the proposed HOA. Commissioner Robbins asked if there would be a limit to the amount of renting allowed in the 315 residences detached from the retail area, and Mr. Hollis stated that there would be a limit set forth in the proposed HOA agreement to ensure a majority of owner-occupied character in the proposed development. Chairman Lidderdale asked if there are any plans for future expansion beyond the footprint of the subject property to which Mr. Hollis stated that there are no current plans for future expansion other than potentially a few additional residential units and stormwater on the out parcel of the subject property.

Rob Bradham, President of the Greater Dalton Chamber of Commerce, elaborated on the Believe Greater Dalton Housing Strategy briefly discussed in the staff analysis. He stated that the developers and petitioner were heavily involved in the planning process and designed this development as an implementation of the strategic five-year plan.

Ron Johnson, an adjacent property owner, stated that although he was not opposed to the development he was concerned with traffic congestion created by the proposed development and new middle school nearby. Some discussion occurred regarding the proposed setbacks of the development and the timeline. Mr. Hollis stated that the project would be an eight-year process.

Richard Planzer, an adjacent property owner, was concerned with potential for other development on the subject property if there were a change in ownership or bankruptcy of the current developer. Mr. Smalley clarified that any deviation from the proposed site plan would require a re-submittal of a new site plan to propose any new change from the current site plan, or another rezoning would need to occur regardless of ownership.

Scotty Tate, neighboring property owner, stated that he was concerned with the ability of the subject property to contain the potential stormwater runoff created by the subject property. Mr. Hollis stated that their plan will be required to adhere to all local and state stormwater regulations. He went on to point out the large amount of retention ponds proposed on the site plan with the understanding that there is room to expand those ponds if needed.

With no other comments heard for or against this hearing closed at 7:02.

**B. Heard the request of Diana Rico to rezone from Low Density Residential (R-2) to General Commercial (C-2) a tract of land totaling 1.3 acres located at 2319 Cleveland Highway. Parcels (12-103-02-011, 063, 093) (County)**

Mr. Minor and Mr. Thomas re-enter the commission chambers. Blanca Cardona acted as an English to Spanish translator for the petitioner.

Mr. Calhoun oriented the audience to the subject property and summarized the staff analysis which was not in favor of the requested C-2 rezoning. There were no further questions for Mr. Calhoun from the Planning Commission.

Diana Rico stated that the plan is to utilize the two existing dwellings on the subject property for the proposed auto dealership office space. Commissioner Crossen confirmed with Ms. Rico that the intention is to utilize the existing structures rather than build new offices. Chairman Lidderdale confirmed with Mr. Calhoun that an adequate buffer would be ineffective along the southern boundary of the subject property. Mr. Calhoun went on to state that the intrusion of a twenty-foot buffer would significantly reduce the amount of lot area to be used for the proposed auto sales business when combined with the required customer and employee parking area. Ms. Rico stated that she would accommodate any buffer requirements the commissioners saw fit for the proposed development. Chairperson Laughter asked Ms. Rico if anyone intended to live in either of the existing dwelling to which Ms. Rico stated that there was no interest in using the property for residential purposes.

Kevin Harris, adjacent property owner, stated that he was opposed to the proposed development due to his concern that the sight, noise and traffic generation of the proposed business would have a negative impact on the adjacent residential properties.

With no other comments heard for or against this hearing closed at 7:20

### **III. REGULAR MEETING**

**A. Recommendation regarding the request of Greenwood Developers to rezone from General Agriculture (GA) to Planned Unit Development (PUD) a tract of land totaling 74 acres located along the west R/W of Cleveland Highway. Parcels (11-300-12-001, 11-313-30-000) (County)**

Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion on the requested PUD rezoning. Mr. Minor and Mr. Thomas recused themselves from this vote and exited the commission chambers prior to any discussion on this item. Mr. DeLay stated that the proposed development would attract many home buyers and young professionals. Ms. McClurg compared the proposed development to a similar one in another

community where age diversity in a high-density residential environment was no issue. Mr. Sanford confirmed that GDOT would preside over access regulations to Cleveland Highway with staff. Mr. Hollis stated that he expects accel and decel lanes would be required for their access roads to Cleveland highway, but he stated that he does not expect a signalized intersection improvement to be made to Cleveland Highway. Ms. McClurg confirmed with Mr. Hollis that there was no opportunity for another access point to the subject property than Cleveland Highway. **Ms. McClurg then made a motion to recommend the PUD rezoning on the proposed site plan based on her agreement with the content of the staff analysis. Mr. DeLay seconded the motion and a unanimous recommendation to approve the requested PUD rezoning followed, 3-0.**

**B. Recommendation regarding the request of Diana Rico to rezone from Low Density Residential (R-2) to General Commercial (C-2) a tract of land totaling 1.3 acres located at 2319 Cleveland Highway. Parcels (12-103-02-011, 063, 093) (County)**  
Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion on the proposed C-2 rezoning. **Mr. Minor then made a motion to deny the C-2 rezoning based on his agreement with the content of the staff analysis. Mr. Thomas seconded the motion and a unanimous recommendation to deny the C-2 rezoning followed, 5-0.**

**C. Final Plat Review—Cantrell**

Ms. Price-Garland oriented the Planning Commission to the subject property and explained that all standards had been met as well as all required signatures were gathered. She stated that it requires Planning Commission approval since it is within the City of Dalton. Mr. DeLay made a motion to approve the plat as drawn and his motion was seconded by Mr. Minor which then passed unanimously, 5-0.

**D. Final Plat Review—Crider**

Ms. Price-Garland oriented the Planning Commission to the subject property and explained that the proposed plat would create a flag lot noted as Tract 2. She stated that this proposal is based on a family property that is being split for the construction of a new single family detached dwelling. Ms. Price-Garland also state that there are access easements included in the plat for tracts 1 and 3. Mr. Minor asked if there was any other possible way to draw the plat and Ms. Price-Garland stated that she and the petitioner have determined that this is the best possible way to subdivide the subject property. Mr. Minor made a motion to approve this plat as drawn. His motion was seconded by Mr. Sanford which then passed unanimously, 5-0.

**E. Final Plat Review—Cervantes**

Ms. Price-Garland oriented the Planning Commission to the subject property and stated that this is a single tract being proposed to be divided into two tracts. She draws attention to the existing carwash operation and single family detached dwelling, and Ms. Price-Garland explains that the plan is to separate the two structures in order to sell the carwash separately. She states that this request would require a side setback variance of four feet for the dwelling and six feet for the carwash structure in order to be approved. Chairman Lidderdale asked if the dwelling was occupied and Ms. Price-Garland stated that it was vacant. Mr. Sanford made a motion to approve the plat as drawn including the four feet side setback variance for the dwelling and six feet side setback variance for the carwash. His motion was seconded by Mr. Thomas which then passed unanimously, 5-0.

**F. Final Plat Review—Reynolds**

Ms. Price-Garland oriented the Planning Commission to the subject property and stated that this is a single tract being proposed to be divided into two tracts. She stated that it meets all the regulations and had obtained all the required signatures for plat approval. Mr. DeLay made a motion to approve the plat

as drawn. His motion was seconded by Mr. Thomas which then passed unanimously, 5-0.

**G. Other Business**

**IV. ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business scheduled, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ethan Calhoun  
Secretary