

MINUTES
DALTON-WHITFIELD COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
January 25, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jim Lidderdale, Chairman
Scott DeLay, Vice-Chairman via teleconference
John Thomas
David Pennington
Eric Barr

WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Jevin Jensen, Chairman via video conference
Barry Robbins, Vice Chairman
Greg Jones

VISITORS PRESENT VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

Jason Farmer, Leonard Cochran, Zaira Mesa, John Morgan, and others.

STAFF PRESENT

Ethan Calhoun
Jean Price-Garland
Robert Smalley

I. GENERAL

A. Call to Order: Chairman Jensen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and confirmed a quorum of commissioners was present with Commissioner Staten absent, and Jensen then turned the meeting over to Chairman Lidderdale who confirmed a quorum of planning commissioners was present with Scott DeLay attending via video conference.

B. Minutes: Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion to approve or correct the December 28, 2020 meeting minutes. Mr. Pennington made the motion to accept the minutes as written and his motion was seconded by Ms. McClurg which then passed unanimously 5-0.

Mr. Calhoun summarized the public hearing procedures and clarified that final action regarding the rezoning matters would likely occur during the February meeting of the Whitfield County Board of Commissioners.

II. REZONING PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Heard the request of Zaira Mesa to rezone from Low Density Single Family Residential (R-2) to Rural Residential (R-5) a tract of land totaling 0.38 acres located at 214 Hewitt Drive, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-242-01-060) (County)

Mr. Thomas recused himself from this hearing and exited the chambers. Mr. Calhoun summarized the staff analysis, which was not in favor of the requested R-5 rezoning. Chairman Lidderdale asked Calhoun about the staff condition regarding a variance, and Calhoun stated that the point in the staff analysis conclusion was in regard to the potential for setback variances if a site-built dwelling were constructed as a way to incentivize site-built development. There were no further questions for Calhoun.

Zaira Mesa stated that her family of eight individuals was living at the adjacent property 216 Hewitt Dr. and that they were hoping to place a manufactured home on the subject property in order to have

more personal space. Lidderdale asked Mesa if they had considered building a conventional site-built dwelling to which Mesa stated that the family's preference is for a manufactured home due to cost savings. Ms. McClurg asked Mesa how long they had been living at their current location to which Mesa stated they had moved from Texas approximately three months prior. Mesa went on to state that the family had not originally realized that their property contained two buildable lots until recently. With no other comments heard for or against, this hearing closed at approximately 6:11pm.

B. Heard the request of Leonard T. Cochran, Jr. to rezone from Neighborhood Commercial (C-1) to Low Density Single Family Residential (R-2) a tract of land totaling 0.49 acres located at 1117 Beaverdale Road, NE, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (11-307-32-000) (County)

Mr. Calhoun oriented the audience to the subject property and summarized the staff analysis which was in favor of the requested R-5 rezoning. There were no further questions for Calhoun.

Leonard Cochran stated that he owned the subject property as well as an adjacent property where he lived. Cochran stated that his intent was simply to rezone the subject property since he no longer used it for his barbershop.

With no other comments heard for or against, this hearing closed at approximately 6:19pm.

C. Heard the request of Riverstone Construction LLC to rezone from General Agricultural (GA) to High Density Residential (R-7) a tract of land totaling 17.46 acres located at 2610 Cleveland Highway, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-089-02-000) (County)

Mr. Calhoun summarized the staff analysis, which was in favor of the R-7 rezoning. Mr. Thomas stated that this application and proposal shows the need for this type of housing and that there is a lack of land available for development within the City. There were no further questions for Calhoun.

Jason Farmer stated that he is a developer that has experience in several communities with similar developments. Farmer stated that his housing developments are often for retired or working-class homebuyers. Farmer then notes the considerable amount of research regarding the subject property including the utility needs. He then stated that his developments include an HOA for handling maintenance and other management of the properties that he presides over until all properties have been sold. Farmer stated that the proposal for the subject property is fee simple and that he would be open to placing deed restrictions to limit rented units after the properties have been sold. Some discussion occurred regarding financing mortgages and how it would benefit to limit the number of rented units with a deed restriction. Farmer stated that he would be more than willing to place deed restrictions on the number of units in this development that could be rented rather than owner-occupied. Lidderdale confirmed with Calhoun that the driveway accessing the neighboring properties to the south is not affected by the development of the subject property.

With no other comments heard for or against, this hearing closed at approximately 6:44pm.

III. REGULAR MEETING

A. Recommendation regarding the request of Zaira Mesa to rezone from Low Density Single Family Residential (R-2) to Rural Residential (R-5) a tract of land totaling 0.38 acres located at 214 Hewitt Drive, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-242-01-060) (County)

Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion on the proposed R-5 rezoning. David Pennington asked Calhoun if the concern for stormwater and topography would prohibit development altogether.

Calhoun replied to Pennington by stating that development of the subject property may be possible since the property is not technically within any flood zone, but he went on to state that the property would likely have issues with stormwater runoff from surrounding properties if it were developed.

Jody McClurg then made a motion to recommend denial of the R-5 rezoning based on her agreement with the content of the staff analysis. Eric Barr seconded the motion and a unanimous recommendation to deny the R-5 rezoning followed, 4-0 with Mr. Thomas recusing himself.

B. Recommendation regarding the request of Leonard T. Cochran, Jr. to rezone from Neighborhood Commercial (C-1) to Low Density Single Family Residential (R-2) a tract of land totaling 0.49 acres located at 1117 Beaverdale Road, NE, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (11-307-32-000) (County)

Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion on the proposed R-5 rezoning. Mr. Thomas returned to the chambers. **John Thomas then made a motion to recommend approval of the R-5 rezoning based on his agreement with the content of the staff analysis. David Pennington seconded the motion and a unanimous recommendation to approve the R-5 rezoning followed, 5-0.**

C. Recommendation regarding the request of Riverstone Construction LLC to rezone from General Agricultural (GA) to High Density Residential (R-7) a tract of land totaling 17.46 acres located at 2610 Cleveland Highway, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-089-02-000) (County)

Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion on the requested R-7 rezoning. **David Pennington then made a motion to recommend the R-7 rezoning based on his agreement with the content of the staff analysis including the condition to limit development to fee simple townhouses. Jody McClurg then seconded the motion and a unanimous recommendation to approve the rezoning and condition followed, 5-0.**

D. Final Plat Review- Armstrong - Ms. Price-Garland oriented the Planning Commission to the subject property along the west R/W of Glenwood Drive. Price-Garland stated that this subdivision was inside the City of Dalton which prompts the Planning Commission to review and approve all property division. She went on to stat that this property is proposed to be divided from one tract into two. Price-Garland stated that all the requirements would be satisfied per the proposed plat and that it had received all the required department head signatures. Price-Garland recommended that the Planning Commission approve the plat as drawn. Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion for the proposed plat. David Pennington made a motion to approve the plat as drawn and his motion was seconded by John. Thomas which then passed unanimously 5-0.

E. Final Plat Review-Planzer

Ms. Price-Garland oriented the Planning Commission to the subject property along the east R/W of Veterans Drive. Price-Garland stated that this was another plat within the City of Dalton that would require Planning Commission approval. She stated that the current property is proposed to be divided into two parcels. Price-Garland stated that the plat met all the requirements and that the proposed lots were actually larger than many of the other lots in this area. She noted that the plat had received all the necessary department head signatures and recommended that the plat be approved. **Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion of the proposed plat. John Thomas made a motion to approve the plat as drawn and his motion was seconded by David Pennington which then passed unanimously 5-0.**

F. Preliminary Plat Review- 4:1 Ratio--Morgan

Ms. Price-Garland oriented the Planning Commission to the subject property along the east R/W of Highway 201 that is zoned GA. She explained to the Planning Commission that the proposed plat would technically create lots in violation of the 4:1 lot ratio, but she stated that the typical concerns with 4:1 lot ratio do not apply to the propose plat due to the larger lot sizes. Price-Garland pointed out the existing single-family dwelling located on the 5-acre lot that has existed on the parent tract for some time and is planned to remain. Some discussion occurred in regard to the airplane runway and small airplane hangar sheds on the subject property that resulted in the understanding that the future property owners would have the ability to utilize them or not. Price-Garland also drew attention to the two shared driveways accessing Hwy. 201 and stated that GDOT limited the developer to three driveway cuts. Lidderdale confirmed that the rear portions of the lots were at a significantly higher elevation than that of the front portions of the lots.

Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion of the proposed plat. John Thomas made a motion to approve the plat as drawn including the 4:1 ratio lots and his motion was seconded by Jody McClurg which then passed unanimously 5-0.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business scheduled, the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ethan Calhoun
Secretary