

MINUTES
DALTON-WHITFIELD COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
November 1, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jim Lidderdale, *Chairman*
Chris Shiflett, *Vice Chairman*
Octavio Perez
Eric Barr
David Pennington IV

WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Jevin Jensen, *Chairman*
John Thomas
Robby Staten

VISITORS PRESENT VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

Vicky Alt, Christopher Byrd, Jeff Pickens, Jimmie Mason, David Armstrong, Dale Reed, Carolyn Isaacs, Virginia Collins, Stephen Raymond, Jeff Raymond, Lisa Standridge, Darryl Long, Cynthia Meza, Mary Mendoza, and others.

STAFF PRESENT

Ethan Calhoun
Robert Sivick
Dan Strain
Jacob Bearden

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 Barry Robbins and Greg Jones, then turned the meeting over to Chairman Lidderdale who confirmed a quorum of planning commissioners was present with Jody McClurg absent.

B. Minutes: Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion to approve or correct the September 26, 2022 meeting minutes. David Pennington made the motion to accept the minutes as written and his motion was seconded by Chris Shiflett which then passed unanimously 4-0.

Mr. Calhoun summarized the public hearing procedures and clarified that final action regarding the rezoning matters would likely occur during the November meetings of the Whitfield County Board of Commissioners and Mayor and Council of the City of Dalton.

II. REZONING PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Heard the request of Christopher Byrd to rezone from Rural Residential (R-5) to General Agriculture (GA) a tract of land totaling 56.46 acres located at Muse Road, Resaca, Georgia. Parcel (13-243-02-000) (County)

Mr. Calhoun summarized the staff analysis which recommended approval of the GA rezoning. There were no further questions for Calhoun.

Christopher Byrd stated that he purchased the subject property approximately one-year ago with the intent to build a homestead for he and his family. Byrd stated that he is requesting a rezoning due to his need to construct a barn prior to a dwelling on the subject property, which is not allowed in the R-5 zone district. Byrd stated the barn would be storage for tools to later build a dwelling and other accessory structures on the subject property.

With no other comments heard for or against, this hearing closed at approximately 6:09pm.

B. Heard the request of Jeff Pickens to rezone from Low Density Single Family Residential (R-2) to Rural Residential (R-5) a tract of land totaling 0.55 acres located at 1131 Mount Vernon Road, Tunnel Hill,

Georgia. Parcel (27-089-05-000) (County)

Mr. Calhoun summarized the staff analysis which recommended the R-5 rezoning. There were no further questions for Calhoun.

Jeff Pickens stated that he previously removed the older manufactured home and wishes to replace it for the purpose of renting the property to a tenant. Pickens stated that he is an experienced landlord in the community and made statements assuring that his rental properties are well-maintained.

Carolyn Isaacs, a neighbor, stated that she opposes the R-5 rezoning due to the manufactured home being out of character with the site-built single-family detached dwellings in the immediate area. Isaacs stated that she believes the existing R-2 zoning is more appropriate given the zoning and development pattern in this area.

Virginia Collins, a neighbor, stated that she opposed the potential of a duplex dwelling or manufactured home on the subject property and preferred the subject property remain site-built single-family detached in character.

Stephen Raymond, a neighbor, stated that he opposes the R-5 rezoning based on his concerns with the negative affect a manufactured home or duplex would pose on the site-built single-family detached dwellings surrounding the subject property. Raymond stated that he believed the adjacent and surrounding properties would be devalued if the subject property is rezoned and developed as proposed.

Vicky Alt, Whitfield resident but not in the area relevant to this rezoning, stated that she believed that permitting manufactured homes in the R-2 zone district would be a viable solution to this issue.

Pickens rebutted by passing out photos to the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners. Pickens made claims that the neighboring properties surrounding the subject property in this area were not well-maintained and therefore would not be devalued by the R-5 rezoning and manufactured home. Pickens then distributed additional photos of other properties that he owns and manages for residential rentals claiming that his properties are well-maintained. Chairman Lidderdale confirmed with Pickens that his intent is only for rental use of the subject property. Lidderdale then asked Pickens if he would be interested in building a duplex on the subject property to which Pickens stated that he was informed by County staff that the subject property would not be able to support a duplex on septic. Lidderdale asked Pickens if the proposed manufactured home would be a new unit or a used model to which Pickens stated he planned on purchasing a used manufactured home for the subject property. Commissioner Thomas asked Pickens if he considered building a site-built dwelling rather than a manufactured home on the subject property to which Pickens stated that the rent would be a less affordable rent at over \$1,000 per month. Pickens then stated that he conducts a thorough screening process for all of his new tenants. Thomas then asked Pickens if he would be opposed to a similar manufactured home being located into Pickens' neighborhood to which Pickens answered by saying that he would not be opposed if the manufactured home was in good condition and well-maintained.

Jeff Raymond, a neighbor, then stated that he opposes the R-5 rezoning and manufactured home due to his concern that it would devalue the adjacent and surrounding properties.

Lisa Standridge, a neighbor, state that she opposes the R-5 rezoning and manufactured home based on the same concerns already noted in others opposition remarks.

With no other comments heard for or against, this hearing closed at approximately 6:31 pm.

C. Heard the request of Jimmie Mason for a special use request on a tract of land totaling 7.50 acres zoned General Agriculture (GA) located on Colonial Way, Dalton, Georgia. Parcels (13-050-29-000 and 13-050-30-000) (County)

Mr. Calhoun summarized the staff analysis which recommended an approval of the special use permit with the conditions noted in the staff analysis. Chairman Jensen confirmed with Calhoun that he recommended a site plan be required as a condition to determine what impact the expanded event center may have on adjacent residential properties. There were no further questions for Calhoun.

Jimmie Mason stated that his request is simply to add additional area to the adjacent property and event center that his daughter operates so that she may have the potential to add additional parking and buildings to the operation at a future date if needed. Chris Shiflett asked Mason to describe the type of events held at the adjacent event center to which Mason stated mostly weddings and church-related events. Mason stated that his request is speculative and that they have no current plans in place to expand onto the subject property. Jim Lidderdale asked Mason if the driveway access to the existing event center is a shared driveway to which Mason confirmed that it is a shared easement. Mason went on to state that he may develop a new driveway entrance to the event center now that the subject property would link the existing event center property to the public road. Lidderdale confirmed with Mason that a site plan could be produced prior to the Commissioner's November meeting.

Tim Thomason, an adjacent neighbor, stated that he was not opposed to the event center or its potential expansion as long as buffers are created to mitigate dust from traffic and noise. Thomason notes occasional issues with large

event traffic creating significant dust and speeding along the shares access easement. Thomason states that he believes these issues could be mitigated with improvements to the easement and entrance including the buffers noted in the staff analysis. Thomason then stated that he would like a copy of the proposed site plan prior to the final action of the proposed rezoning.

Daryl Long, a Whitfield County resident in another area of the county, stated that he believed that a site plan should be required for all rezonings as a means to eliminate any uncertainty as to the petitioner's intended use or development of the property in question.

With no other comments heard for or against, this hearing closed at approximately 6:48pm.

D. Heard the request of David Armstrong to rezone from Low Density Single Family Residential (R-2) to Transitional Residential (R-6) a tract of land totaling 1.83 acres located at 1103 Walston Avenue, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-197-01-035) (City)

Mr. Calhoun summarized the staff analysis which recommended an R-6 rezoning. Octavio Perez stated that the previous City zoning ordinance allowed residential development in the manufacturing zone district so that employees could live near their place of employment. There were no further questions for Calhoun.

David Armstrong confirmed the staff analysis accurately described his intent. Armstrong then noted multiple properties in the area that were developed with multi-family dwellings similar to his proposed development of the subject property.

With no other comments heard for or against, this hearing closed at approximately 6:57pm.

E. Heard the request of Dale Reed rezone from Transitional Residential (R-6) to Neighborhood Commercial (C-1) a tract of land totaling 0.48 acres located 709 Arbella Street, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-161-01-018) (City)

Mr. Calhoun summarized the staff analysis which recommended the C-1 rezoning be approved. There were no further questions for Calhoun.

Dale Reed stated that he is a Dr. and partner in the adjacent AOSM medical office and believed they would need to expand their business in the future to meet the needs of the community. Reed stated that their business has seen an increase in patients despite having other office locations in other nearby communities. Reed state that he purchased the subject property himself with the speculation of a future need for his office to expand. Reed also noted that the subject property had been vacant for some time.

With no other comments heard for or against, this hearing closed at approximately 6:06pm.

F. Heard the request of Benjamin Cordova to rezone from Heavy Manufacturing (M-2) to Transitional Residential (R-6) a tract of land totaling 0.59 acres located 1905 Abutment Road, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-315-01-004) (City)

Mr. Calhoun summarized the staff analysis which recommended approval of the requested R-6 rezoning. There were no further questions for Calhoun.

Cynthia Meza translated on behalf of Mary Mendoza and stated that the petitioner's plans are simply to redevelop the subject property by constructing a quadplex.

With no other comments heard for or against, this hearing closed at approximately 7:14pm.

III. REGULAR MEETING

A. Recommendation regarding the request of Christopher Byrd to rezone from Rural Residential (R-5) to General Agriculture (GA) a tract of land totaling 56.46 acres located at Muse Road, Resaca, Georgia. Parcel (13-243-02-000) (County)

Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion on the requested GA rezoning. **David Pennington then made a motion to recommend approval of the GA rezoning based on his agreement with the content of the staff analysis. Chris Shiflett then seconded the motion and a unanimous recommendation to approve the GA rezoning followed, 4-0.**

B. Recommendation regarding the request of Jeff Pickens to rezone from Low Density Single Family Residential (R-2) to Rural Residential (R-5) a tract of land totaling 0.55 acres located at 1131 Mount Vernon Road, Tunnel Hill, Georgia. Parcel (27-089-05-000) (County)

Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion on the requested R-5 rezoning. **Octavio Perez then then made a motion to recommend approval of the R-5 rezoning. Chris Shiflett raised the issue regarding the**

potential for a duplex which all neighbors staunchly opposed. After some discussion with staff, it was determined that a condition to prohibit a duplex would protect the single-family character of this area in the event sewer is one day made available to this area. Octavio Perez amended his motion to include the condition that no duplex be permitted on the subject property. Chris Shiflett then seconded the motion and a unanimous recommendation to approve the R-5 rezoning with the condition that no duplex be permitted on the subject property followed, 4-0.

C. Recommendation regarding the request of Jimmie Mason for a special use permit on a tract of land totaling 7.50 acres zoned General Agriculture (GA) located on Colonial Way, Dalton, Georgia. Parcels (13-050-29-000 and 13-050-30-000) (County)

Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion on the requested GA special use permit. David Pennington then made a motion to recommend an approval of the GA Special Use Permit for an event center based on the content of the staff analysis including the conditions listed in the staff analysis. Chris Shiflett then seconded the motion and a unanimous recommendation to recommend an approval of the special use permit followed, 4-0.

D. Recommendation regarding the request of David Armstrong to rezone from Low Density Single Family Residential (R-2) to Transitional Residential (R-6) a tract of land totaling 1.83 acres located at 1103 Walston Avenue, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-197-01-035) (City)

Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion on the requested R-6 rezoning. Chris Shiflett then made a motion to approve the R-6 rezoning based on his understanding that there would be no issues. Eric Barr then seconded the motion and a unanimous recommendation to approve the R-6 rezoning followed, 4-0.

E. Recommendation regarding the request of Dale Reed rezone from Transitional Residential (R-6) to Neighborhood Commercial (C-1) a tract of land totaling 0.48 acres located 709 Arbella Street, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-161-01-018) (City)

Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion on the requested C-1 rezoning. David Pennington then made a motion to recommend the C-1 rezoning based on his agreement with the content of the staff analysis. Chris Shiflett then seconded the motion and a unanimous recommendation to approve the C-1 rezoning followed, 4-0.

F. Recommendation regarding the request of Benjamin Cordova to rezone from Heavy Manufacturing (M-2) to Transitional Residential (R-6) a tract of land totaling 0.59 acres located 1905 Abutment Road, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-315-01-004) (City)

Chairman Lidderdale sought a motion on the requested R-6 rezoning. Octavio Perez then made a motion to approve the R-6 rezoning. Chris Shiflett then seconded the motion and a unanimous recommendation to approve the R-6 rezoning followed, 4-0.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business scheduled, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ethan Calhoun
Secretary