

Planning Commission

June 17, 2019

The Planning Commission met on Monday, June 17, 2019 in the Council Chambers of the City Hall office. The following members were present: Pat Webb; Dial Dubose; Mario DiPietro, Vice Chairman; Blake Sanders, Planning and Project Manager; and Tommy Holcombe, Building Official. Absent: Don Hamilton, Chairman, and Ray Williams.

Mario DiPietro, Vice Chairman, opened the meeting.

The following item was presented to the Board:

REZONING REQUEST: Rezoning of 17.02 acres located at 103 Pineview Drive, Easley, SC. Pickens County Tax-5028-12-75-6949 from R-10 (Residential) to FRD (Flexible Review District). Owner McKinney Holdings, 4574 Calhoun Memorial Hwy, Easley, SC 29640.

Mario DiPietro called upon Tommy Holcombe, Building Official. Tommy stated that the owner, builder, and architect were all present at the meeting.

Jamie McCutchins, Engineer with Davis/Floyd, representing Tim McKinney, presented plans/drawings on what the property development would look like. He stated that each unit would include four attached townhomes with a minimum of one car garage each and that there would be a minimum 20 foot landscape buffer. Primary access would be on Wimberly. One building on property would stay as possible clubhouse amenity or storage space. Mr. McCutchins stated that there would be a private access for emergency response that would not be open to the public. He also informed that a portion of the property was being donated to the City of Easley to help with concerns over traffic in the future. He explained that current zoning would allow for 68 single family detached homes and the new zoning would allow for 93 single family attached homes. The site plan proposes 92 single family attached homes. He expressed that there might be a possibility to alter the plans of a specific eight townhomes to four single family homes. Pond on site will be maintained. 10 percent will be for guest parking.

Pat Webb expressed concern on the emergency response entrance. It was stated that input from the Fire Department would be requested.

Dial Dubose mentioned concerns about the number of units going from 68 to 93. He isn't sure if the extra will pose a traffic problem. Tommy Holcombe stated that ordinarily traffic is increased with the size of the family unit and that townhomes typically don't produce the same level of traffic.

It was stated that the Planning Commission would be approving the number of units, the buffer, and the development concept. Any major changes would require the developer to come before the Planning Commission again and resubmit any changes. Only minor changes can be addressed by staff.

The meeting was opened for citizens to voice concerns or ask any questions.

Fred Jackson, 103 Echo Circle, asked if the townhomes were going to be sold or rented. Was told that homes would be sold, but may be rented out by owner. Mr. Jackson asked who would maintain the property and was told that the property would have an HOA for this purpose. Development will be private streets that will be maintained within the development as well. He has concerns with the traffic because of the events at JB Red Owens Park. Mr. Holcombe was asked if the roads to be to city specs and he said that they would be to city specs, but that the city does not own them.

Charles Gill, 301 Echo Circle, asked for an explanation on the FRD zoning since it is the first request for this new zoning regulation. It was explained that this zone is to give the public information on what the developer is planning to turn property into before it is approved. Mr. Gill stated that he thinks the properties that Mr. McKinney develops are very nice and that he is pleased that there will be an HOA in place to assure the neighbors that the property will be maintained. Mr. Gill had a question on if any review will be done on the current pond since it is quite old. Tommy Holcombe said that it will be reviewed on the site plan. The pond will be treated and evaluated for any improvements that may need to be made. Mentioned traffic and asked if the City could request a traffic study. Tommy told Mr. Gill that a request from SCDOT would be made for a traffic study.

Jim Martin, 198 Longview Terrace, asked why the plans show two detention ponds. City reviews stormwater ponds. Questioned if it was really necessary for a second access for ER to be on Pineview Drive. It was explained that the fire departments like for a second entrance point whenever a development is over 30 units to make accessibility easier. It was noted that they are rarely used, but an asset when needed in an emergency situation.

Sean Faulkner, 111 Pineview Drive, does not want ER access on Pineview if possible. Also, Mr. Faulkner believes that the additional 25 homes that the rezoning would invite would increase density too much. He would like the property to stay zoned as R-10 because traffic would be less dense, in his opinion.

Chad Weisner, 104 Pineview Drive, stated that visibility from Pineview is difficult due to the trees. Makes getting onto Brushy Creek difficult. Wanted to know if there would be anything done about that including on the property being donated to the City. Tommy stated that if the visibility is a concern then it will be addressed with SCDOT to find a solution.

Crystal Riggins, 115 Pineview Drive, doesn't think ER access on Pineview is a good idea. Stated that she feels it will be difficult for fire trucks to get into the entrance because of the angle of the road. Was told that the fire department would be reviewing road access. Ms. Riggins questioned what the value of homes would be when they went on the market. She was told that information is unknown at this time and that the City cannot regulate what the townhomes are sold for.

Mario DiPietro, Vice Chairman, explained that the Planning Commission is an advisory board and that the request will go to the City Council for the next two readings for approval. He gave the next meeting date of July 8, 2019 at 7:00pm at the Easley Law Enforcement Center. He also explained the process for the request to be approved; that it has to be approved at two Council Meetings. He also stated that one

person per agenda item can speak and that whomever will need to sign in to be heard from before the beginning of the meeting.

Easley Combined Utilities does not have any issues with servicing the potential development.

Jessica Martin, 198 Longview Terrace, thanked the Committee and the public citizens for taking their time to have this discussion. Ms. Martin is not pleased with the number of units being proposed, does not feel that townhomes is a good fit for that particular area. Believes that having a HOA is a good idea.

A motion was made by Dial Dubose to approve the rezoning request to FRD, seconded by Pat Webb. All board members present voted in favor of this rezoning request to FRD as submitted.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.