

**Town of Smithfield  
Planning Board Minutes  
Thursday, February 3rd, 2022  
Town Hall Council Chambers  
6:00 PM**

Members Present:

Chairman Stephen Upton  
Vice-Chairman Mark Lane  
Michael Johnson  
Debbie Howard  
Sloan Stevens  
Alisa Bizzell  
Ashley Spain  
Doris Wallace

Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Mark Helmer, Senior Planner  
Julie Edmonds, Administrative Assistant

Staff Absent:

Stephen Wensman, Planning Director

**CALL TO ORDER**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Michael Johnson made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Debbie Howard. Unanimously approved.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR JANUARY 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2022**

Debbie Howard made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Michael Johnson. Unanimously approved.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**S-22-01 Franklin Townes:** The applicant is requesting preliminary subdivision approval to divide one parcel of land totaling 15.9 acres and located within a to the R-8 CZ (Conditional Zoning) district into 134 residential lots. The property considered for approval is located on the southeast side of the intersection of Wilson's Mills Road and M. Durwood Stephenson Parkway and further identified as Johnston County Tax ID# 15083049E.

Mark Helmer stated that Morris and Ritchie Associates of NC, PC is requesting the preliminary plat of Franklin Townes, a 134-lot townhouse development on 15.9-acres of land in a R-8 Conditional Zoning District. The property is located southeast of Wilson's Mills Road and M. Durwood Stephenson Parkway. The property owners are Market Street 1500, LLC. The property was rezoned to R-8 CZ with a site plan for the Franklin Townes development on 12/07/21 by the Town Council. The preliminary plat is consistent with the approved master plan.

To approve a preliminary plat, the Town Council shall make the following finding (staff's opinion in Bold/Italic):

1. The plat is consistent with the adopted plans and policies of the town; The plat is consistent with the adopted plans and policies of the town.
2. The plat complies with all applicable requirements of this ordinance; The plan complies with all applicable requirements of this ordinance and the R-8 Conditional Zoning Master Plan
3. There exists adequate infrastructure (transportation and utilities) to support the plat as proposed. There is adequate infrastructure.
4. The plat will not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or other neighborhood uses. The plat will not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or other neighborhood uses.

Planning Staff recommends approval of S-22-01 with the following conditions based on the finding of fact for preliminary plats:

1. That the subdivision be in accordance with the approved R-8 Conditional Zoning Master Plan with the following deviations from the R-8 Zoning District:

Item	R-8 CZ
Streets & right-of-way	27' wide back-to-back in 50' R/W with 3' utility strip
Curb and gutter	Valley curbs in front of units and within 10' of an end unit.
Rear setback	15'
Perimeter buffer	10'
Building separation	20'
Building height	39'-6 ¼"

2. That the driveway entrances be constructed in accordance with the town's standard driveway apron detail.
3. That park dedication fees in lieu be paid prior to recording the final plat in accordance with the UDO Section 10.114.8.
4. That all utility fees including system development fees be paid before recording the final plat.
5. That the Town of Smithfield Stormwater Operations and Management agreement with a maintenance plan be submitted and recorded prior to final plat recording.
6. That the HOA declarations and covenants be submitted for Town Attorney review prior to final plat and the HOA
  - be responsible for the ownership and maintenance of all common amenities including front, side yard and open space landscaping, the stormwater SCM, parking lots, recreational amenities, and open space
  - enforce no parking in the subdivision streets
  - enforce the provision requiring trash and recycling roll offs to be stored in garages or rear yards.
7. That the streets are posted "no parking".

Debbie Howard asked if the Town had the sewer capacity to service this development?

Mark Helmer said yes, we do.

Doris Wallace asked what the price ranges would be for the proposed townhomes?

Mark Helmer said a representative of this project would gladly come forward later in the meeting to answer the question.

Sloan Stevens asked what was decided on the piece of land that jutted out between the houses of the adjoining property.

Mark Helmer said the plan was approved with conditions that the buffer be adequate through there. Some discussions were made about a gate being installed there so groundskeepers could enter and exit through there.

Mark Helmer told Doris Wallace he did find the information she requested earlier about price ranges for the townhomes. He said The Rose is a 2,106 sq. ft townhome for \$275,000 and The Akamatsu is a 1,792 sq. ft townhome for \$250,000.

Rob Bailey of 1611 Jones Franklin Rd Suite 101 Raleigh, NC spoke on behalf of R&R Development of NC, LLC. He spoke on Doris Wallace's question about the pricing. He said it seems to be changing daily. The prices Mark Helmer mentioned earlier are on the bottom range of where they think the pricing will be. There is a possibility the prices could go higher.

Stephen Upton asked Mr. Bailey if he and the Planning Department staff were in agreement on any recommendations?

Rob Bailey said yes, we are. We added a few during the Town Council meeting. They also had a few concerns from the resident's properties that back up to this property. They were able to accommodate the residents. They added additional buffering to provide more privacy.

Emma Gemmel of 207 Hancock Street wanted to show her appreciation to the board for doing their job last month, showing concern about not letting the land owners know about the changes around them other than the newspaper advertisement. The Town Council was divided as well, there wasn't a unanimous vote on either board.

Stephen Upton stated that he contacted the Town Manager, Michael Scott about the procedure for petitioning the Town Council for a full-time code enforcement officer. He read a letter to Town Council from the Planning Board.

Debbie Howard made a motion to petition the Town Council to add to the 2022-2023 Town Budget a full-time position for a code enforcement and zoning officer, seconded by Doris Wallace. Unanimously approved.

Mark Lane voiced his concerns about comments made at the February 1<sup>st</sup> Town Council meeting. They were directed toward the Planning Board. He doesn't feel they were appropriate for a public setting. After

5 terms on the Planning Board, he has always voted to protect the citizens of Smithfield and the surrounding ETJ. If the town officials don't like how he votes he will gladly turn in his resignation.

Doris Wallace was present at the Town Council meeting and she too felt the way the comment from Town Council was worded was wrong. She doesn't feel like they vote on the Planning Board using personal opinions.

Mark Helmer said the Planning Board is tasked with reviewing development proposals for compliance with current development standards and policies. The Planning Board must review plans and make recommendations to Town Council based on the merits of the plan. Critiquing current Town policies during the course of a plan review should be avoided until after the board has made a formal recommendation. Failure to do so could lead to a violation of the applicants right to due process.

Debbie Howard said she agrees with what Mark Helmer just said. What she doesn't agree with is the Town Council chastising the Planning Board in a public meeting and calling her out.

Mark Helmer stated that Planning staff would be creating a library of training material that can be checked out at any time by anyone. It will cover a wide range of topics that would be of interest to this board.

**Adjournment**

Being no further business, Doris Wallace made a motion seconded by Alisa Bizzell to adjourn the meeting. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julie Edmonds".

Julie Edmonds  
Administrative Support Specialist