

**Town of Smithfield
Planning Board Minutes
Thursday, March 3rd, 2022
Town Hall Council Chambers
6:02 PM**

Members Present:

Chairman Stephen Upton
Doris Wallace
Michael Johnson
Alisa Bizzell

Members Absent:

Vice-Chairman Mark Lane
Sloan Stevens
Debbie Howard
Ashley Spain

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 Alisa Bizzell. Unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 3rd, 2022

Doris Wallace made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Alisa Bizzell. Unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

CZ-22-01 Foster Commons: The applicant is requesting conditional zoning approval for the construction of a 50-unit apartment building on a 5.46-acre tract of land located within the B-3 (Business) zoning district. The property considered for approval is located on the south side of the intersection South Brightleaf Boulevard and East Holt Street and further identified as Johnston County Tax ID# 15041020A.

Mark Helmer stated that Woda Cooper Development Inc. is requesting a rezoning to B-3 Conditional Zone from the B-3 zoning district with a master plan for Foster Commons, a 50-unit senior (55+ restricted) multi-family apartment on 5.46 acres. The property is on the southwest corner of South Brightleaf Boulevard and East Holt Street, and approximately 1,240 lineal feet north-east of the Brogden Road/S. Brightleaf Boulevard intersection. The property considered for approval is vacant with road frontage on S. Brightleaf Boulevard and the CSX Railroad to the rear of the property. It is owned by E & F Properties, Inc.

The primary access to the development will be off of East Holt Street. East Holt is currently a closed public right-of-way. The developer will construct approximately 300 lineal feet of road in the right-of way that will match the street width found across S. Brightleaf Blvd with curb and gutter. The site will have two driveways off of Holt with no direct access onto Brightleaf Boulevard. The new street will require a cul-de-sac bulb at its terminus. A driveway apron should be provided at the end of the E. Holt Street cul-de-sac for the driveway to the business at 711 E Rose Street. Sidewalks will be constructed along Brightleaf Boulevard and on the south side of East Holt Street that will connect to the front door of the apartment building.

83 parking spaces are proposed and 8 spaces will be ADA accessible and van accessible. The supplemental standards for multi-family requires a minimum of 24 sq ft of storage space per unit. The development proposes 16 sq. ft. of storage per unit. Given the project is restricted to 55+ residents, the lesser amount of storage may be appropriate. There will be (18) one-bedroom units and (32) two bedrooms units. There currently is not adequate capacity in the sewer lines. Johnston County expects the capacity issue to be resolved by early 2025.

With the approval of the rezoning, the Planning Board/Town Council is required to adopt a statement describing whether the action is consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan and other applicable adopted plans and that the action is reasonable and in the public interest. Planning Staff considers the action to be consistent and reasonable:

- **Consistency with the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan** – the use is consistent with the comprehensive plan.
- **Consistency with the Unified Development Code** – the property will be developed in conformance with the UDO conditional zoning provisions.
- **Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses** - The property considered for rezoning will be compatible with the surrounding land uses. Multi-family is a permitted use in the B-3 zoning district and the use will not detrimentally impact adjacent properties and will improve property values.

Planning Staff recommends approval of CZ-22-01 with the following conditions:

1. That the future preliminary plat and development plans for the subdivision be in accordance with the approved Master Plan, R-8 Zoning District, and UDO regulations with the exception that the Storage Per Unit no less than 16 sq. ft. and the building height not exceed 43 feet.
2. That the parking lot entrances be constructed in accordance with the town's standard driveway detail.
3. That a landscaping and lighting plan be submitted with the construction plans in accordance with the UDO.
4. This facility should be designed to accommodate trash and recycling as required in UDO Section 7.35.1.4.6.
5. That a cul-de-sac bulb be constructed at the terminus to East Holt Street
6. That a driveway apron be provided at the end of the public street to accommodate the gravel driveway for 711 E. Rose St.
7. That site plan approval be contingent upon their being adequate sewer capacity for the project.

Stephen Upton asked if the applicant was agreeable to the seven conditions listed above?

Mark Helmer answered yes, they are.

Denis Blackburne of 50 Meeting Street Suite D, Savannah, GA spoke on behalf of Woda Cooper Companies. He stated that their company had been in operation for 32 years and the headquarters are in Columbus, Ohio. They have developed over 400 properties nationwide in 16 states. They specialize in affordable workforce housing. They build multi-family and senior housing. They own all the properties they develop, manage them and build most of them. They have over 700 employees and currently ranked 10th in the nation in terms of the size of the company. They manage 16,000 units. The current projected rental price for a 1 bedroom would cost \$400-\$650 per month based on the tenant's income and for a 2 bedroom the rent would cost \$460-\$745 based on the income.

Brian Rabil and Joey Gerrell of 713 S. Brightleaf Blvd came forward. They own Capitol Auto next door to the proposed apartments. They have concerns about the increased amount of traffic and how it will affect their business.

Mark Helmer stated that the primary access to this development would be off of East Holt Street. That street is currently an unimproved public right-of-way. The site will have two driveways accessing East Holt Street with no direct access onto S. Brightleaf Blvd.

Denis Blackburne spoke in regards to Brian Rabil and Joey Gerrell's concerns. He totally understands where the two of them are coming from. When speaking of public housing or low-income housing this is completely different than that. This is workforce housing; this program was created by the Reagan Administration in 1986.

David Lee of 304 N. Second Street came forward to speak. He owns the car dealership on the other side of this proposed development. He is concerned about how his property will be affected. He's afraid the property value will drop and it would affect him ever selling it. He agrees with what Brian Rabil and Joey Gerrell expressed earlier. He doesn't feel that a development like this would fit well in this location.

Brian Rabil spoke again on the flooding issue on his property. He said the slightest amount of rain creates an issue. He's had water come into his shop before from the flooding.

Mark Helmer said this project would be responsible for retaining stormwater in accordance with the state and federal requirements for stormwater.

Stephen Upton suggested the Planning Department bring this flooding concern to the Town to be addressed.

Doris Wallace made a motion to approve the zoning map amendment, CZ-22-01, with the 7 conditions of approval, finding the rezoning consistent with the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and other adopted plans, and that the amendment is reasonable and in the public interest and also taking the flooding concerns into consideration by the Town, seconded by Alisa Bizzell. Unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS: None

Adjournment

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

Respectfully Submitted,



Julie Edmonds
Administrative Support Specialist