

GREATER LOWNDES PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
325 WEST SAVANNAH AVENUE  
Monday, May 22, 2023 – 5:30 PM

**GLPC Commission Members Present:** Johnny Ball, Franklin Bailey, Ron Bythwood, Calvin Graham, Ed Hightower (Chairman), Steve Miller,

**GLPC Commission Members Absent:** Vicki Rountree, Chip Wildes, Chris Webb, Tommy Willis

**Staff:** Matt Martin, City of Valdosta Planner, JD Dillard, County Planner – Lowndes County; Molly Stevenson, Lowndes County Planning Analyst (Clerk)

**VISITORS PRESENT:**

(Sign-In sheet available in file.)

**CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Hightower called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. Chairman Hightower led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the Invocation by Commissioner Bailey. Chairman Hightower welcomed everyone to the GLPC meeting and explained that the Planning Commission serves as an advisory (recommending) body to the local member governments regarding land use requests, and the final determination of the requests presented at this meeting will be made by the applicable local governments. Chairman Hightower then explained the meeting procedures and announced the dates of the public hearings for the local member governments, as listed on the agenda.

**Agenda Item #2**

**Approval of the Meeting Minutes: April 24, 2023**

Chairman Hightower called for additions, questions, and corrections of the April 24, 2023, GLPC meeting minutes. There being none, Chairman Hightower called for a motion. Commissioner Bailey made a motion to approve the April 24 2023, meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Bythwood second. All voted in favor, no one opposed (5-0). Motion carried.

**\*\*Agenda Item #7\*\***

Chairman Hightower stated that case number VA-2023-09 would be discussed out of the printed agenda order and turned the floor over to Mr. Martin. Mr. Martin gave preliminary feedback to the application regarding the proposed design, and recommended TABLING of the request for one month. Chairman Hightower asked if there was anyone present who had planned to speak either in favor of or against this case. Mr. George Avery, 201 W. Cranford Ave. rose and stated that he was present to gain a better understanding of the request. Mr. Martin proposed meeting with Mr. Avery following the meeting.

There being no further citizens wishing to be heard, Chairman Hightower called for a motion. Commissioner Bailey made a motion to Table case number VA-2023-09 for one month. the April Commissioner Graham second. All voted in favor, no one opposed (5-0). Motion carried.

### **Agenda Item #3**

CU-2023-02 Conditional Use Permit (CUP) by Anthony Tong, 307 East Jane Street, ~0.33 acres,

Mr. Martin presented the case in which the applicant, Mr. Anthony Tong is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a “Tattoo Parlor/Studio” in an Office Professional (O-P) zoning district. The subject property consists of 0.33 acres located at 307 East Jane Street, which is along the south side of the street about 300 feet east of Williams Street and about 500 feet west of North Ashley Street. (\*\* This is the same property that was rezoned from R-P to O-P by City Council on April 6th at the request of this same applicant.) The property contains a small vacant office building (2,034-sf) with small front and rear yard parking areas. The applicant is proposing to expand his existing “Urban Ink” tattoo parlor from its current location at 1507 North Ashley Street, to become a tenant in this second location in order to be closer to VSU. This proposed use requires a CUP in O-P zoning (which is why the applicant requested the rezoning to O-P, in order to make the proposed use eligible for consideration). The applicant is currently not proposing any exterior changes to the building.

The subject property is located within a Transitional Neighborhood (TN) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan.

As discussed with the recent Rezoning request for this property, the surrounding land use pattern is dominated by a mixture of both residential and professional office type uses. However, in terms of overall character, this area still has a strong “residential” feel to it in terms of older homes that have been converted to offices but keeping their residential style, the urban tree canopy, narrow streets with light traffic, etc.. Because of these factors, staff was opposed to the rezoning to O-P. However, since the O-P zoning has now been approved by City Council, the attention now turns to that of CUP criteria (see pages 3-4 herein) and overall compatibility of the proposed use with its surroundings. Staff recognizes the limited size of the existing building (2,034-sf) will go a long way in limiting the potential magnitude of the facility, but believes there should be some additional limitations to aid in the compatibility with the surrounding R-P development pattern. Included in these are limitations on the hours of operation, as well as signage being restricted to a primarily R-P standard.

Staff finds the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Conditional Use Review Criteria, and recommends approval to the City Council, subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Approval shall be granted in the name of the applicant only, for a Tattoo Parlor/Studio business in O-P zoning, and for the existing building only – with no building expansions greater than 100 square feet cumulative. This shall be a single tenant/business occupancy with no other tenants/businesses allowed on the premises.
- (2) Hours of operation shall be limited to within the hours of 7am – 6pm daily.
- (3) Signage shall be in strict accordance with O-P requirements without Variance. No signs shall be internally lit. There shall be no directional signs, nor any temporary signs nor attention-getting devices of any kind.
- (4) Conditional Use approval shall expire one (1) year from the date of approval if no City business license has been obtained by that date.

Chairman Hightower asked if there were any questions for staff from the commissioners. There being none, Chairman Hightower opened the Public Hearing portion of the case.

Speaking in favor of the request:

- Mr. Anthony Tong, Applicant - 307 E. Jane St.

Mr. Tong inquired about the type of signage that would be allowed. Mr. Martin stated that the type of signage allowed in R-P Zoning would be permitted. Mr. Tong stated that the operating hours at his current location are 11am - 8pm and he would like proposed Condition #2 to be changed to closing at 8pm.

Commissioner Bailey asked if a client could walk in at 7pm begin the tattoo process to which Mr. Tong answered no.

Commissioner Bythwood asked if tenants in the area had been approached about the proposal before now. Mr. Martin said staff had received a letter in opposition. Commissioner Bailey asked if there had been opposition for the previous rezoning.

Chairman Hightower asked if anyone was present to speak in opposition to the request. There being none, Chairman Hightower closed the public hearing portion for the case.

Following further discussion among the commissioners regarding hours of operation, Chairman Hightower called for a motion. Commissioner Bailey made a motion to recommend approval of the request with 4 conditions, but that Condition #2 be amended to:

- 2) Hours of operation shall be limited to within the hours of 11am – 8pm daily.

Commissioner Miller second. All voted in favor, no one opposed (5-0). Motion carried.

#### **Agenda Item #4**

VA-2023-06 Jack Langdale, 106 West Northside Drive, 0.81 acres - Request to rezone from Office Professional (O-P) to Community Commercial (C C).

Mr. Martin presented the case in which the applicant, Mr. Jack Langdale, on behalf of the property owner (The Credit Shelter Trust – via Estate of Dr. Jerry Purvis) is requesting to rezone 0.81 acres from Office Professional (O-P) to Community Commercial (C C). The subject property is located at 106 West Northside Drive, which is along the north side of the street about half way between North Oak Street and North Patterson Street. The property contains an existing professional office building (2,788-sf) and it is being proposed for occupancy as an off-site expansion of Valdosta Animal Hospital (located at 111 East Northside Drive). There are currently no physical changes to the site being proposed.

The subject property is located within a Community Activity Center (CAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan which allows the possibility of C-C zoning. The property is also located within the Urban Commercial Corridor Overlay District (UCCOD).

The surrounding zoning patterns in the area are dominated by mostly C-C zoning in this area between North Oak and North Patterson Street, with R-P zoning for some of the medical offices across the street.

To the east across North Patterson there is mostly C-H zoning which is reflective of a more intensive commercial area. To the west of the intersection with North Oak Street, there is R-P and O-P zoning, with residential zoning farther westward. The surrounding land use pattern generally mimics the zoning pattern and consists of mainly light commercial and professional office type uses. All of this reflects an apparent graduated scale of intensity across these three different blocks of Northside Drive. However, another defining characteristic is the roadway itself; which is a 4-lane "Minor Arterial" with center turn lane in the portion in front of the subject property, and running eastward. Here, the commercial zoning pattern coincides with increased traffic counts. Therefore, allowing the possible conversion of this property to a commercial use is consistent with all of these patterns of the area, and likely facilitate the logical reuse of this property after it has been sitting vacant for more than 13 years.

Staff finds the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommends approval to the City Council.

Commissioner Bailey asked if rezoning will relax/allow for more uses and verified that the lots on both sides are vacant.

Chairman Hightower opened the Public Hearing portion of the case.

Speaking in favor:

- Mr. Jack Langdale, Attorney for the applicant, 701 N. Patterson St.

Mr. Langdale explained that the intent is to expand the existing veterinarian clinic for exams and surgeries. No boarding will be done at that location. The other facility will be maintained.

Commissioner Bailey clarified that rezoning is necessary because the proposed use will be a medical facility for animals which is categorized differently than a medical facility for humans.

No one spoke against the request.

Chairman Hightower called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Ball to recommend approval of the request as presented. Commissioner Graham second. All voted in favor, no one opposed (5-0). Motion carried.

#### **Agenda Item #5**

VA-2023-07 Jack Langdale, 2101 West Hill Ave., 34.91 acres - Request to rezone from Highway Commercial (C-H) to Community Commercial (C-C).

Mr. Martin presented the case in which the applicant, Mr. Jack Langdale, on behalf of the property owners (Longleaf Property Management of Valdosta, Inc.) (Val D'Aosta Company), is requesting to rezone three (3) parcels totaling 34.91 acres from Highway Commercial (C-H) to Community Commercial (C-C). The subject property is located at 2101 West Hill Avenue, which is at the SW corner of Exit 16 along I 75. The eastern parcel (11.57 acres) currently contains an existing restaurant (Austins) and a former hotel site (Kinderlou Inn). The small central parcel (1.00 acre) contains an abandoned gasoline station. The western parcel (22.34 acres) is currently vacant. The property owners are proposing to completely redevelop the entire property, and they are contemplating a mixed-use development pattern.

The subject property is located within a Community Activity Center (CAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan which allows the possibility of C-C zoning.

Although it excludes some of the more intensive commercial uses (such as truck stops, auto body shops and mini-warehouses), C-C zoning offers a wider range of potential uses than is allowed under C-H without sacrificing any of the mainstream commercial uses often associated with a fully commercial development. The owners are considering a possible mixed-use overall master plan for the entire property, and might be submitting a Planned Development proposal for consideration later this year. Approval of C-C zoning gives them the ability to consider the maximum range of logical uses for this property.

Staff finds the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommends approval to the City Council.

Speaking in favor:

- Mr. Jack Langdale, Attorney for the applicant, 701 N. Patterson St.

Mr. Langdale explained that the intent is mainly to be able to incorporate the multi-family aspect of the plan. There is no intent for Austin's Steakhouse to "go away".

No one spoke against the request.

Chairman Hightower called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Graham to recommend approval of the request as presented. Commissioner Ball second. All voted in favor, no one opposed (5-0). Motion carried.

#### **Agenda Item #6**

VA-2023-08 Jason Parker, 1511 Harmon Dr., .91acre - Request to rezone from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Highway Commercial (C-H).

Mr. Martin presented the case in which the applicant, Jason Parker is requesting to rezone 0.97 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Highway Commercial (C-H). The subject property is located at 1511 Harmon Drive, which is along the south side of the street, about 300 feet east of North St Augustine Road. The property is currently vacant and the applicant currently has this property and the adjacent C-H property at 1513 Harmon Drive under contract for purchase. The applicant is proposing to combine these properties and redevelop both of them together as a car wash facility facing North St Augustine Road.

The subject property is located within a Community Activity Center (CAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan which allows the possibility of C-H zoning.

The subject property is located in the transitional area between the established commercial corridor along North St Augustine Road, and a residential area behind it. As such, the surrounding zoning patterns in the area are dominated by mostly C-H zoning along the commercial corridor, and R-10 zoning for the residential area. The surrounding land uses follow the same general pattern. However, the redevelopment trends in the area have been for a slow expansion of the commercial development (such as the recently constructed Candlewood Suites hotel, and the Hog-n-Bones restaurant to the north) as well as conversion of some of the single-family residential properties to multi-family apartments. The applicant's proposal is to expand the commercial corridor 1 lot deeper into the old neighborhood, to the

same depth as the existing institutional use (church) to the south – which is also likely to become commercially zoned some day. Although this inward expansion might be slightly ahead of the ideal transition timeline, it should be deemed OK and compatible in terms of the long-term redevelopment trends of the area.

Staff finds the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommends approval to the City Council.

Speaking in favor:

- Mr. Jason Parker, Applicant, 4900 Knights Ferry Rd.

Mr. Parker stated he was present to answer any questions.

Commissioner Bailey asked whether the carwash would be “Drive-through” or “Get out”. Mr. Parker stated both options will be available. Commissioner Bythwood asked about the largest size vehicle/RV/boat that could utilize the facility. Mr. Parker stated that tractor trailers will not be able to utilize the facility as they are too big.

No one spoke against the request.

Chairman Hightower called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Miller to recommend approval of the request as presented. Commissioner Bailey second. All voted in favor, no one opposed (5-0). Motion carried.

#### **Agenda Item #8**

REZ-2023-07, Viking Project, Hunt Road, 0158D 004, ~67.4 acres

Current Zoning: M-2 (Heavy Manufacturing) and CON (Conservation)

Proposed Zoning: M-2 (Heavy Manufacturing) and CON (Conservation)

Mr. Dillard presented the case in which the applicant is requesting to rezone approximately 4.73 acres from its current CON (Conservation) zoning district to M-2 (Heavy Manufacturing) zoning based upon current field data that delineates the actual wetland boundaries.

The subject property is accessed off W Hunt Road, a local County Road created as part of the Perimeter West Industrial Park concept, sitting within the Urban Service Area and Industrial Activity Center character area, and proposed to be served by the City of Valdosta Utilities.

Per the applicant’s letter, “the intent of the current zoning map is for the wetland area to be in the CON zoning designation. The zoning map was based off approximate NWI wetland maps. A wetland delineation has been performed by a professional geologist...[and we] request the CON zoning line to be moved to the delineated wetland line.”

The TRC reviewed the request and had no objections, while also finding the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and existing land use.

No one spoke in favor of or against the request.

Chairman Hightower called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Miller to recommend approval of the request as presented. Commissioner Bythwood second. All voted in favor, no one opposed (5-0). Motion carried.

There being no other business, Chairman Hightower adjourned the meeting at 6:16 p.m.

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**Ed Hightower, Chairman**  
**Greater Lowndes Planning Commission**

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**Date**

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