

Columbia County Planning Commission Meeting  
November 17, 2016  
Evans Government Center Auditorium  
Evans, Georgia

Chairman Cox called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Others present at the meeting included:	Andrew Strickland, Planning Division Director
Commissioner Galeas	Nayna Mistry, Planning Manager
Commissioner Henderson	Will Butler, Planner II
	Danielle Bolte, Planner I
	Linda Lindley, Planning Specialist IV
	Elizabeth Metzger, Administrative Specialist
	General Public

Commissioner Galeas gave the invocation and Commissioner Henderson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Cox declared a quorum with 3 present, 60%. Vice-Chairman Skinner and Commissioner Noah absent.

Chairman Cox asked for a motion to approve or amend the November 3, 2016 minutes. Commissioner Henderson made the motion to approve the November 3, 2016 meeting minutes. Commissioner Galeas seconded the motion. Motion carried: 3-0.

Chairman Cox asked for a motion to approve or amend the agenda. Commissioner Henderson made the motion to amend the meeting agenda by adding Under Debate: Item 2C5, *Individual Plat Robert Horton*. Commissioner Galeas seconded the motion. Motion carried: 3-0.

**PRESENTATIONS** – None

Chairman Cox gave a brief description of the Planning Commission's role in the rezoning and variance process for the public's edification. Chairman Cox stated: "Before we begin, I'd like to take a moment to clarify that the Planning Commission is a recommending body to the Columbia County Board of Commissioners. The decisions made on rezoning & variance requests tonight will be forwarded to the Commissioners for final action on December 6, 2016. If you wish to address the Board of Commissioners at their meeting, please see Ms. Elizabeth to obtain a *Request to Speak* form."

**DEBATE AGENDA**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** –

VA16-11-02, Variance to Sections 90-98 *List of Lot and Structure Requirements* and 90-140 *Landscaping*, Tax Map 072 Parcel 056, 0.965+/- acres, located at 4429 Washington Road (Tabled from November 3, 2016 Planning Commission Meeting)

Staff member Will Butler stated the following:

- Property located on north side of Washington Road off of Faircloth Drive
- Evans Diner on site
- Evans Town Center District has a front setback maximum of 125ft from centerline of Washington Road and 55ft on the side. Building on Proposed Site Plan does not meet those setbacks
- Applicant requests to eliminate the maximum front setbacks
- Front bay of property has 13 existing parking spaces. According to Section 90-140, must have an island with every 12 parking spaces
- Since applicant wants to keep existing mature landscaping, staff is comfortable with this variance request
- Staff is comfortable with both variance requests
- Reason variance was to revise proposed site plan. Changes on transportation related issues.

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:  
Chairman Cox questioned if the high pressure gas line was addressed.

Will Butler stated: This was not an issue. There was originally a possibility to acquire right of way from the County, but that was not necessary for this situation.

Chairman Cox stated this was a public hearing and asked if the applicant was here.

Bill Baker, Endurance Properties, 209 Royal Tern Road North, Ponte Verde, FL 32082, stated the following:

- Will pretty much covered everything
- Had 2-3 meetings with staff addressing any issues that came up
- In regards to setback variance we're at about 6-7 feet beyond what would be required. Largely a function of existing conditions (building, drive aisles, access points)
- Wants to keep current 13 parking spaces and maintain mature landscaping

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:  
Chairman Cox questioned if they were deconstructing Evans Diner

Bill Baker responded: Mr. Robertson is planning on moving the diner off the property.

Chairman Cox stated this was a public hearing and asked if there was anyone else to speak for or against this variance. Hearing none, he called for a motion.

Commissioner Henderson made the motion to approve file VA16-11-02, variance to front setbacks from Washington Road and Faircloth Drive and permit 13 spaces without a landscaped island along Washington Road. Commissioner Galeas seconded the motion. Motion carried: 3-0.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Temporary Use Permit –**

Temporary Use Permit, Tax Map 015 Parcel 080, 10+/- acres, located at 6776 Cobbham Road.

Staff member Will Butler stated the following:

- Located at 6776 Cobbham Road and is currently zoned R-A (Residential Agriculture)
- Applicant requests a temporary use permit for a construction office during construction of residence
- Applicant would utilize temporary mobile office in back to store tools inside while constructing
- Site plan shows the location of construction office and it meets setbacks
- Staff recommends approval

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:  
Chairman Cox verified with Will Butler that temporary use permits are only good for one year and must either be removed or permit extended until construction complete.

Will Butler confirmed that information was correct.

Commissioner Galeas made the motion to approve the TUP for Tax Map 015 Parcel 080 located at 6776 Cobbham Road. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried: 3-0.

Temporary Use Permit, Tax Map 020 Parcel 022A, 3.11+/- acres, located at 1218 Miles Road.

Staff member Danielle Bolte stated the following:

- Request for Temporary Use Permit at 1218 Miles Road
- Property currently zoned S-1 (Special)
- Owners will rezone it back for residential use
- Applicant requesting approval for a shipping container to be placed on the property as a secure storage location for building materials and equipment while constructing house
- Staff recommends approval

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Chairman Cox verified with Danielle Bolte that temporary use permits are only good for one year and must either be removed or permit extended until construction complete.

Danielle Bolte confirmed that information was correct.

Commissioner Henderson made the motion to approve the TUP for Tax Map 020 Parcel 022A located at 1218 Miles Road. Commissioner Galeas seconded the motion. Motion carried: 3-0.

### **Preliminary Plat**

Crawford Creek South Phase III, located off of William Smith Boulevard, zoned PUD (Planned Unit Development), 32 lots, 142.46 +/- acres, Tax Map 067 Parcels 1690 and 122.

Planning Manager Nayna Mistry stated the following:

- Preliminary Plat for Crawford Creek South Phase III located off Hereford Farm Road
- Currently zoned PUD (Planned Unit Development)
- 32 lots on 142.46 acres
- Phase includes Section II of Tanner Oaks and Section III of Davenport
- Minimum setbacks for both neighborhoods is 15ft from the right of way
- Side and rear setbacks are 5 and 10 feet respectively
- In Section II of Tanner Oaks, the minimum lot size is 11,448.9 square feet
- Average lot size is 13,480 square feet in Tanner Oaks, 9,326 square feet in Davenport
- Sidewalks are to be installed on one side of the streets in these neighborhoods
- Staff recommends approval

Chairman Cox stated this was not a public hearing and called for a motion. Commissioner Galeas made the motion to approve the preliminary plat for Crawford Creek South Phase III, Tax Map 067 Parcels 1690 and 122. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

### **Final Plat**

Gateway Square, located off of Horizon South Parkway, zoned C-2 (General Commercial), 7 lots, 10.71 +/- acres, Tax Map 062 Parcel 086F

Planning Manager Nayna Mistry stated the following:

- Final Plat for Gateway Square located off Horizon South Parkway
- 7 commercial lots on 10.71 acres
- Property currently zoned C-2 (General Commercial)
- Average lot size is 1.38 acres with a minimum lot size of 0.72 acres
- Minimum 20-foot setback from the front property line along the internal private roads
- Minimum 90-foot front setbacks from the centerline of Gateway Boulevard and 125 feet from the centerline of Horizon South Parkway
- Each lot will have a minimum 3-foot side setbacks since adjoining land are C-2 properties, and a minimum of 20-foot rear setbacks where lots adjoin R-A (Residential Agriculture)
- Sidewalks are required on both sides of the streets
- Staff recommends approval

Chairman Cox stated this was not a public hearing and called for a motion. Commissioner Henderson made the motion to approve the final plat for Gateway Square Tax Map 062 Parcel 086F. Commissioner Galeas seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Hatcher Glen Phase II, located off of Wrightsboro Road, zoned R-1 (Single Family Residential), 13 lots, 22.01 +/- acres, Tax Map 030 Parcel 204

Planning Manager Nayna Mistry stated the following:

- Final Plat for Hatcher Glen II located off Wrightsboro Road
- 13 lots on 22.01 acres
- Property currently zoned R-1 (Single Family Residential)
- Minimum lot size is 50,119 square feet with an average lot size of 95,894 square feet

- Minimum 65-foot setback from the centerline of the internal street with minimum 125-foot setbacks from the centerline of Appling Harlem Road and 110 feet from the centerline of Old Appling Harlem Road
- Lots have 35-foot undisturbed and no access buffers along both of these major roadways
- Minimum 10-foot side and 25-foot rear setbacks
- Sidewalks are not required in this subdivision
- Staff recommends approval

Chairman Cox stated this was not a public hearing and called for a motion. Commissioner Galeas made the motion to approve the final plat for Hatcher Glen Phase II Tax Map 030 Parcel 204. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Hidden Creek Section H, located off of Nikki Way, zoned PUD (Planned Unit Development), 68 lots, 13.93 +/- acres, Tax Map 051 Parcel 737

Planning Manager Nayna Mistry stated the following:

- Final Plat for Hidden Creek Section H located off Baker Place Road
- 68 residential lots on 13.93 acres
- Zoning is PUD (Planned Unit Development)
- Section H is the final phase of the townhome development in Hidden Creek
- Average lot size is 3166 square feet with a minimum lot size of 2633 square feet
- Lots will have a minimum 15-foot setback from the front property line and 15-foot rear setbacks
- Building groups are separated by a minimum 20 foot setback
- Sidewalks are required on both sides of the streets and along Warriors Way to connect to the adjacent school property
- Staff recommends approval

Chairman Cox stated this was not a public hearing and called for a motion. Commissioner Henderson made the motion to approve the final plat for Hidden Creek Section H Tax Map 051 Parcel 737. Commissioner Galeas seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Whispering Pines II, located off of William Few Parkway, zoned PUD (Planned Unit Development), 108 lots, 52.14 +/- acres, Tax Map 059 Parcels 332, 138, and 138G

Planning Manager Nayna Mistry stated the following:

- Final Plat for Whispering Pines II located off William Few Parkway
- 108 residential lots on 52.14 acres
- Property currently zoned PUD (Planned Unit Development)
- Average lot size is 8457 square feet with a minimum of 6500 square feet
- Lots have minimum 25-foot setback from the right of way
- Four different lot widths: the 50 and 60 foot wide lots have 5 foot minimum side setbacks, while the 65 and 70 foot wide lots have 7.5 foot minimum side setbacks
- All the lots have minimum 10 foot rear setbacks
- Sidewalks are required on both sides of all the streets
- 75-foot buffer from William Few Parkway
- There is 22.86 acres of open space that will be retained in this section
- Staff recommends approval

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Chairman Cox had a question for developer Keith Lawrence or staff. Noticed on the PowerPoint slide with the plat there is a stub or connecting road. Will this be developed or are they waiting for a permit from the Department of Transportation?

Keith Lawrence stated the following:

- Will make the connection to it once the County paves the road
- Left the lots off because we're going to try and work and build where the gravel road needs to go
- This has not been finalized yet with Roads and Bridges
- We were able to add a mile length of walking trails along the creek which will connect Whispering Pines I and II

Chairman Cox stated this was not a public hearing and called for a motion. Commissioner Galeas made the motion to approve the final plat for Whispering Pines II, Tax Map 059 Parcels 332, 138, and 138G. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

### **Individual Plat**

Robert Horton (Item added), located off Ray Owens Road, zoned R-A (Residential Agriculture), 3 lots, 53.7 +/- acres, Tax Map 014 Parcel 054H

Staff member Danielle Bolte stated the following:

- Individual Plat for a parcel located off Ray Owens Road of 53.7 acres
- Applicant requests to create two additional lots
- Was subdivided from the larger estate back in 2015
- Have a section in our code that prohibits parcels from being subdivided for five years after an original subdivision
- Proposal is to create two 5-acre lots at the front of the parent tract for family members, does not violate the intent of the ordinance and they meet all the lot requirements for R-A
- Staff recommends approval

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Commissioner Henderson questioned if flagpole lots would be an issue for the owners in the future.

Danielle Bolte stated that it should not be an issue.

Commissioner Henderson made the motion to approve the individual plat for Robert Horton Tax Map 014 Parcel 054H. Commissioner Galeas seconded the motion. Motion carried: 3-0

### **Plan Revision**

RZ16-11-05, Major PUD (Planned Unit Development) Revision, Tax Map 073 Parcel 101B, 034A-034F, Tax Map 073M Parcels 001-016, 018-033, 034A, 035-072, 0.09+/- acres, located at 354 Village Square Drive

Staff member Will Butler stated the following:

- Major PUD Revision located at 354 Village Square Drive
- Includes a lot of tax map and parcels
- Applicant Lewis E. Stewart
- Subject property is on the south side of Village Square Drive
- Zoning of property is currently PUD. Property to the south is R-2 as well as surrounded with a mixture of A-R, S-1, and P-1
- Reason for request is because the owner/applicant of the residential property wants to acquire an additional 15 feet beyond the original property line from the neighboring commercial property
- Overall development as a PUD listed out with a certain amount of commercial and residential. This request would reduce the amount of commercial and expand residential, therefore requesting a major PUD revision
- Very small area of only 0.09 acres
- Fits within the Future Land Use Map
- Property located within the Evans Towns Center Activity Center. Residential is a perfectly fine use in this activity center as well as in a planned development
- Staff recommends approval of the major PUD revision to add 0.09 acres to the residential portion and decrease the commercial portion by 0.09 with staff recommendation

Chairman Cox stated this is a public hearing and asked if the applicant was present.

Mary Stewart, applicant's spouse and co-owner of 354 Village Square Drive stated the following:

- Bought the house in 2001
- Live right next to Platts Funeral Home
- Recently they were looking outside their bedroom window and noticed a surveyor close to their property line and wondered what was going on
- Asked Platt's Funeral Home for a 15-foot buffer from their property line to increase their quality of life

Chairman Cox stated this is a public hearing and asked if there was anyone that would like to speak for or against this major PUD revision. Hearing none he called for a motion.

Commissioner Galeas made the motion to approve RZ16-11-05 Major PUD Revision, Tax Map 073 Parcel 101B. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried: 3-0.

### **Public Hearing**

VA16-11-03, Variance to Section 90-53 *List of Lot and Structure Requirements* and 90-139 *Buffers*, Tax Map 060 Parcel 1265, 0.25+/- acres, located at 929 Innisbrook Drive.

Staff member Danielle Bolte stated the following:

- Request for variances to Section 90-53 List of Lot and Structure Requirements and 90-139 Buffers located at 929 Innisbrook Drive
- Property located on north side of Innisbrook Drive just off of Hereford Farm Road in the Southwind Village subdivision
- Currently zoned R-2 (Single Family Residential)
- Property backs up to R-1 property which is important in terms of the buffer
- The applicant is requesting a variance to install a pool
- Current design of the pool, shows the wall of pool would encroach 6 feet into the required 10-foot setback as it is platted
- Plat for property is unusual in that rear setback is measured from edge of the natural buffer instead of from property line
- Staff not concerned with the setback request
- Staff recommends approval with conditions

Chairman Cox stated this is a public hearing and asked if the applicant was present.

Chris Rudy, 929 Innisbrook Drive, stated the following:

- Bought the property with the intention to put in a pool, but then found out about the buffer
- Wants to put up a retaining wall because backyard has a steep slope which has caused flooding in yard
- No issues with replanting trees

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Planning Division Director Andrew Strickland commented that none of the other properties in this neighborhood have buffers either. Staff members were promised by the developer that buffers would be taken down during construction but then replanted on houses being built. This has not happened yet. We have some leverage on making sure that happens.

Commissioner Henderson questioned if putting up a retaining wall would cause flooding in neighbors' yards.

Planning Division Director Andrew Strickland responded:

- Could be constructed in a way that could affect the neighbors
- When they apply for permit to put pool in, Storm Water department will look at it and see if there are any potential flooding issues
- There are ways to correctly build the wall that would channel the water away from neighboring homes

Chairman Cox stated this is a public hearing and asked if there was anyone that would like to speak for or against this variance.

Eric Schumacher, 750 Avrett Circle, had the following comments:

- Developer didn't meet obligation for buffer that should have already been there
- Should not be the applicant's responsibility to put it in. Applicant should not be penalized

Planning Division Director Andrew Strickland responded:

- If approved, the buffer would need to be put in, but not necessarily by the owner
- The developer will have to make this buffer right. This will be a discussion between the developer and each property owner of this neighborhood

- Planning Department would facilitate

Chairman Cox stated this is a public hearing and asked if there was anyone that would like to speak for or against this variance. Hearing none he called for a motion.

Commissioner Henderson made the motion to approve with conditions File: VA16-11-03 variance to permit a 6-foot intrusion and reduce the required setback for the construction of a pool. Commissioner Galeas seconded the motion. Motion carried: 3-0.

Conditions are as follows:

**Planning:**

If approved, the 15-foot natural buffer must be replanted in accordance with Section 90-139 Buffers of the Columbia County code. A planting plan shall be submitted with the building permit application for the pool. Plant materials within the buffer shall create a screen to a height of at least six (6) feet within two (2) growing seasons in accordance with Section 90-139. The building permit will not be released until and unless the landscaping plan is approved.

VA16-11-04, (Public Hearing), Variance to Section 90-53 *List of Lot and Structure Requirements*, Tax Map 077H Parcel 422, 0.68+/- acres, located at 763 Michaels Creek.

Staff member Danielle Bolte stated the following:

- Request for variance to setback requirements at 763 Michaels Creek
- Property is just south of Furys Ferry Road
- Located in Jones Creek subdivision and is currently zoned PUD (Planned Unit Development)
- Variance for existing pool in backyard
- The required setback from Furys Ferry is 110 feet from the centerline, which goes right through the middle of applicant's pool
- Request to reduce setback to 90 feet to match existing pool
- This variance would clean up property so they can sell it
- Staff recommends approval with conditions

Chairman Cox stated this is a public hearing and asked if the applicant was present.

Greg Oldham, Meybohm realtor, stated the following:

- Sold the property for Mr. Preston
- When pulled plat, realized there was an encroachment which was not there when he originally bought the property
- Reapplied for variance for setback of approximately 20 feet

Chairman Cox stated this is a public hearing and asked if there was anyone that would like to speak for or against this variance. Hearing none he called for a motion.

Chong Yi, neighbor of applicant, asked for clarification on setbacks.

- Discussion followed.

Chairman Cox stated this is a public hearing and asked if there was anyone that would like to speak for or against this variance. Hearing none he called for a motion.

Commissioner Galeas made the motion to approve VA16-11-04 with conditions variance to Section 90-53 Tax Map 077H Parcel 422. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried: 3-0.

Conditions are as follows:

**Planning:**

The reduction in the setback from Furys Ferry Road shall apply only to the existing pool. Any new structures built on the property must meet the required 110-foot setback from the centerline of Furys Ferry Road.

Items Added (which need immediate action or have not gone before Committee)- None.

LEGAL MATTERS- None.

**STAFF AND COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

MW16-11-02, Minor Waiver, Tax Map 082J Parcel 317, 0.30+/- acres, located at 533 Oak Brook Drive

Staff member Will Butler stated the following:

- Request at 533 Oak Brook Drive to reduce front setback from 55 feet to 50 feet for proposed garage addition
- Minor Waivers can reduce setbacks by 10% administratively
- Property currently zoned R-2
- Staff member Will Butler stated the minor waiver was approved by staff on November 8, 2016. Information only.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PARTICIPATION**

Chairman Cox requested in the remote circumstance that both Chairman Cox and Vice-Chairman Skinner are absent for a Planning Commission meeting, that a commissioner take the place as second Vice-Chairman. Commissioner Galeas made the motion to appoint Commissioner Henderson to take their place should they both be absent. Chairman Cox seconded the motion. Motion carried: 3-0.

Commissioner Henderson is appointed second Vice-Chairman.

Commissioner Galeas made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:36pm. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried: 3-0.

Signature on File –Approved December 1, 2016

Minutes approved by Chairman Cox, November 17, 2016

Signature on File –Approved December 2, 2016

Minutes attested by Andrew Strickland, November 17, 2016