

The Planning Commission of the City of Waynesboro, Virginia, held a regular meeting on the 21st day of March 2023, at 7:00 P.M., in Council Chambers, Charles T. Yancey Municipal Building, 503 West Main Street, Waynesboro, Virginia:

PRESENT: Commission Members:

Shannon Boyle, Chair
William Flory
Michael Gibson
Hashim Halstead
Kenny Lee, Council Liaison
W. Lowrie Tucker

Director of Community Development:
City Planner & Clerk of the Commission:
Zoning Administrator:

Leslie Tate
Alisande Tombarge
Laura Martin

ABSENT: Commission Member:

Nick Zawhorodny

1. Call to order. Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Boyle called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and asked Mr. Tucker to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Adoption of agenda.

Mr. Tucker motioned to adopt the agenda; Mr. Gibson seconded. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

3. Review and approval of minutes of meeting held February 21, 2023.

Mr. Gibson motioned to approve the minutes; Mr. Flory seconded. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

4. Public comment period for items not on the agenda.

None.

5. Public hearing for a conditional use permit request by Christopher Rice of Wilder Assets, LLC, to allow for a hair salon and skincare center in the RO (Residential Office) District at 1305 13th Street, Unit C2, Waynesboro, Virginia, Tax Map No. 44-4-12-C2.

Ms. Tombarge gave the presentation on the request by Christopher River of Wilder Assets, LLC, for a conditional use permit. For details, see the staff report in the agenda packet for the March 31, 2023, Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Tucker read the following statement:

“Fellow Commissioners, I would like to disclose that I also own an office in this Professional Center, but I have no ownership interest in the office that has applied for this conditional use permit. I have consulted with the City Attorney, who has advised that I do not have a conflict of interest and that I am able to lawfully participate. I am confident that I am able to hear and vote on this matter impartially, but in the interest of transparency I did want to let you all know that I own a nearby unit.”

Ms. Boyle opened the public hearing.

No one was in attendance to speak and staff had not received any comments that were to be read during the public hearing.

Ms. Boyle closed the public hearing.

Mr. Gibson made a motion to recommend approval of the conditional use permit allow for a hair salon and skincare center in the RO (Residential Office) District at 1305 13th Street, Unit C2, Waynesboro, Virginia, Tax Map No. 44-4-12-C2.

Mr. Flory seconded.

Vote was 6-0 in favor.

6. Public hearing for a preliminary plat request by D.R. Horton for a 167-lot residential subdivision on 17.344-acres located at 0 Hopeman Parkway, Waynesboro, Virginia, Tax Map Nos. 15-1-45A and 15-1-45B.

Ms. Tombarge gave the presentation on the preliminary major subdivision plat request by D.R. Horton. For details, see the staff report in the agenda packet for the March 31, 2023, Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Lee asked if the developer had considered a pedestrian crossing from the subdivision across Hopeman Parkway to the Food Lion shopping center area. He added that there would be a lot of people crossing every day.

Mr. Tucker agreed, there was a lot of foot traffic at that intersection and he saw it when picking up groceries.

Ms. Tate said she would need to check the ordinance to see at what point a crossing might be triggered, but the ordinance does require pedestrian improvements if it is shown on the City's Comprehensive Plan. This area of Hopeman Parkway is not included in the Comprehensive Plan as a pedestrian route, and that she would need to check to see if it is something that could be required as part of the preliminary plat. It was something the Planning Commission could make a comment about.

Mr. Halstead said that lining up the entrance to the development with Food Lion would make sense. Mr. Flory agreed and asked if the plat would allow for an alignment of that entrance with the Food Lion entrance without loss of units.

Ms. Tate said that yes, staff had received VDOT's comments today and that the developer had shown those two entrances being aligned during prior versions of the submittal, but she believed that they could show the two entrances aligning without any loss of units.

Mr. Flory said that aligning it would be desirable. Mr. Halstead agreed.

Ms. Boyle commented that the speed limits along Hopeman Parkway changes frequently and perhaps this should be something that is made more consistent.

Mr. Flory stated that the new development does not include any pedestrian access along Hopeman. The land use map does not show a plan to incorporate pedestrian access along Hopeman. If Hopeman continues to develop and high density residential is called for, then eventually the city will need to put in sidewalks instead of having the developers do it.

Ms. Tate said that the greenway is shown going through that northern area, but acknowledged that it is recreational in nature and does not serve the same use for someone trying to get to the grocery store. She mentioned that if something is shown on the plan as a pedestrian connection, then the City is given more of a leg to stand on to require one, but that she could continue to look into it. She noted that the City had applied for a grant to fund a bicycle and pedestrian plan, but that it still was not known if the application was successful. Any future update to the comprehensive plan and land use plan could include an examination of those areas and where pedestrian connectivity should be shown.

Mr. Flory said that he had gone through the Comprehensive Plan and that there seemed to be a disconnect between the zoning map which shows high density residential in that corridor and the comprehensive plan and that he could not find a pedestrian access plan. He added that if you are planning high-density residential then there should be a plan for necessary services for pedestrians as well.

Ms. Tate said that comprehensive plan is disjointed as far as being one document. The City has a 2008 land use plan, a comprehensive plan that was done in 2018 that has more of a strategic plan element, and a 2018 Transportation Plan that is considered a part of the comprehensive plan. The 2008 land use plan along with bike and pedestrian facilities, could be updated.

Ms. Boyle asked if the city was required to update it.

Ms. Tate responded a locality is required to review its comprehensive plan every five years.

Ms. Boyle asked about the review of the land use map.

Ms. Tate said that the last update of the comprehensive plan was 2018 and the City is within its 5-year review time-frame, and that though state code requires a locality to review the plan it does not provide guidance as to what that review should consist of. Staff did give a presentation to City Council about the comprehensive plan and to notify them that the City is approaching its 5-year review window. Staff will likely recommend reviewing and updating the land use map and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to go along with what was done in 2018 as part of the 5-year review.

Ms. Boyle asked if any of this should hold up the public hearing and vote for this preliminary plat.

Ms. Tate responded that the preliminary plats no longer go to City Council per the change in the subdivision ordinance in July 2022, so the Planning Commission will be the approving body. She added that if the Planning Commission has specific questions related to the pedestrian connections,

then the Planning Commission could table the request to allow staff time to look into that further and consult with legal counsel.

Mr. Tucker asked if it would be a painted crosswalk with signs or include pedestrian islands.

Ms. Tate said that there are all degrees of traffic improvements. The city applied for HSIP funding and it was for a range of pedestrian treatments including rapid flashing beacons and crosswalks. However, if there were questions surrounding that, it would be something staff could look into more.

Mr. Gibson asked about the parking and if the roads would be wide enough to incorporate the parking and still allow the fire department to have access.

Ms. Tate confirmed that the fire department had reviewed the plans.

Ms. Tombarge remarked that the roads vary from a 26- to 28-foot clear zone.

Ms. Tate said that Public Works requested that some of the interior roads be private and allow for the on-street parking to help ensure that the parking configuration would not interfere with the Public Works duties.

Mr. Gibson remarked that he wished the lots were larger.

Ms. Tate confirmed that the plat meets the zoning ordinance requirements.

Mr. Flory said it was interesting that the lots that front on Hopeman Parkway are all zoning for high density residential, that it was an interesting zoning choice. That there are few places in the city zoned for high density residential. There are a lot of units going into a small space, but it is a by-right subdivision.

Mr. Halstead commented that he does not mind the high density as long the foot traffic that will be created has safe access.

Ms. Tate commented that sidewalks are required internally and that the idea for a pedestrian connection is a good one, she just needed to do further research.

Mr. Halstead said that it looked like the sidewalks did not come all the way out to Hopeman Parkway. Mr. Flory agreed. Mr. Halstead said that that does not help foot traffic get out to the road safely. Mr. Flory agreed.

Ms. Tate commented that if there is not a pedestrian connection there, then you would not want to funnel people out to Hopeman Parkway.

Ms. Boyle opened the public hearing.

Mr. Jeremy Fox, engineer of record for D.R.Horton, approached the podium.

Ms. Boyle asked if lining up the northern entrance with the Food Lion entrance would cause problems to the subdivision design.

Mr. Fox responded no, in a previous iteration of the design it had shown these two entrances lined up per VDOT standards, and he did not see any issues with lining the entrance up again and meeting VDOT standards.

Mr. Flory asked if aligning the entrances and adding a pedestrian crossing would impact the number of units in the development.

Mr. Fox said no, and that they had looked at a number of stormwater options and had carved out that corner for a stormwater basin, but recently they had been thinking it would involve more point source bio-filters.

Mr. Flory asked if there was room for a nice BMP on the plat. Mr. Fox said there was one in the upper northwestern corner.

Mr. Tucker asked if there was room for a playground. Mr. Fox responded that if it was in the ordinance, there would be.

Mr. Flory asked if D.R. Horton had a physical office in this geographic area.

Mr. Fox responded that they were located in Richmond.

Mr. Flory followed up by asking if there had been any discussion about affordable housing with this development.

Mr. Fox said that he was unaware if any discussion had been made around affordable housing but knew that D.R. Horton had done their due diligence in the Shenandoah Valley area.

Mr. Flory asked what the price point for the units would be. Mr. Fox responded that he did not know.

Mr. Flory asked what the size of the units would be. Mr. Fox responded they would be around 1,200 square feet.

Mr. Tucker asked when the developers were looking to start. Mr. Fox responded that the projected build out was 2025 so they are looking to start once approvals and permits are in place.

Mr. Gibson asked if the plan was to connect this development to Evershire. Mr. Fox responded that the connection would be made to Ivy Commons from Bridge Ave after conversations with the City. He did not know if development on the parcel to the north would materialize.

There was a brief conversation about there being a conservation easement on part of the property to the north, the street connections, and parking.

Ms. Boyle asked if any comments from the public had been received by staff. Ms. Tombarge said that none had been received.

Ms. Boyle closed the public hearing.

Mr. Flory said that he had reviewed the comprehensive plan and ordinance and that he had done some research into the applicant, D.R. Horton. He said the City has these national builders coming into the City that have no local business presence and the City has a downtown that is emerging from being blighted. Mr. Flory wondered if there was a way for the Planning Commission to recommend changes for Council to adopt to incentivize local businesses when it comes to development. He followed up by saying that teachers and police officers need places to live as well, and that as it stands, Waynesboro does not have any affordable housing requirements and these two issues are the ones that are prevalent to the community. Developments like the applicants are needed to meet the housing demand, but the development over the last couple years has been aggressive and primarily single-family homes, and the City is not creating an environment to incentivize local businesses or want to be here. Mr. Flory said the City needs to start looking at affordable housing and perhaps Staff can look at that and provide some recommendations.

Mr. Gibson said that it would good to have not only businesses with a presence in Waynesboro, but that the people living in Waynesboro, work in Waynesboro as well.

Ms. Boyle said that the Commissioners needed to think about what motion the Commissioners would make tonight regarding the public hearing.

Ms. Tate said that if the Commissioners wanted to focus on the road alignment with the Food Lion entrance, then they could vote to approve tonight with the understanding that that change would be made prior to City signatures. If the commissioners wanted Staff to continue to look into the pedestrian connections it would be prudent to table it and allow Staff time to do additional research.

Mr. Gibson said he would prefer to table the application to allow Staff to look into the pedestrian issues.

Ms. Tate said she would recommend tabling it because of the questions surrounding the issue and the need to consult legal counsel

Ms. Boyle asked if there was a motion to table the application until staff returns with

Mr. Tucker made that motion and Mr. Gibson seconded.

Vote was 6-0 in favor of tabling the request until the Planning Commission's meeting in April.

7. Public hearing for a rezoning request by MP Marketplace, LLC, to rezone a portion of the property at 1930 Rosser Avenue, Waynesboro, Virginia, Tax Map No. 51-12-46 (portion) from PUD (Planned Unit Development) to H-B (Highway Business).

Ms. Tombarge gave the presentation on the rezoning request by MP Marketplace, LLC. For details, see the staff report in the agenda packet for the March 31, 2023, Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Tucker asked if the zoning change was made if the whole property would all be under the same zoning.

Ms. Tombarge confirmed it would be.

Ms. Boyle opened the public hearing and invited the applicant forward.

Seth Roderick with Monteverde Engineering & Design Studio in Charlottesville, representing the developer, Bill Mitchener of Mitchener Properties, came forward. Mr. Roderick provided a summary of the past history of the Waynesboro Marketplace project. He noted that the developer has two high quality tenants interested in the site which is why this rezoning is being requested. Mr. Roderick also provided a review of the traffic studies that had been conducted and that he had been in touch with the Brandon Circle neighborhood.

Mr. Gibson asked about the hotel and stated that this one would be the 6th one in that area.

Mr. Roderick said that part of it is Waynesboro's location within the region and this location's proximity to the interstate.

Mr. Halstead said that he appreciated the outreach to the Brandon Circle community.

Mr. Flory said he noticed that the site plan showed two of the pads built out and two that were not and asked if there were commitments in place for the two that were shown as being built out.

Mr. Roderick said that there was a LOI (letter of interest) in place for the restaurant and an agreement in place for the hotel. He mentioned that it was not a large hotel, only 63 rooms and will be designed for extended stay.

Mr. Flory asked about the other two pads and if they will be developed as tenants are found. Mr. Roderick responded that was correct.

Mr. Halstead commented that the future interparcel connection farther down Windigrove is better.

Mr. Roderick agreed and said that was why there was plans to create the stub there so that the connection would be made if the adjoining property owner chose to. The other potential connection gave him pause, but did want to provide at least an opportunity to have a connection there.

Ms. Boyle asked if any comments from the public had been received by staff. Ms. Tombarge said that none had been received.

Ms. Boyle closed the public hearing.

There was general agreement among the Planning Commissioners that the rezoning made sense and was a good idea.

Mr. Halstead asked about plans to slow traffic down along Windigrove Drive.

Ms. Tate said that the Waynesboro Place PUD rezoning that the Commissioners reviewed last fall had been tabled by Council so that the traffic could be examined. There was a study done and traffic counts were done as part of that and that the traffic counts could be provided to the Commissioners. The count numbers were not exceeding what had been forecasted. Additional discussion was had about the traffic numbers and potential connections.

Ms. Tate commented that the Staff was still working with the applicants (MP Marketplace, LLC) on one proffer about the property owner's association versus deed covenants, and it can be worked out prior to Council.

Ms. Boyle asked for a motion to approve the rezoning request by MP Marketplace, LLC, to rezone a portion of the property at 1930 Rosser Avenue, Waynesboro, Virginia, Tax Map No. 51-12-46 (portion) from PUD (Planned Unit Development) to H-B (Highway Business) with existing proffers.

Mr. Tucker made the motion. Mr. Flory seconded. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

8. Review of minor subdivision and final subdivision plats approved since the February 21, 2023, meeting.

None

9. Matters from staff.

Mr. Gibson asked about the time frame for the comprehensive plan review.

Ms. Tate said that she had given a presentation to Council about the comprehensive plan review, but that she did not know the direction this review might take at this point. She noted that she would be taking it back to Council soon with some recommendations from Staff about the direction to take. A specific timeframe may be determined once the City's budget is approved.

Mr. Gibson said it would be a good idea to get all the plans lined up during this review. None

10. Commissioners' correspondence and communications

Mr. Halstead said that he's been riding his bike around with his daughter and is loving the direction the city is taking in adding the safer infrastructure.

Ms. Tate mentioned that the City had been awarded \$800,000 in HSIP grant funding for 16 intersections and that those funds would come in 2025.

Mr. Gibson said that there had been a good crowd at the grand opening at the Basic City new event space.

11. Adjournment.

Mr. Tucker motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Gibson seconded. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 P.M.