

Minutes
Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission
City of Chattahoochee Hills, Georgia
September 10, 2020, 2020/6:30 pm

Call to Order

Chair Bob Simpson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Present at the call to order were Bob Simpson, Jim Hancock, and Jett Hattaway. Patrick Johnson and Mark Prater were absent. Also present was Community Development Director Mike Morton and City Planner Cheryl Brooks.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Simpson led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Simpson requested the item under new business relating to the proposed preliminary plat for the Creation at Serenbe HM-SD3 district be heard before the public hearing.

Mr. Hancock made a motion to move item as requested by Mr. Simpson before the public hearing. Mr. Hattaway seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Hancock made a motion to approve the agenda with amendments. Mr. Hattaway seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of August 13, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Hattaway made a motion to approve the August 13, 2020 minutes. Mr. Hancock seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

New Business Item 4 (moved above public hearing)

2. Proposed Preliminary Plat for the Creation at Serenbe HM-SD3 district

The applicant, John Pepper Bullock (9105 Selbourne Lane), requested approval of the plat and noted there would be a vegetative wall around the parking lot.

Mr. Simpson asked if Mr. Bullock would speak about plans for screening of the parking lot and the expanded fish house.

Mr. Bullock stated there would be a vegetative wall around the parking lot due to the proximity to residential property. Mr. Bullock stated they were currently working on the marking plans and are working with some major contractors. Due to the potential sometimes, the plans may change however, the design is for a permanent green house structure the intent is to create an Agri hood where various agricultural uses occur.

Mr. Hancock noted the 12,000 sq. ft. greenhouse and 30,000 sq. ft. grow house and asked if those would be visible from the road.

Mr. Bullock stated that they would design and landscape the building but at this time could not fully answer the question. He added that the current application is just for the first part and that he will come back with designs for the other aspects of the project.

Mr. Morton stated the applicant was proposing three new lots. The first lot was for parking, second for the aquaponics and the last lot currently has no uses proposed. Mr. Morton noted the RL rules apply to anything outside of the district buffers and that the changes comply with the code and staff recommends approval.

Mr. Hancock made a motion to approve the Preliminary Plat for the Creation at Serenbe HM-SD3 district. Mr. Hattaway seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearings

Mr. Simpson read the rules for the Public Hearings.

3. **Ordinance for a variance to the required district buffer-** application is to eliminate the district buffer at the property known as Deer Hollow on the west side of Atlanta Newnan Road just north of the main entrance to Serenbe.

Mr. Simpson opened the Public Hearing.

The following person spoke in support of the item:

1. Mr. John Reid (8390 Hearn Road) spoke as the applicant and stated the following: The property is unusual because surrounded by Serenbe. The purpose would be to preserve the open space. Mr. Reid has owned the property since 2009. It is 10 acres and he would develop 3 acres while preserving 7 acres for open space. Applicant stated that he needs the variance to make the project viable and that the rezoning recommendation was contingent on the variance for the buffer requirements. The question was if we can make the lots and still meet the buffer requirement, and the answer is no if the intent is to preserve the open space. The next question is why are we doing this? Mr. Reid stated that he feels that this is a better plan than the original plan that is already approved because it reserves the open space. This project is good for the owner, for Serenbe, and for the intent of the City.
2. Mitchell Perkins (9218 Selborne Lane) stated he did not know if he was speaking for or against the project. Stated his property backed up to the property and wanted to know what it will look like in the future when he is on his back porch.

The applicant responded that there would be no change in the view and the person would just see the southern part of the property. The new building would face Augusta Way.

Mr. Morton showed Mr. Perkins the plan and showed the previously approved minor subdivision plan, which does not require any buffers. Mr. Morton explained that the townhomes that back the property are about 260 ft away,

Mr. Simpson asked Mr. Perkins if that answered his question and if he was for or against the project. Mr. Perkins stated his questions were answered and that he was for the variance for the project.

3. Betsy Hard (9216 Selborne Lane) wanted to know if lot four could be shown on the development map because the documents she received only have some of the lots. She also wanted to know if the property backed Atlanta Newnan road. Ms. Hard stated she was in favor of the variance. Mr. Morton stated the lot is on the plans and described where to find it. The lot in question is the one that fronts Atlanta Newnan Road.
4. Jennifer Landers (9110 Selborne Lane) represents Serenbe Development and is in support of the variance. She stated the project aligned with the adjacent lots and has open space.
5. Sean Christy (9 Swann Ridge) stated that the development is only 3 acres and asked that the commission consider dealing with the preservation up front as a part of the variance request.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

Mr. Simpson closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Morton stated that the setbacks are 60 ft in the front 10-20 feet on the sides and 20 feet in back. He pointed out that there is a cutout that does not touch Atlanta Newnan Road and that Augusta Way would be the front of the three smaller lots.

Mr. Simpson brought up the open space and said that if everyone does their job it will be okay. There are conditions that have to be met and there are some topographical issues on the property. The proposal meets the intent of the zoning and it will not be detrimental to the city. Mr. Simpson asked for the staff's recommendations.

Mr. Morton said that staff recommends approval with 2 conditions as follows:

1. The district buffer is to remain in place as required where the property is open space,

rather than buildable lot. This is not to be interpreted to require the planting of the existing viewshed as seen from Atlanta Newnan Road.

2. The owner of the lot fronting Atlanta Newnan Road (identified as lot 69 on the attached plan) will maintain vegetation to form an effective visual buffer of the view from the road into any structures build on the lot.

Mr. Hancock stated everyone seemed to be in favor of the variance, however, he wanted Mr. Morton to run through the variance criteria and whether they could legally approve the variance. He had no problem recommending approval if the criteria were met.

Mr. Morton went through the criteria as presented in the memo, stating that the topographical issues on the west side of the property and the city's interest in the open space on the front part of the property are the extraordinary conditions for the property. He concluded that the variance criteria were met.

Mr. Simpson wanted to know about protecting the open space in the future. Mr. Morton replied that the applicant would be locked into the plan and, based on city code, in the short term the project would be preserved by process and later it would be protected by conservation easement.

Mr. Hancock made a motion to approve the variance with the conditions recommended by staff. Mr. Hattaway seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

None

New Business

4. Proposed Concept Plan for Deer Hollow

Mr. Hattaway made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed concept plan for Deer Hollow. Mr. Hancock seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports

Mr. Morton mentioned updates on the following items:

1. There will be filming on September 16, 2020 on Rico Road.
2. Rock Quarry- Application for a rock quarry in Carroll County is under review by the Three Rivers Regional Commission. The Commission has extended public comment around September 26, 2020 for the DRI. Contact the Region Commission for any comments.

Adjourn Meeting

Mr. Hancock made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Hattaway seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting ended at 7:25 pm.

These minutes are provided as a convenience and service to the public, media, and staff. It is not the intent to transcribe proceedings verbatim. Any reproduction of this summary must include this notice. Public comments are noted and heard by the Commission, but not quoted. This is an official record of the City of Chattahoochee Hills Planning Commission Meeting proceedings.

Approved this 15th day of October, 2020.

Bob Simpson, Chairman

Attest:

Dana Wicher, City Clerk

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