



A regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held Tuesday, September 3, 2019, at 6:00 PM in City Council Chambers, City Hall, 155 Johnston Street, Rock Hill, South Carolina.

**MEMBERS PRESENT** Randy Graham, Duane Christopher, Justin Smith, Shelly Goodner, Keith Martens, and Nathan Mallard

**MEMBERS ABSENT** Gladys Robinson

**STAFF PRESENT** Eric Hawkins, Dennis Fields, Shana Marshburn, Leah Youngblood, Bill Meyer, Janice Miller

## 1. Approval of minutes of the August 6, 2019, meeting.

Mr. Christopher made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 6, 2019, meeting. Mr. Smith seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by a vote of 6-0 (Robinson absent).

## PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

### 2. Hold public hearing and consider a recommendation to City Council on petition M-2019-22 by WWP Acquisition LLC to rezone approximately 32.19 acres at 3040, 3045, 3049, & 3057 Cherry Road; 1080, 1082, & 1084 Riverside Drive; and adjacent right-of-way from Riverside on the Catawba Master Planned Commercial (MP-C) to Porter's Landing Master Planned Commercial (MP-C). Tax parcels 662-07-01-188 to -193.

Staff member Eric Hawkins, Planner III, presented the staff report.

Mr. Graham asked why screening for the car wash was required. Mr. Hawkins stated that the requirement is in the zoning ordinance. Staff is looking into where this requirement originated and if it is applicable to every situation across the board.

Mr. Graham asked if the eastern side across Cherry Road could be separated and redeveloped under new ownership. Mr. Hawkins stated it could, adding the way the current master plan is written, it could be rezoned by a new owner without requiring an amendment of the master plan.

Mr. Mallard asked if that parcel would revert to the original zoning under new ownership. Mr. Hawkins stated it would not. Mr. Hawkins stated that it could either be developed as shown on this plan or rezoned to permit something different.

Mr. Christopher noted the staff report indicated this development would be less intense, asking where this occurred. Mr. Hawkins stated the previous plan for Riverside on the Catawba included 114,000 square feet of office space, 76,000 square feet of retail space, almost 15,000 square feet of restaurant space, and 300 residential units.

Mr. Christopher asked if the commercial uses facing the river was part of the original concept. Mr. Hawkins stated the previous plan had an office building facing the river with commercial uses facing Cherry Road.

Mr. Smith asked if the previous plan also included a reduction of the parking. Mr. Hawkins stated he would have to check on this.

Mr. Christopher noted that the main change is that the new plan is mostly residential use. Mr. Hawkins agreed.

Mr. Martens asked where the Dunkins Ferry extension across Cherry Road would go. Mr. Hawkins stated it would connect to Riverside Drive.

Mr. Martens asked if the Dunkins Ferry extension would be new. Mr. Hawkins stated there would be newly constructed sections in order for the road to connect Riverside.

Mr. Martens asked if the road would dead end. Mr. Hawkins stated it would not, that it would connect to Riverside Drive which became Pump Station Road at a certain point. There was general discussion as to how the streets would be configured once development was completed.

Mr. Martens noted the impact of 370 units having 370 cars within this area, asking if all the commercial units reverted to residential if commercial spaces were not leased. Mr. Hawkins stated that not all of the commercial spaces could be converted to residential.

Mr. Martens asked if the commercial unit square footage was figured into the final residential numbers. Mr. Hawkins stated they were and that the maximum number of residential units would be 370.

Mr. Smith noted concern over the speed and increased traffic along Cherry Road. He asked if the access points indicated for Cherry Road were finalized or if there had been any further discussion regarding those access points. Mr. Hawkins stated the accesses were not finalized but there was no other way to access the site except by Cherry Road.

Mr. Mallard referred to the right in/right out for the parcel located along the eastern side of the project, asking for confirmation that travelers leaving that parcel would be required to cross the bridge going towards Fort Mill and make a U-turn at the light on the other side of the Catawba in order to go towards the City of Rock Hill. Mr. Hawkins stated this was correct.

Mr. Graham addressed the commercial to residential conversion, asking how many apartments would be built if the commercial component needed conversion. Mr. Hawkins stated the plan called for 352 with the retail components, but if converted to residential, the total number would be no more than 370.

Mr. Graham asked if there would be a cap on the number of residential units if the plan was approved. Mr. Hawkins stated there would.

Mr. Lee Freeman, WWP Acquisition LLC, 660 W Conway Drive, Atlanta GA, applicant, provided some background on the project. He noted the former concept had not addressed several issues dealing with wetlands and overall topography of the site. He stated the new plan presented was similar but less intense as it took into account the division of the overall site by Cherry Road, wetland areas, sewer and water lines, and other factors that created different development patterns within the site. He noted the main section towards Cherry Road would contain the commercial components with the areas located towards the Catawba River and the more interior sections devoted to residential development, adding the inclusion of the design for trails and interconnectivity to enhance these areas. Mr. Freeman explained the retail conversion was in the event they were unable to attract retail tenants as this site was more of a destination-oriented retail area as opposed to impulse retail. He noted that part of the planned commercial area includes the leasing office and resident amenities as there was no club house being planned for the site. He explained the desire to not have screening for the car wash/maintenance/dog wash area.

Mr. Christopher noted how unique the site is and added his desire to see the buildings take advantage of the river views. Mr. Freeman agreed, noting the Catawba River was the strongest asset to the project. He stated all buildings would have a view of the river and amenities would be designed to see the river as well.

Mr. Christopher asked the rates for the apartment units. Mr. Freeman stated these were planned to be luxury apartments with one-bedroom units renting for \$1000-1200 per month; two-bedroom units, \$1400-1500 per month; and three-bedroom units, \$1600-1700 per month.

Mr. Wes Mize, VHB, 2624 Wells Avenue, Raleigh NC, project engineer, addressed the topography issues of the site and explained several of the changes between the two plans.

Mr. Smith asked if there was a plan for the areas between the utility easements and the river. Mr. Freeman stated there were limitations to this. Mr. Mize noted the steep grade in place creating difficulties. Mr. Freeman reiterated the importance of continuing the trail along the river.

Mr. Smith commented on the restaurant depicted in the inspiration drawings, noting not many people would want sit outside along Cherry Road. Mr. Mize noted there would be a grade separation and a buffer between the building and Cherry Road. Mr. Freeman stated the desire to have a patio area with a view of the Catawba.

Mr. Smith asked the location of the restaurant back of house. Mr. Freeman stated this would be up to the architect, but probably corridors within the building would provide access to back of house facilities as dumpster areas.

Mr. Martens noted his continued concern over Riverside Drive, wondering if the plan would be successful in alleviating traffic issues with three intersections. Mr. Freeman stated a gate would be installed at the central intersection which would provide entrance only for residents. There was general discussion over eliminating the third drive. Mr. Freeman stated the need to create a friendly environment for residents as well as providing traffic flow for retailers. He added the Riverwalk retail component would be enhanced with the proposed intersection and connection but there was a desire to find a balance.

Mr. Mallard asked how the Catawba River was considered a trade barrier. Mr. Freeman explained the concept of a destination retailer, such as a specific place where people have a particular need or desire, as opposed to an impulse retailer, such as a shopping mall where people shop but do not have a particular need in mind. There was general discussion over the direction retail was taking with "e-tail" becoming more common among all members of society.

Mr. Curtis Houllion, 452 Luray Way, spoke in favor of the request, noting specifically the signalized intersection would be an advantage for everyone in that area.

Mr. Smith asked if improvements would be made to Pump Station Road in conjunction with the proposed car wash nearby on Cherry Road at Riverwalk Parkway. Mr. Hawkins noted that Pump Station Road will be extended to connect to Cherry Road at Riverwalk Parkway. Mr. Smith asked if Pump Station Road ties into Riverside Drive. Mr. Hawkins stated that it does. There was general discussion regarding the improvements with the Riverwalk Parkway intersection and Riverside Drive.

Mr. Christopher asked about the Sutton Road improvement. Mr. Mize stated the improvements suggested by the original Traffic Impact Analysis, which included the

Sutton Road improvements, were currently underway. He added the new plan in front of the Commission presented a 40% reduction in traffic than the original approved plan as it included more residential than commercial.

Mr. Christopher stated he was a proponent of having more access. He asked about stacking along Dunkins Ferry Road and if Riverside Drive would be right in/right out as well. Mr. Mize stated the stacking numbers were appropriate for the entrance. There was further discussion regarding the distance between the entrances and parking.

Mr. Graham asked if Riverside Drive would still be required to meet City standards even if it was a private drive. Mr. Hawkins stated it would.

Mr. Graham asked if Riverside would be wide enough to allow for two-way traffic. Mr. Hawkins stated it would be.

Mr. Christopher presented the motion to recommend to City Council approval of the Porter's Landing Master Planned Commercial (MP-C) as presented. Mr. Smith seconded.

Mr. Martens expressed his concern over the increased number of intersections along Cherry Road.

Mr. Mallard expressed concern over the eastern parcel having only the right in/right out access. There was general discussion as to how the intersection would affect the associated development and Riverwalk.

Mr. Meyer addressed the Commission, noting specifically that the eastern parcel would be difficult for anyone to develop as a standalone project due to the right in/right out situation.

Mr. Mallard asked if this had arisen in any past discussions regarding the site. Mr. Meyer stated it had, but the desire was for the parcel to hook back into Riverwalk, so staff was trying to navigate and encourage thoughtful development of the site.

Mr. Smith asked if the previous plan had also included a hotel. Mr. Meyer stated it had.

Mr. Christopher asked if the purchase of the property by Riverwalk would be more definite by the time it was presented to City Council. Mr. Meyer stated he could not speak to that.

Mr. Christopher asked if any contingencies regarding the purchase of the eastern parcel could be made as part of the Commission's approval. There was further discussion as to how the eastern parcel could be developed without Riverwalk purchasing the site.

Mr. Freeman was allowed to return to the podium to address this question. He stated he had met with Mr. Mark Mather of Riverwalk as to how this parcel would be a front door, so to speak, for Riverwalk. He added they had reached an agreement that Riverwalk will purchase the property on the east side of Cherry Road and they will split the cost of the signal for the intersection. They are working towards a contract that will finalize the terms of this agreement.

There were no further questions or comments.

Mr. Graham called for a vote, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 6-0 (Robinson absent).

### **3. Hold public hearing and consider a request to rename a portion of the Pump Station Road Right-of-Way.**

Staff member Dennis Fields, Planner II, presented the staff report.

There were no questions or comments.

Mr. Christopher presented the motion to approve the renaming of the Pump Station Road Right-of-Way to Pipeline Road. Mr. Mallard seconded, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 6-0 (Robinson absent).

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **4. Consideration of a request by Timmons Group for Major Site Plan approval for U-Haul Heckle Boulevard. (Plan #20180995)**

Staff member Shana Marshburn, Planner I, presented the staff report.

There were no questions or comments.

Mr. Christopher presented the motion to approve the Major Site Plan, subject to staff comments. Mr. Martens seconded, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 6-0 (Robinson absent).

#### **5. Other Business.**

Staff member Janice Miller, Historic Preservation Specialist, provided information on upcoming continuing education opportunities.

#### **6. Adjourn.**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.