



Columbia County Planning Commission
May 20, 2021 at 6:00 PM
Evans Government Center Auditorium
Evans, Georgia

Present at the meeting included:

Chairman Jim Cox
Commissioner Russell Wilder
Commissioner Gene Futch
Commissioner Al Dempsey

Scott Sterling, Division Director
Will Butler, Planning Manager
Nayna Mistry, Community Planner
Danielle Montgomery, Planner II
Jennifer Neal, Planning Technician
Cara Harden, Administrative Specialist
Members of the Public

A. CALL TO ORDER

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

B. INVOCATION

Commissioner Wilder gave the invocation.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Futch led the pledge to the American Flag.

D. ROLL CALL / QUORUM

Chairman Cox declared a quorum with 4 Commissioners present (80% Quorum). Vice-Chairman Henderson absent.

E. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

(E1) May 6, 2021

Commissioner Futch made a motion to approve the May 6, 2021 meeting minutes. Commissioner Wilder seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

F. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Futch made a motion to approve the May 20, 2021 Agenda. Commissioner Wilder seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

G. PRESENTATION

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 June 1, 2021. If you wish to address the Board of Commissioners at their meeting, please see Ms. Cara Harden to obtain a Request to Speak form."

H. DEBATE AGENDA

(H1) Unfinished Business

(H2) New Business

(H2a) Massage Operator's License

(H2a1) Brianna McIntosh dba Massage by Bri, located at 1106 Furrys Lane Suite A, for on premise massage services.

Staff member Will Butler stated the following:

- This is a request for a Massage Operator's License for Brianna McIntosh dba Massage by Bri for on premise massage services.
- Therapist Brianna McIntosh meets all the MOL requirements.
- Staff recommends approval.

Chairman Cox stated this was not a public hearing and called for a motion.

Commissioner Futch made a motion to approve Brianna McIntosh dba Massage by Bri, located at 1106 Furrys Lane Suite A, for on premise massage services. Commissioner Dempsey seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(H2a2) Chloe Helen Roy, located at 4090 Washington Road Suite A, for on premise massage services.

Staff member Will Butler stated the following:

- This is a request for a Massage Operator's License for Chloe Helen Roy for on premise massage services.
- Therapist Chloe Helen Roy meets all the MOL requirements.
- Staff recommends approval.

Chairman Cox stated this was not a public hearing and called for a motion.

Commissioner Wilder made a motion to approve Chloe Helen Roy, located at 4090 Washington Road Suite A, for on premise massage services. Commissioner Futch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(H2b) Temporary Use Authorization

(H2c) Conceptual Plan

(H2c1) Conceptual Plan for The Woodlands at Riverwood, Tax Map 058 Parcel 134J, 164 lots, 94.71 +/- acres, located Off Clanton Road and Old Washington Road, and currently zoned PUD (Planned Unit Development).

Staff member Danielle Montgomery stated the following:

- This is a request for a concept plan including 164 lots, with four different lot widths shown ranging from 55 feet to 75 feet.
- Access to this section is proposed from Washington Road via a proposed new road running along the northwestern boundary of the church property line.
- This new road would provide access to both the church and the proposed new section of Riverwood West.
- The applicant has submitted an email from GDOT indicating that the proposed location of this road is likely viable.
- There is a second access shown to Clanton Road, a County-owned dirt road, with this plan; the applicant proposes to leave this connection gated for emergency fire access only until Clanton Road is paved, and offers to place a bond with the County for the future connection costs.
- Given the location of the connecting road within the development, it is staff's opinion that the road should be built and paved in conjunction with the remainder of the project.
- The opposite side of Clanton Road includes significant acreage still to be developed as future phases of Riverwood West; providing the future connection to Clanton Road will tie the larger Riverwood West development together.
- The proposed location of this connection will likely change due to the new fire code requirements

regarding the separation of entrances to a development, and will likely be located further south along Clanton Road than is currently shown.

- This should not significantly impact the final lot count or conceptual plan.
- Due to Clanton Road serving as a portion of the second fire access road, the road itself will also need to be improved to meet the weight requirements.
- The lots are generally largest at the northern end of the project, and decrease in size moving south.
- The 75-foot lots are developed around a large central park. To the east of these lots are 70-foot lots double loaded around a loop road.
- There is an environmental area near the center of the eastern property line; there are no road crossings proposed in this area to avoid impacts to the wetlands and floodplains.
- This section also includes the use of an alley, so a small section of lots will front directly on this park space.
- The combination of site planning avoiding existing environmental conditions on the site, required buffers, and park spaces bring the total greenspace on the site to 42.21 acres, or just over 44% of the site.
- The buffer along Clanton Road is currently shown as measured from the right of way for the future realignment and paving of Clanton Road, however the current roadbed is not entirely within the right of way.
- The applicant is relying on the grading ordinance in Section 34-1 to request an alternative buffer plan to be approved within the 50 feet from the right of way.
- The buffer requirements would not ordinarily allow a road within the buffer, and it is staff's position that along a public road, the requirements of Section 90-139 require the 50 feet to be measured from the edge of the road.
- The subject property has an unusual situation in that road is not within a right of way, and therefore the project boundary, at the right of way, is not the same as the edge of the public road.
- The applicant has indicated that the alternate buffer plan would produce an average buffer of 50 feet from the right of way; in sections where the existing road lies outside the right of way however, there may be as little as 25 feet between the rear of the lots and the existing dirt road.
- This narrower buffer raises concerns of future nuisance complaints by the residents of these homes related to dust from the road, as has been seen in other areas of the County where residential development is adjacent to an unpaved road.
- Staff recommends that the required buffer be measured 50 feet from the edge of the existing road, unless the road is relocated by the applicant within the right of way as part of this project, in which case the buffer is measured from the edge of the right of way.
- The applicant has also submitted a pedestrian plan showing sidewalks on both sides of the roads. The sidewalks are proposed to include a connection to the entrances for the church and the future development towards Washington Road, however they will not extend all the way to Washington Road as there are no sidewalks on this GDOT road.
- This development does require public water and sewer service.
- Staff recommends approval with modifications:

Modifications

- Relocation of the second fire access road
- Improvement of Clanton Road to meet fire code access requirements
- Minimum 50-foot buffer from edge of Clanton Road
- Revision of alley cross section to meet Water Utility standards
- Revised development name

The comments included in the staff report provide a more complete description of the modifications required.

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Chairman Cox questioned staff about the improvements to Clanton Road required for fire trucks.

Staff member Danielle Montgomery answered the requirement is for it to hold 75,000 pounds.

Chairman Cox asked the applicant to provide more information.

Keith Lawrence, 211 Dixon Court:

- The fire department is providing service to the already existing 20+ lots on Clanton Road.
- We will work with CCFR to make sure it has adequate capacity.

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Commissioner Dempsey questioned the applicant whether the state will be allowing another curb cut, whether he was comfortable with the recommended modifications, and expressed concerns about Clanton Road.

Keith Lawrence answered we have a curb cut approved by GDOT. The only modification that we do not agree with is the improvements to Clanton Road to meet fire codes because the county is already providing service on Clanton Road which means it should currently already meet the requirements. We are going to treat the gravel road to mitigate the dust. We originally proposed to build Clanton Road to the entrance of The Woodlands with a roundabout, but the County did not agree and requested for us to build the road all the way to the end of The Woodlands property.

Director Scott Sterling mentioned this is the concept plan process, therefore, most of the discussions with the other departments will resolve some of these concerns during the preliminary and final plat processes.

Chairman Cox questioned the applicant about decal lanes.

Keith Lawrence answered that everything will be determined with the traffic study.

Commissioner Wilder questioned the applicant about the dust mitigation measures.

Keith Lawrence answered he believes it is something similar to calcium chloride that lasts about 6-12 months at a time. We have it budgeted into the HOA to maintain.

Chairman Cox stated this was not a public hearing and called for a motion.

Commissioner Dempsey made a motion to approve with additional modifications the Conceptual Plan for The Woodlands at Riverwood, Tax Map 058 Parcel 134J, 164 lots, 94.71 +/- acres, located Off Clanton Road and Old Washington Road, and currently zoned PUD (Planned Unit Development). Commissioner Wilder seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Required modifications will include but are not limited to the following:

- Relocation of the second fire access road
- Improvement of Clanton Road to meet fire code access requirements
- Minimum 50-foot buffer from edge of Clanton Road
- Revision of alley cross section to meet Water Utility standards
- Revised development name

The comments included in the staff report provide a more complete description of the modifications required.

Planning Commission included additional modifications in their approval as follows (updated 5.20.21):

- Include roundabout on Clanton Road and paving of Clanton Road to this entrance
- Provide dust control for the unpaved portion of Clanton Road

(H2d) Preliminary Plat

(H2e) Final Plat

(H2f) Plan Revision

(H2g) Public Hearing

(H2g1) RZ21-05-02, Conditional Use for a Special Event Facility, Tax Map 074A Parcel 133, 2.76+/- acres, located at 507 CDP Industrial Boulevard, and currently zoned M-1 (Light Industrial).

Staff member Danielle Montgomery stated the following:

- This is a request for a Conditional Use for a Special Event Facility for property located at 507 CDP Industrial Boulevard on 2.74 +/- acres currently zoned M-1 (Light Industrial).
- The applicants are requesting the Conditional Use in order to allow a portion of the property to be leased for bridal showers, rehearsal dinners, and other special events.
- The subject property is located at the intersection of CDP Industrial Boulevard and Wrightsboro Road, and is bounded by additional M-1 properties to the north and west, and a C-2 (General Commercial) property to the south.
- Properties to the east across CDP Industrial Boulevard are zoned A-R10 (Apartment Residential) and R-1 (Single Family Residential).
- Properties to the south across Wrightsboro Road are zoned S-1 (Special) for an existing church and R-1 (Single Family Residential).
- Existing businesses on the property include computer and software related businesses, contractor's offices, food processing, metal finishing, and a bake shop.
- The applicant has indicated that the events would all take place inside the building with no outdoor activity, and will occur primarily on Saturdays and Sundays between the hours of 10AM and 10PM for up to 50 people.
- The property has 59 paved and marked parking spaces in front of the building, as well as a large gravel area behind the building.
- There is therefore sufficient parking on the site for the proposed event size.
- While there may occasionally be events on Fridays, the majority of the events are proposed to be over the weekend when the other businesses on the site are closed, avoiding conflict over the use of the parking spaces.
- The change of use from an industrial space to an assembly space does require a new Certificate of Occupancy and possible modifications to the tenant's space to meet the building and fire code requirements for an assembly use.
- The applicant will be responsible for coordinating with Development Services to address any required improvements.
- The subject property is located within the Interstate Activity Center on the future land use map.
- This Activity Center is a designated Employment Center providing for commercial uses, light and heavy industrial uses, and high density residential uses.
- The proposed event center is a commercial use in keeping with the intent of this Activity Center.
- Staff recommends approval.

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Chairman Cox questioned staff whether they would be providing catering on-site.

Staff member Danielle Montgomery answered if they prep food on-site, they would be required to have a commercial kitchen. The applicant has not indicated there will be catering provided.

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

Jennifer Grubbs, 507 CDP Industrial Boulevard:

- There will be no catering on-site.

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

Commissioner Futch made a motion to approve RZ21-05-02, Conditional Use for a Special Event Facility, Tax Map 074A Parcel 133, 2.76+/- acres, located at 507 CDP Industrial Boulevard, and currently zoned M-1 (Light Industrial). Commissioner Wilder seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(H2g2) RZ21-05-03, Change of Conditions, Tax Map 052 Parcel 037, 96.74+/- acres, located off Hamilton Road, and currently zoned R-2 (Single Family Residential).

Staff member Danielle Montgomery stated the following:

- This is a request for a change of conditions for property located off Hamilton Road on 96.74 +/- acres and currently zoned R-2 (Single Family Residential).
- The subject property is located on the north side of Hamilton Road and the south side of Wrightsboro Road and is currently zoned R-2 (Single Family Residential).
- The property was rezoned in 2020 under file RZ20-01-01 with several conditions, one of which stated:
 1. A 50-foot undisturbed natural buffer shall be required along Hamilton Road and Wrightsboro Road as per Section 90-139.
- As noted in the condition, the buffer requirement is also a County code requirement.
- A conceptual plan for this property was approved April 1, 2021, which showed larger 1 acre lots fronting on Hamilton Road.
- Rather than providing a buffer on Hamilton Road, the applicants are proposing to provide a buffer behind these larger lots, between them and the remainder of the development, which would be subject to major site grading and developed to R-2 lot standards with a 10,000 square foot minimum lot size.
- This buffer area consists largely of floodplain area, and would remain undisturbed.
- The width of this buffer is approximately 150 feet according to the submitted plan.
- As discussed in the staff report for the conceptual plan, the provision of the larger lots on Hamilton Road was supported by staff to provide a transition from the R-2 development to the larger lot, R-A development characteristic of the remainder of Hamilton Road.
- Staff recommends approval with conditions:

Conditions

Planning:

1. The 50-foot undisturbed buffer shall be required on Wrightsboro Road.
2. The lots fronting on Hamilton Road shall not be mass graded.
3. All other conditions of approval from file RZ20-01-01 shall remain in effect.

Chairman Cox stated this was a public hearing and asked if there was anyone to speak for or against the Change of Conditions.

Kimberly Gragg, 453 Sebastian Drive:

- Expressed concerns about adding 7 houses with driveways along Hamilton Road since that is not consistent with the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Expressed concerns about the buffer requirements, the lack of sidewalks along Hamilton Road, and traffic.
- Requested for the County to widen Hamilton Road, add a turning lane, and sidewalks if they approve this request.

Chairman Cox stated this was a public hearing and asked if there was anyone else to speak for or against the Change of Conditions.

Karen Domain, 3230 Alexandria Drive:

- Expressed concerns about the width of Hamilton Road and the location of the houses on the lots along Hamilton Road.

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

Tyler Findley, 8219 N. Crossing Court, Fortson, GA:

- Traffic and lot width were taken into account by the civil engineer.

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Chairman Cox questioned the applicant whether there would be covenants about parking on the street, whether there has been a traffic study completed, and whether there will be a bridge to cross the stream.

Tyler Findley answered the only time parking will be allowed on the street is when there are no spots left in the driveway and yes there will be a bridge.

Danielle Montgomery answered a traffic study will be submitted during the preliminary plat process.

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

Commissioner Wilder made a motion to approve with conditions RZ21-05-03, Change of Conditions, Tax Map 052 Parcel 037, 96.74+/- acres, located off Hamilton Road, and currently zoned R-2 (Single Family Residential). Commissioner Futch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(H2g3) VA21-05-02, Variance to Section 90-139 *Buffers and Screening*, Tax Map 052 Parcel 037, 96.74+/- acres, located off Hamilton Road, and currently zoned R-2 (Single Family Residential).

Staff member Danielle Montgomery stated the following:

- This is a request for a variance to Section 90-139 *Buffers and Screening* for property located off Hamilton Road on 96.74 +/- acres and currently zoned R-2 (Single Family Residential).
- The applicant is requesting the variance related to an alternate buffer plan for Hamilton Road.
- The subject property is located on the north side of Hamilton Road and the south side of Wrightsboro Road and is currently zoned R-2 (Single Family Residential).
- Rather than providing a buffer on Hamilton Road, the applicants are proposing to provide a buffer behind these larger lots, between them and the remainder of the development, which would be subject to major site grading and developed to R-2 lot standards with a 10,000 square foot minimum lot size.
- This buffer area consists largely of floodplain area, and would remain undisturbed.
- The width of this buffer is approximately 150 feet according to the submitted plan.
- Staff recommends approval with conditions:

Conditions

Planning:

1. The 50-foot undisturbed buffer shall be required on Wrightsboro Road.
2. The lots fronting on Hamilton Road shall not be mass graded.

Chairman Cox stated this was a public hearing and asked the applicant if he would like to add anything for the variance request. Applicant did not provide any further information.

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

Commissioner Futch made a motion to approve with conditions VA21-05-02, Variance to Section 90-139 *Buffers and Screening*, Tax Map 052 Parcel 037, 96.74+/- acres, located off Hamilton Road, and currently zoned R-2 (Single Family Residential). Commissioner Wilder seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(H2g4) VA21-05-01, Variation to Section 90-96 *Evans Town Center Overlay District*, Tax Map 077A Parcel 099A, 1.34+/- acres, located at 4321 Evans to Locks Road, and currently zoned C-2 (General Commercial).

Staff member Nayna Mistry stated the following:

- This is a request for a variation to Section 90-96 *Evans Town Center Overlay District*, for property located at 4321 Evans to Locks Road on 1.34 +/- acres and currently zoned C-2 (General Commercial).
- The applicant is requesting the variation in regards to building materials and for fencing for a proposed expansion to an existing pet resort.
- The subject property is located on the north side of Evans to Locks Road.
- Property to the north and west is zoned M-2 (General Industrial), property to the south across Evans

to Locks Road is zoned A-R (Apartment Residential) and C-2 (General Commercial), and property to the east is zoned C-2.

- A Variance request was approved by the Board of Commissioners on March 16, 2021. The condition from Planning stated the following:
 - Chain link fencing noted on the provided plan is not approved with this submittal.
 - An approved variation to Evans Town Center Overlay District (ETCOD) standards will be required in order to use the noted chain link fencing.
- To address the fencing, Code Section 90-96 (Evans Town Center Overlay District) includes the following:
 - Fences and landscaping walls may be used. Fences shall be constructed of materials coordinating with external building walls, wrought iron, vinyl or painted aluminum.
- The applicant is proposing to construct an 8-foot black vinyl coated chain-link fence and privacy screen as the structural buffer.
- This fence will serve as a structural buffer, as well as a screened fence along the rear of the play yards.
- By placing the landscaping between the fence and the property line, this will provide an attractive view from the adjoining property and prevent any pet damage to the landscaping that abuts the play yards.
- The industrial zoned property adjacent to this site would be allowed a similar fence with public-viewed fencing to be vinyl fencing or a metal railing.
- Fencing outside of the buffer shall consist of two fence types.
- Any fence that is visible from Evans to Locks Road or the building and parking lot area shall be 8-foot white solid vinyl fencing to match the existing fence at the site.
- The remaining internal fences shall be 8-foot black vinyl coated chain-link fence and privacy screen, which is the same as the proposed structural buffer fence.
- The chain-link fencing is a very functional solution and provides separation for the pets and still allow for adequate supervision by staff, and is located internal to the site or adjacent to the industrial property and is therefore acceptable in this location.
- For the building materials Code Section 90-96 (Evans Town Center Overlay District) includes the following sections:
 - External building walls shall be architecturally designed and faced with bricks, stucco, structural masonry, stone or stone veneer, fiber cement board cladding, split face block, wood siding or wood shingles. Architectural metal panels and architectural glazing systems may be used as an accent and up to a maximum 25 percent of any elevation.....All elevations of a structure shall be in harmony with one another in terms of scale, proportion, detail, material, color and design quality. The side and rear elevations of buildings shall be as visually attractive as the front elevation, especially where those side or rear elevations are often viewed by the public.
- The applicant has submitted a detailed narrative to explain how the design for the new buildings will work with the existing buildings and create attractive elevations to the public area and the road frontage.
- The existing one story buildings have 100% metal siding finish on all four sides in a neutral color and shutters to give some interest to the façades.
- For the new buildings, the narrative states that the design intent is to create visual uniformity across all buildings on the site in harmony with the adjacent neighbors.
- The variation is requested where the portions of the proposed (new) buildings will not be seen by the public and border the industrial use property, and will use metal panel siding, which is not typically allowed per Section 90-96 above.
- The new building 'A' will be located towards the back of the site and will not be seen from the public road. For that reason, the wall finish will use metal corrugated panels on the side and rear elevations to match the existing buildings.
- Building 'B' is located closer to the frontage and the proposal is to use corrugated metal panels on the 'non-public viewed' elevations, which is the side facing Building 'A' and the elevation facing 4323 Evans to Locks Road.
- The public-viewed elevations shall be finished in a stone and a textured stucco finish with smooth stucco accents to create visual appeal.

- Due to the use, it is difficult to incorporate windows into the design as it distracts the pets, so the buildings will feature pergolas with trellis on the public facades with details to create visual interest.
- Staff recommends approval with condition:

Condition

Planning:

The variation to the elevations and the fencing will follow the description in the Narrative and as per the drawings submitted for this request. Minor design improvements or alterations may be approved by staff.

Chairman Cox stated this was a public hearing and asked if the applicant was present. Applicant present, no information added.

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

Commissioner Wilder made a motion to approve with condition VA21-05-01, Variation to Section 90-96 *Evans Town Center Overlay District*, Tax Map 077A Parcel 099A, 1.34+/- acres, located at 4321 Evans to Locks Road, and currently zoned C-2 (General Commercial). Commissioner Futch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(H2g5) VA21-05-03, Variance to Section 90-98 *List of Lot & Structure Requirements*, Tax Map 077C Parcel 027, 0.48+/- acres, located at 109 Shaw Street, and currently zoned C-2 (General Commercial).

Staff member Will Butler stated the following:

- This is a request for a variance to Section 90-98 *List of Lot & Structure Requirements*, for property located at 109 Shaw Street on 0.48 +/- acres and currently zoned C-2 (General Commercial).
- The applicant is requesting the variance to reduce building setbacks for existing and proposed structures.
- The subject property is surrounded on all four sides by road right of way: Shaw Street to the north, south, and east and Martinez Boulevard to the west.
- Nearby properties are primarily zoned C-2 (General Commercial), but there is a property zoned P-1 (Professional) at 112 Shaw Street, as well as a property zoned R-3 (Single Family Residential) at 114 Shaw Street.
- Building setbacks are 90 feet from the centerline of Martinez Boulevard (classified as a Collector) and 55 feet from the centerline of Shaw Street.
- The existing building is well within the setback from Martinez Boulevard, but does meet building setbacks for Shaw Street.
- The applicant is proposing a new building which is intended to house a crematory with an office and is within the building setback for Shaw Street.
- Building setbacks requested by the applicant are 20 feet from the property line along Martinez Boulevard and 10 feet from the property line along the southern and eastern property line at Shaw Street.
- The setback on the northern side of the property along Shaw Street is not proposed to be reduced with this request.
- Also shown on the site plan is a new parking lot, but this is not included in the requested variance.
- Per the addendum, the property is surrounded by street right of way and this causes issues with adding buildings to the property due to the setbacks on all four sides.
- Staff recommends approval with condition:

Condition

Planning:

Setbacks are reduced as shown on the provided concept plan for Lamar McCoy dated April 9th, 2021.

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Commissioner Dempsey questioned staff about the number of additional and total parking.

Staff member Will Butler answered there will be 4 additional for a total of 17.

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

Lamar McCoy, 213 Ansley Way:

- The crematory will not increase occupancy.

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Commissioner Wilder questioned the applicant about the occupancy during services now and whether parking has been an issue.

Lamar McCoy answered he is not sure about the occupancy because he does not operate the funeral home and that he is not aware of parking being an issue.

Chairman Cox stated this was a public hearing and asked if there was anyone to speak for or against the Variance.

Cooper Cliatt, 5402 Hwy 220 E, Lincolnton, GA:

- Parking is currently an issue and the space being utilized to add a crematory could be used to add more parking. Questioned the addition to the building.

Staff member Will Butler answered the addition will be approximately 200 square feet.

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Commissioner Dempsey questioned the applicant on whether we needed to add more parking to assist with the traffic issues.

Lamar McCoy answered they are willing to add more parking, but were concerned it would not get approved because of the room for vehicles to back out of the parking spots.

Staff member Will Butler questioned the applicant about the number of seats inside the building.

Lamar McCoy answered 34 in the main big room.

Staff member Will Butler commented that the minimum number of spaces they are required to have is 9 and the maximum is 17 to meet code, which they are currently meeting and will meet with the request. There are some circumstances that allow approval of more parking, but it may not be feasible for this site. Director Scott Sterling commented anything beyond the existing and proposed addition to parking may tap the site out.

Chairman Cox stated this was a public hearing and asked if there was anyone else to speak for or against the Variance.

Chad McCrickard, 212 Flowing Wells Road:

- Petsch Respiratory just moved in behind this site this week.
- The option for additional parking on our property is non-existent.
- Expressed concerns about parking, the room for their 18 wheelers to get to their site for deliveries, and the odor pollution from the crematory.

Chairman Cox responded we received a letter from the manufacturer of the crematory materials about their measures to eliminate odors.

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

Commissioner Wilder made a motion to approve with condition VA21-05-03, Variance to Section 90-98 *List of Lot & Structure Requirements*, Tax Map 077C Parcel 027, 0.48+/- acres, located at 109 Shaw Street, and currently zoned C-2 (General Commercial). Commissioner Dempsey seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-1. Commissioner Futch opposed.

(H2g6) RZ21-05-04, Rezone from R-3 (Single-Family Residential) to C-3 (Heavy Commercial) with a Conditional Use for Light Industrial, Tax Map 078 Parcel 125, 1.97+/- acres, located at 4400 River Watch Parkway, and currently zoned R-3 (Single Family Residential).

Staff member Will Butler stated the following:

- This is a request for a Rezoning from R-3 (Single Family Residential) to C-3 (Heavy Commercial) with a Conditional Use for Light Industrial for property located at 4400 River Watch Parkway on 1.97 +/- acres and currently zoned R-3 (Single Family Residential).
- The subject property is located on the south side of River Watch Parkway.
- Property to the north is zoned M-2 (General Industrial), property to the east is zoned C-C (Community Commercial), property to the south is zoned T-R (Townhouse Residential), and property to the west is zoned R-3 (Single Family Residential).
- The applicant has requested a rezoning to C-3 with a conditional use for light industrial.
- Provided with the application is a brief addendum describing the conditional use, as well as a conceptual development plan showing a single building on the property that is noted at approximately 9,000 square feet with an internal breakdown of 3,000 square feet of office and 6,000 square feet of warehouse space.
- If the property is rezoned it will be included in the Evans Town Center Overlay District.
- While a building elevation has not been shown, the site plan appears to meet the building setbacks in Evans Town Center.
- None have been provided, but having additional, albeit smaller, warehousing space near the commercial uses in the vicinity (Mullins Colony, Mullins Crossing, Lowes, and Publix to name a few) that could potentially provide some warehousing space for their use could be beneficial.
- The applicant has also noted that there would be no outdoor storage of vehicles or materials at this property.
- The subject property is located within the Evans Activity Center Character Area of the Vision 2035 Future Land Use map.
- The intent of this Character Area is to enhance and create concentrated commercial uses, employment centers, and mixed use developments in defined areas that are served by a network of paths and streets suitable for pedestrians and cars.
- The proposed rezoning to C-3 does permit shops and offices, with the addition of light industrial via the conditional use.
- The commercial and office uses certainly meet the intent of the Character Area and the additional light industrial is acceptable due to nearby industrial uses.
- Staff recommends approval with condition:

Condition

Planning:

Limited and general outdoor storage, as defined in Section 90-147 (i)(10) & 90-147 (i)(11) of Columbia County Code, is not permitted.

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Chairman Cox questioned staff whether this would be considered speculative zoning.

Staff member Will Butler answered that we have a concept plan for this project. It is the Planning Commission's and Board of Commissioner's decision whether that is sufficient enough to not be considered speculative.

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

Billy Franke, 7111 Grayson Drive, Graniteville, SC:

- We plan to stick to the proposed site plan with slight modifications depending on the tenants we have.

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Commissioner Wilder questioned the applicant about the amount of office versus warehouse space.

Billy Franke answered he is not sure how much of each at this time. We know we have to meet the overlay requirements and wanted to make sure we had enough space to get trucks around to the back of the property.

Chairman Cox stated this was a public hearing and asked if there was anyone to speak for or against the Rezoning.

Sally Kolar, 638 McKinnis Court:

- Owner of 4384 River Watch Parkway.
- Support the development, however, expressed concerns about traffic in and out of the property.

Staff member Will Butler responded Traffic Engineering provided comments to address during the site plan process.

Billy Franke added the driveway will line up with the curb cut.

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

Commissioner Futch made a motion to approve with condition RZ21-05-04, Rezone from R-3 (Single-Family Residential) to C-3 (Heavy Commercial) with a Conditional Use for Light Industrial, Tax Map 078 Parcel 125, 1.97+/- acres, located at 4400 River Watch Parkway, and currently zoned R-3 (Single Family Residential). Commissioner Dempsey seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(H2g7) VA21-05-04, Variance to Sections 90-98 *List of Lot & Structure Requirements* and 90-139 *Buffers and Screening*, Tax Map 077A Parcels 064A, 063, 063A, and 064B , a combined 3.2+/- acres, located at 4285 Washington Road, 541, 545, and 551 Rountree Way respectively, and currently zoned C-2 (General Commercial).

Staff member Nayna Mistry stated the following:

- This is a request for variances to Sections 90-98 *List of Lot and Structure Requirements* and 90-139 *Buffers & Screening*, for property located at 4285 Washington Road, 541, 545 and 551 Rountree Way, a combined 3.2 +/- acres, and zoned C-2 (General Commercial).
- The subject properties are located on the east side of Washington Road and the south side of Rountree Way.
- The adjacent parcels to the north-west are zoned C-2 (General Commercial) for the existing Waffle House location.
- Adjacent parcels to the south are zoned R-2 (Single-Family Residential).
- There is an S-1 zoned property on the north of Rountree Way for a church.
- Other surrounding properties have a mix of retail, restaurants and multi-family and are within the Evans Town Center Overlay District.
- The applicant is proposing an approximately 31,000 SF grocery store and associated site development which will include landscaping, lighting, parking, stormwater management, utilities and associated site infrastructure.
- Washington Road is an Arterial Road in the Evans Town Center and required front setbacks are minimum 5FT and maximum 125FT.
- Also Rountree Way is a Collector Road and has a required setback of minimum 5 FT and maximum 90 FT.
- The submitted site plan shows the building closer to the north along Rountree Way and this meets the required setbacks for that road.
- Due to the shape and size of this combination of parcels, that makes it difficult to meet the maximum setback from Washington Road.
- The site plan shows the 125 FT required maximum setback from the centerline of Washington Road which almost coincides with the right of way line.
- Columbia County Code requires a structural buffer of 30 FT between C-2 (General Commercial) and R-2 (Single-Family Residential).
- The narrative explains that there is currently ± 25 FT of grade change from the northwest portion of the property to the southeast.
- Due to the topographic challenges, a retaining wall is proposed along the rear of the building footprint within the structural buffer.

- This proposed plan is requesting a reduction to approximately 8 FT at the narrowest point to allow for the proposed retaining wall, fencing and some landscaping areas.
- The distance to the rear building line would be approximately 20 FT so that will allow adequate access for access, walls, fences and landscaping.
- The applicant is aware that the new building shall meet the requirements for Evans Town Center Overlay District or they will apply for a Variation if necessary.
- These parcels are located within the Evans Activity Center, a Mixed Use Center on the future land use map.
- The intent of Activity Centers is to enhance and create concentrated commercial uses, employment centers, and mixed use developments in defined areas.
- Staff recommends approval.

Chairman Cox stated this was a public hearing and asked if there was anyone to speak for or against the Variance.

Robert Gillespie, 3953 Loblolly Trail:

- Expressed concerns about traffic and removing the house on the property.

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

Delbert Renfro, Atlanta, GA:

- We will be utilizing the current zoning on the property to build a Lidl grocery store.

Planning Commission questions/comments/concerns:

Chairman Cox questioned the applicant about the time frame for the project.

Delbert Renfro answered they would like to begin as soon as possible.

Chairman Cox stated this was a public hearing and asked if there was anyone else to speak for or against the Variance.

Linda Townsend, 602 Pebble Beach Court:

- Questioned the location of the retaining wall.

Staff member Danielle Montgomery showed the location of the retaining wall on the PowerPoint to be along the southeast side of the property along 4555 River Watch Parkway and County right of way.

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

Commissioner Wilder made a motion to approve VA21-05-04, Variance to Sections 90-98 *List of Lot & Structure Requirements* and 90-139 *Buffers and Screening*, Tax Map 077A Parcels 064A, 063, 063A, and 064B, a combined 3.2+/- acres, located at 4285 Washington Road, 541, 545, and 551 Rountree Way respectively, and currently zoned C-2 (General Commercial). Commissioner Futch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(H2h) Text Amendments

(H2i) Items Added (which need immediate action)

I. LEGAL MATTERS

J. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Director Scott Sterling provided an update on the progress of the Vision 2035 Comprehensive Plan Five-Year Update and informed the Planning Commission the plan is expected to go to the Board of Commissioners meeting June, 1, 2021.

K. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PARTICIPATION

There was no further business to discuss; therefore Commissioner Futch made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:16p.m. Commissioner Wilder seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

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Signature on File

Jim Cox, Chairman

Signature on File

Scott Sterling, Planning Services Director