

CHATHAM COUNTY-SAVANNAH METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

MPC MINUTES

**ARTHUR A. MENDONSA HEARING ROOM
110 EAST STATE STREET**

March 21, 2006

1:30 PM

Members Present: Stephen R. Lufburrow, Chairman
Lee Meyer, Vice Chairman
Jon Todd, Secretary
Robert Ray, Treasurer
Douglas Bean
Michael Brown
W. Shedrick Coleman
Ben Farmer
Melissa Jest
Walker McCumber
Timothy S. Mackey
Lacy A. Manigault
Susan Myers

Members Not Present: Russ Abolt

Staff Present: Thomas L. Thomson, P. E., AICP, Executive Director
Harmit Bedi, AICP, Deputy Executive Director
James Hansen, AICP, Director, Development Services
Gary Plumbley, Development Services Planner
Amanda Bunce, Development Services Planner
Deborah Rayman-Burke, AICP, Development Services Planner
Beth Reiter, AICP, City Preservation Officer
Marilyn Gignilliat, Executive Assistant
Lynn Manrique, Administrative Assistant

Advisory Staff Present: Robert Sebek, Chatham County Zoning Administrator

I. Call to Order and Welcome

Chairman Lufburrow called the meeting to order and explained the agenda for the benefit of those who were attending the meeting for the first time.

II. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgments

A. Notice(s)

APA Audio Conference – Introduction to the Planning Commission, Wednesday, March 22, 2006, 4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M., Jerry Surrency Conference Room.

B. Items Requested to be Removed from the Final Agenda.

None.

III. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of the March 7, 2006, MPC Meeting Minutes and Briefing Minutes.

Mr. Todd **moved** to approve the March 7, 2006, MPC Meeting Minutes and Briefing Minutes. Mr. Ray seconded the motion.

MPC Action: The motion to approve the March 7, 2006, MPC Meeting Minutes and Briefing Minutes carried with none opposed. Voting were Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Todd, Mr. Ray, Mr. Bean, Mr. Brown, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Farmer, Ms. Jest, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Manigault and Ms. Myers.

B. Sign Plan

Whitemarsh Center Sign Plan
119 Charlotte Road
P-B-N Zoning District
Jane A. Feiler, Owner/Agent
Debbie Burke, MPC Project Planner
MPC File No. P-060307-62395-1

Nature of Request: The petitioner is requesting approval of fascia signage on the front of a proposed commercial building within a P-B-N (Planned Neighborhood Business) zoning district. A variance of 152 square feet of additional fascia sign area is requested to allow 252 square feet of fascia sign area on the front of the building.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of a variance of 152 square feet of fascia sign to allow 252 square feet of fascia sign area on the building front.

Mr. Meyer **moved** to approve the staff recommendation. Mr. Ray seconded the motion.

MPC Action: The motion to approve the staff recommendation carried with none opposed. Voting were Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Todd, Mr. Ray, Mr. Bean, Mr. Brown, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Farmer, Ms. Jest, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Manigault and Ms. Myers.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

None.

V. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Master Plan

The Village at Southbridge
705 Berwick Boulevard
PIN 1-1008-02-047
88.7 Upland Acres
PUD-C Zoning District
Terry R. Lee, Jr. (Thomas & Hutton Engineering), Agent
Sivica Communities, Inc., Owner
Gary Plumbley, MPC Project Planner
MPC File No. M-060302-47595-1
MPC Ref. File No. M-040929-58621-1, Z-001009-53586-1
and M-040428-49901-1

The petitioner requested that this item be continued until the April 4, 2006, MPC Meeting.

Mr. Bean **moved** to remove this item from today's agenda and continue it until the April 4, 2006, MPC Meeting. Mr. Farmer seconded the motion.

MPC Action: The motion to continue this petition until the April 4, 2006, MPC Meeting carried with none opposed. Voting were Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Todd, Mr. Ray, Mr. Bean, Mr. Brown, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Farmer, Ms. Jest, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Manigault and Ms. Myers.

B. Zoning Petition – Map Amendment

1675 and 1685 Chatham Parkway
Donald Voorhees, Petitioner
Roberta Kamine-Haysman & HBD, Inc., Owners
Danny Falligant, Agent
Amanda Bunce, MPC Project Planner
MPC File No. Z-060302-37206-2

Issue: The rezoning of 1675 and 1685 Chatham Parkway from a PUD-B-R (Planned Unit Development – Regional Business) zoning classification to a PUD-M-18 (Planned Unit Development – Multifamily, 18 units per acre) classification.

Policy Analysis: The proposed rezoning is not consistent with the City's Future Land Use Plan. However, the requested rezoning will establish a zoning district that has a predictable use and density that is compatible with the existing and planned uses in the immediate vicinity.

Staff Recommendation: Approval of the request to rezone the subject property from a PUD-B-R (Planned Unit Development – Regional Business) zoning classification to a PUD-M-18 (Planned Unit Development – Multifamily, 18 units per acre) classification. **Approval** of a change to the City of Savannah Future Land Use Plan from Heavy Commercial to Multifamily Residential.

Speaking on the Petition:

Tim Walmsley (Hunter, Maclean, Exley & Dunn), Agent, spoke on behalf of the petitioners, Roberta Haysman and HBD, Inc., a family corporation. Two of the principals, Bobby and Danny Falligant, were in attendance. The plan is to develop the property as apartments and the developer will be Continental Properties. Mr. Walmsley introduced Dick Trevlin of Continental Properties to give a general sense of what is being planned.

Dick Trevlin, Director of Multi-family Development for Continental Properties, said that 25-year-old Continental Properties is headquartered near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and is a premier developer of real estate throughout the United States, including retail, apartments, office complexes and hospitality development. The company is one of the nation's largest developers of Kohl stores, as well as Wal-Mart, K-Mart and Publix. In 1999 the company developed and still manages its first apartment facility. In 2000 the company decided to focus a lot of effort on multi-family development and determined that the southeast quadrant of the United States is the most likeable area for apartment development. In 2002, two "Springs" complexes were developed. Now there are six "Springs" facilities that are completed, owned and managed by Continental, one of which is located in the Nashville, Tennessee area. Four more are under construction in Florida, Texas and Alabama. These facilities operate at 97 percent occupancy and are very popular with residents and the communities in which they are located. The company's goal is to find suitable metropolitan areas within the southeast quadrant with 250 to 500 thousand population. They are very excited about Savannah. There is tremendous growth here in jobs, economy and population. Ikea announced an addition of 1,500 people to the job force and Gulfstream

is expanding. There is a shortage of good new apartments in the Savannah area. Most apartments seem to be congregated on the southside and appear to be in need of maintenance, renovations and upgrading. There are only five or six built in the last five years or so that are in the category of the "Springs" complexes. Those facilities are running at 97 to 100 percent occupancy. One of these facilities, The Merritt on Johnny Mercer Boulevard, has been converted to condominiums. This means a loss to the community of 352 rental units on this level. Continental's plans call for 352 units. The company believes this city has a need for this kind of development and presents a good market. Representatives have met with people on the Planning Commission and in City Engineering and Permitting and have found people very congenial to work with. Chatham Parkway was selected as a site because there is very little comparable product in that area other than The Walden, which has a 98 to 100 percent occupancy and was rented up in 10 months, which is extremely fast in the industry. U. S. 17 and I-16 provide access to roadways which will take one anywhere in the City, especially to employment areas. They would like to see more retail in the area, particularly food stores and department stores within walking distance or very short drive distance from their development. The apartments may help attract these kinds of businesses. He thanked the Commission for the opportunity to speak. He said Continental is a strong company who will build what they say they will build and will work within the guidelines. They will go from conception to completion to management and plan to be here a long time. There are no plans to convert to condominiums at a later date. This development will be strictly rental; Continental's business is to build and hold facilities. He had brochures available to show what the typical "Springs" developments look like.

Mr. Walmsley said that Commissioners should have copies of letters written by nearby neighbors Charlie Williams, Rick Fitzer and SunTrust supporting this development. His clients believe this apartment complex will enhance what is happening along Chatham Parkway and encourage commercial and office development. The staff recommendation refers to a 50-foot buffer. A preliminary site plan has been put together which incorporates this 50-foot buffer. It is not the intent of the

owners of the property to impede the development of the southern property in any way.

Edward Jenkins owns property west of the site under consideration. He asked how this rezoning would affect the future zoning of his property and if his property could still go commercial. He does not believe that anyone would be interested in building a residence on his property with the current pattern of commercial development in the area. Ms. Bunce said Mr. Jenkins property is currently zoned R-M-H (Residential Manufactured Housing). The Comprehensive Plan for this area calls for commercial development, so any rezoning for a commercial zoning district would be supported by and consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The rezoning under consideration would have no effect on Mr. Jenkins property in that regard.

Mr. Jenkins is concerned that the area is low with a canal running through it that frequently overflows. He asked how this development would affect drainage. Mr. Lufburrow said this was an issue that could not be addressed at this point, but when the Specific Development Plan comes forward, City Engineering will address the drainage issue and will have to approve the plan.

Mr. Jenkins said he is not opposed to rezoning the site in question.

Mr. Todd **moved** to approve the staff recommendation. Mr. Ray seconded the motion.

MPC Action: The motion to approve the staff recommendation carried with none opposed. Voting were Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Todd, Mr. Ray, Mr. Bean, Mr. Brown, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Farmer, Ms. Jest, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Manigault and Ms. Myers.

C. Victorian Planned Neighborhood Conservation District - New Construction

GBS Construction Company, Inc.
Benjamin Eicholz, Owner
501 East Anderson Street
Beth Reiter, MPC Project Planner
MPC File No. N-060308-34172-2

Nature of Request. The applicant is requesting approval to construct a two-story single-family dwelling on the lot located at 501 East Anderson Street (PIN 2-0053-21-017), in a 1-R zoning district in the Victorian Planned Neighborhood Conservation District. The applicant is requesting a 21-foot, three-inch rear yard setback variance and a two-foot side yard setback variance.

Staff Recommendation. **Approval** of a two-foot side yard setback variance based on historic precedence; **approval** of a 21-foot three-inch rear yard setback variance based on the physical constraints of the lot; and **approval** of the proposed two-story residence with the conditions that 1) the front door be a six-panel door, 2) consideration be given to tapered front porch columns, if available in the chosen column style, and 3) City of Savannah approval of the curb cut and off-street parking. A copy of the approval is to be brought to Staff for the file.

Mr. Brown **moved** to approve the staff recommendation subject to the condition that the staff must address the issues of access and the intersection. Mr. Mackey seconded the motion.

MPC Action. **The motion carried with one opposed.** The motion was to 1) approve a 2-foot side yard setback variance based on historic precedence; 2) approve a 21-foot 3 inch rear yard setback variance based on the physical constraints of the lot; 3) approve the proposed two-story residence with the conditions that the front door be a six panel wood door; consideration be given to tapered front porch columns if available in the chosen column style; 4) staff must address the issues of access and the intersection. Voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Todd, Mr. Ray, Mr. Bean, Mr. Brown, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Farmer, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Manigault, and Ms. Myers. Ms. Jest was opposed to the motion.

VI. Recess to Executive Session

Mr. Mackey **moved** to recess to Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. Mr. Farmer seconded.

MPC Action: The motion carried with none opposed. The motion was to recess to Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. Voting were Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Todd, Mr. Ray, Mr. Bean, Mr. Brown, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Farmer, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Manigault, Ms. Myers, and Ms. Jest

After the Executive Session, the Commission reconvened.

Chairman Lufburrow stated that the Board's only discussion during Executive Session revolved around a personnel matter. He then asked for a motion to support the recommendation of the Personnel Committee.

Mr. Bean **moved** to approve the recommendation of the Personnel Committee for a five-percent increase in the base salary of the MPC Executive Director. Mr. Meyer seconded the motion.

MPC Action. The motion for a five-percent increase in the base salary of the MPC Executive Director carried with none opposed. Voting were Mr. Lufburrow, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Todd, Mr. Ray, Mr. Bean, Mr. Brown, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Farmer, Ms. Jest, Mr. McCumber, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Manigault, and Ms. Myers.

VII. Other Business

Ms. Myers requested that discussion of the SAGIS Blue Ribbon Committee Report and Recommendations be placed on the agenda for a future planning meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the March 21, 2006, Regular Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas L. Thomson, P.E., AICP
Executive Director

Note: Minutes not official until signed