



Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
April 27, 2010 1:30 p.m.
MINUTES

April 27, 2010 Regular MPC Board Meeting

Members Present: Shedrick Coleman, Chairman
J. Adam Ragsdale, Vice-Chairman
Jon Pannell, Secretary
Lacy Manigault, Treasurer
Ben Farmer
Stephen Lufburrow
Timothy Mackey
Tanya Milton
Susan Myers
Jon Todd
Joseph Welch

Members Not Present: Russ Abolt
Michael Brown
Ellis Cook

Staff Present: Thomas Thomson, P.E. AICP, Executive Director
Melony West, CPA, Director, Finance & Systems
James Hansen, AICP, Director, Development Services
Gary Plumbley, Development Services Planner
Marcus Lotson, Development Services Planner
Christy Adams, Director, Administration
Bri Finau, Administrative Assistant
Shanale Booker, Administrative/IT Assistant
Dennis Hutton, AICP, Director of Comprehensive Planning
Michael Adams, Transportation Planner

Advisory Staff Present: Randolph Scott, City Zoning Administrator

I. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

II. INVOCATION

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. NOTICES, PROCLAMATIONS and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Notice(s)

1. [May 18, 2010 Regular MPC Meeting at 1:30 P.M. in the Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room, 112 East State Street.](#)

Proclamation(s)

2. [Resolution of Appreciation for Michael B. Brown, City Manager](#)

Mr. Coleman presented the proclamation plaque for Michael Brown.

Whereas, Michael B. Brown has served as a member of the Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission from January of 1995 through April of 2010; and

Whereas, Mr. Brown moved from the position of City Manager of Columbus, Georgia, from 1989 to 1994, to serve as City Manager for the City of Savannah, a position which he has held for a total of fifteen years; and

Whereas, Prior to such service, Mr. Brown served as Assistant City Manager of Savannah for nine years; and

Whereas, Mr. Brown distinguished himself during these periods of service through his leadership abilities, his profound understanding of the complexities and nuances of the numerous issues which have come before the Commission, his vision for the Commission, and his dedication to the betterment of this community; and

Whereas, Mr. Brown was a key motivator and guide in the establishment of many of this community's most significant regulations, community facilities and services, having helped to steer the steps of the community progress in positive directions; and

Whereas, Mr. Brown brought to the Commission extraordinary abilities, education and training, along with an uncanny ability to go straight to the heart of an issue; and

Whereas, Mr. Brown has earned the admiration and respect of his fellow Commissioners, the Elected Officials of this community, and those citizens with whom he came into contact and on whose behalf he worked so diligently; and

Whereas, Mr. Brown's tenure on the Commission is concluded, after fifteen years to accept the County Manager position in Arlington, Virginia.

Now therefore be it resolved, that the Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission does hereby express its grateful appreciation to Michael B. Brown for his dedication, leadership and service to this Commission and to the citizens of Chatham County and the City of Savannah.

Be it further resolved that the Commission members extend to Mr. Brown its thanks for a job well done and its best wishes for the future.

Unanimously adopted this 27th day of April 2010.

Marty Johnson, Director of the Savannah Civic Center, accepted the proclamation and thanked the MPC on behalf of Mr. Brown. Ms. Johnson expressed Mr. Brown's regret for not being able to attend the meeting.

V. PRESENTATIONS

3. [Healthy Savannah Community Forum - Dennis Hutton, Director of Comprehensive Planning](#)

Attachment: [Thomson Planning Commission, Re; Healthy Savannah - Community Forum 042710.pdf](#)

Mr. Dennis Hutton, Director of Comprehensive Planning, presented the following information regarding the Healthy Savannah Community Forum:

Healthy Savannah is a partnership of over 120 local organizations convened 3 years ago by Mayor Otis Johnson. A community forum will take place on April 29, 2010 at the Savannah Civic Center from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The purpose is to encourage citizens to take responsibility for their own health and community. Dr. Evelyn Lewis, motivational speaker, will speak on health disparities. Other local speakers will present information regarding transportation and health, intelligent civic master planning and health, beneficial effects of better nutrition, and elimination of tobacco usage.

All are invited to attend.

VI. ITEM(S) REQUESTED TO BE REMOVED FROM THE FINAL AGENDA

Zoning Petition - Map Amendment

4. [12214 Deerfield Road](#)

Board Action:

The applicant has requested for this item to be continued to the July 20, 2010 MPC meeting. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Adam Ragsdale

Second: Stephen Lufburrow

Russ Abolt	- Not Present
Michael Brown	- Not Present
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Ellis Cook	- Not Present
Ben Farmer	- Aye
Stephen Lufburrow	- Aye
Timothy Mackey	- Aye
Lacy Manigault	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Susan Myers	- Aye
Jon Pannell	- Aye
Adam Ragsdale	- Aye
Jon Todd	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye

5. [911 West 37th Street Zoning - R-4 to RM-25](#)

Attachment: [VICINITYMAP.pdf](#)

Attachment: [TAXMAP.pdf](#)

Attachment: [ZONINGMAP.pdf](#)

Attachment: [AERIALMAP.pdf](#)

Attachment: [staff rpt.pdf](#)

Board Action:

The applicant has requested to postpone petition to the May 18, 2010 MPC meeting. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Jon Todd

Second: Stephen Lufburrow

Russ Abolt	- Not Present
Michael Brown	- Not Present
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Ellis Cook	- Not Present
Ben Farmer	- Aye
Stephen Lufburrow	- Aye
Timothy Mackey	- Aye
Lacy Manigault	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Susan Myers	- Aye
Jon Pannell	- Aye
Adam Ragsdale	- Aye

Jon Todd	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye

The Consent Agenda consists of items for which the applicant is in agreement with the staff recommendation and for which no known objections have been identified nor anticipated by staff. Any objections raised at the meeting will result in the item being moved to the Regular Agenda. At a 12:30 briefing, the staff will brief the Commission on Consent Agenda items and, time permitting, Regular Agenda items. No testimony will be taken from applicants, supporters or opponents, and no votes will be taken at the briefing.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of MPC Meeting Minutes and Briefing Minutes

6. [Approval of April 6, 2010 MPC Meeting Minutes and Briefing Minutes](#)

Attachment: [04.06.10 MPC BRIEFING MINUTES.pdf](#)

Attachment: [04.06.10 MINUTES.pdf](#)

Board Action:

Recommend **APPROVAL** of the MPC Meeting and Briefing Minutes as submitted. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Stephen Lufburrow

Second: Adam Ragsdale

Russ Abolt - Not Present

Michael Brown - Not Present

Shedrick Coleman - Aye

Ellis Cook - Not Present

Ben Farmer - Aye

Stephen Lufburrow - Aye

Timothy Mackey - Aye

Lacy Manigault - Aye

Tanya Milton - Aye

Susan Myers - Aye

Jon Pannell - Aye

Adam Ragsdale - Aye

Jon Todd - Aye

Joseph Welch - Aye

Authorization(s)

7. [Authorize the Executive Director to execute a contract with Hussey, Gay, Bell & DeYoung for American Recovery Act of 2009 \(ARRA\) Contract FY 2010.](#)

Attachment: [Thomson Planning Commission, Re: Contract with Hussey, Gay,](#)

[Bell & DeYoung SR 21 Corridor Study 042710.pdf](#)

Board Action:

Recommend **Approval** for the Executive Director to execute a contract with Hussey, Gay, Bell & DeYoung for \$750,000 of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funds for the SR 21 Corridor Study. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Jon Todd

Second: Jon Pannell

Russ Abolt	- Not Present
Michael Brown	- Not Present
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Ellis Cook	- Not Present
Ben Farmer	- Aye
Stephen Lufburrow	- Aye
Timothy Mackey	- Aye
Lacy Manigault	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Susan Myers	- Aye
Jon Pannell	- Aye
Adam Ragsdale	- Aye
Jon Todd	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye

8. [Authorize the Executive Director to execute a contract with Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. for American Recovery Act of 2009 \(ARRA\) Contract FY 2010.](#)

Attachment: [Thomson Planning Commission, Re: Contract with Jacobs Engineering Group SR 21 042710.pdf](#)

Board Action:

Recommend **Approval** for the Executive Director to execute a contract with Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. for \$715,000 of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funds for the SR 204 Corridor Study. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Jon Todd

Second: Jon Pannell

Russ Abolt	- Not Present
Michael Brown	- Not Present
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye

Ellis Cook	- Not Present
Ben Farmer	- Aye
Stephen Lufburrow	- Aye
Timothy Mackey	- Aye
Lacy Manigault	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Susan Myers	- Aye
Jon Pannell	- Aye
Adam Ragsdale	- Aye
Jon Todd	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye

9. Authorize the Executive Director to execute a contract with Wilbur Smith Associates, Inc. for American Recovery Act of 2009 (ARRA) Contract FY 2010.

Attachment: [Thomson Planning Commission, Re; Contract with Wilbur Smith Associates US 80 042710.pdf](#)

Board Action:

Recommend **Approval** for the Executive Director to execute a contract with Wilbur Smith Associates, Inc. for \$250,000 of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funds for the US 80 Bridges Replacement Study. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Jon Todd
Second: Jon Pannell
Russ Abolt - Not Present
Shedrick Coleman - Aye
Ben Farmer - Aye
Stephen Lufburrow - Aye
Timothy Mackey - Aye
Lacy Manigault - Aye
Tanya Milton - Aye
Susan Myers - Aye
Michael Brown - Not Present
Ellis Cook - Not Present
Jon Pannell - Aye
Adam Ragsdale - Aye
Jon Todd - Aye
Joseph Welch - Aye

Zoning Petition - Text Amendment

10. Amendment to Savannah Zoning Ordinance Section 8-3025 (b) Use number 62

(locksmith, gunsmith and similar activities)

Attachment: [02-27-10 STAFF REPORT Z-100324-41527-2 Text Amendment.pdf](#)

Board Action:

The MPC staff recommends **approval** of the petitioner's request of a text amendment to the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance for the purpose of allowing use number 62 (locksmith, gunsmith and similar activities) as a permitted use in the B-C (Community Business) district. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Jon Todd

Second: Stephen Lufburrow

Russ Abolt	- Not Present
Michael Brown	- Not Present
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Ellis Cook	- Not Present
Ben Farmer	- Aye
Stephen Lufburrow	- Aye
Timothy Mackey	- Aye
Lacy Manigault	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Susan Myers	- Aye
Jon Pannell	- Aye
Adam Ragsdale	- Aye
Jon Todd	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye

VIII. ITEMS MOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

IX. OLD BUSINESS

Zoning Petition - Map Amendment

11. [Amended zoning request for 199, 201, 203, 205 and one unaddressed parcel on Lathrop Ave.](#)

Attachment: [Aerial.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Tax Map.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Site Photo.pdf](#)

Attachment: [EXISTING R-4 USES.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Proposed RB-1 USES.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Zoning Map.pdf](#)
Attachment: [Staff Report 042710.pdf](#)

Petitioner: A. Fox Construction
Request: Rezone from R-4 to RB-1
Address: 199, 201, 203, 205 and one unaddressed parcel on Lathrop Avenue
Acres: .48
City Council District: 1
County Commission District: 8
MPC File NO. Z-09127-40110-2

MPC Project Planner: Marcus Lotson

Mr. Lotson presented the petitioner's request to rezone five existing R-4 residential parcels to RB-1. At the April 6, 2010 hearing of the MPC, the Board granted a continuance so that consideration of additional properties could be made in order to facilitate development. The three properties north of Richards Lane were part of the original petition and staff recommended denial of the request rezoning due to the size of the lots and the adjacency to a residential neighborhood. Since that time, the petitioner has acquired two of the three properties south of Richards Lane. The acquisition of the two lots south of the lane provides the opportunity to create a more viable development.

A sixth lot at the corner of East Lathrop and Love Streets is not a part of the petition for rezoning. This causes concern for Staff because the properties to the north in the current configuration could be developed commercially and if the properties to the south of the lane were rezoned, it could also be developed commercially. It is the opinion of Staff that the acquisition of the two properties to the south opens the opportunity to create a commercial development with a commercial building on the north side of Richards Lane and principal use to the south of the lane. Therefore, staff recommends that the petition as submitted be denied. Alternatively, it is recommended that the lots on the north side of Richards Lane be rezoned from R-4 to RB-1 and the lots on the south side remain R-4, although they can be used for parking for the development on the northern lots.

Mr. Farmer asked what exactly is being voted on.

Mr. Coleman stated the Staff recommendation is to deny the petitioner's request as submitted for the five lots but approve of Staff's alternative recommendation to rezone the three lots to the north of Richards Lane.

Mr. Lufburrow stated he was concerned about the lots north of Richards Lane that if rezoning is recommended, it could cause the area south of Richards Lane to be rezoned and result in more business-types of rezoning. This may put pressure on some of the residents.

Mr. Lotson stated the other properties along Lathrop toward Augusta Avenue

were reviewed. Initially, it was determined unnecessary to bring those properties into this petition. However, given the types of uses on the other side of Lathrop, those other residential properties could be eventually pressured to be rezoned to some other use. There is some concern as to whether Lathrop is a commercial corridor or residential; it appears to be transitioning.

Mr. Lufburrow asked what does the Future Land Use Map label that area.

Mr. Lotson stated the area south of Richard Street is traditional residential in the Future Land Use Map.

Ms. Myers asked is there a 'Traditional Business' use in the Future Land Use Map.

Mr. Lotson said there is a 'Neighborhood Business'.

Ms. Myers asked is this not more of a transitional type zoning into the residential areas?

Mr. Lotson stated there are heavily residential areas. Some of the lots on the east side of Lathrop are industrial. The properties that front Lathrop are primarily residential and we want to respect what is there today. However, it could be argued a transition is needed along Lathrop between the light industrial and the residential properties.

Mr. Mackey stated he is leery of changing it because people live there now.

Mr. Coleman said the relationship of residential and industrial in the area is not new. Though it could be argued the industrial across the street has always functioned that way, to go into the residential side would be an intrusion. There was never any impetus to change and we need to listen and get as much information as possible before changes are made.

Ms. Milton stated it was always a mixed use area. She stated she wanted clarification on the Staff's alternate recommendation and how it fits into the Future Land Use.

Mr. Lotson stated that the Future Land Use Comprehensive Plan recommends the area south and west of Richards and Lathrop remain residential. In regard to the recommendation, it is to recommend denial of the petitioner's request to rezone all five properties to RB-1 and alternatively rezone all properties north of Richards Lane to maintain the two properties south of Richards Lane. The two southern properties can be a part of the development as they are zoned now.

Mr. Coleman asked if we make zoning changes that are different; doesn't the Comprehensive Plan have to be amended as well?

Mr. Lotson replied yes, that was correct.

Mr. Lufburrow what does the area north of Richards Lane call for in the Future Land Use Comprehensive Plan?

Mr. Lotson it would be all be residential.

Ms. Janice Fox, petitioner, stated they are happy with the recommendation rezoning for the three properties. She stated they did not agree with the recommendation of parking only for the other two properties, thereby making it a parking lot. An additional Staff recommendation was that the parking would be a transition between the commercial building and the residential. We suggest the Commission revisit the denial of the petition because we are speaking futuristically and can utilize other buffers or setbacks. We do not agree to utilize the two lots only for parking without the ability to be developed.

Mr. Pannell asked what are the plans for the lots. Is it necessary to rezone the two southern lots to do accomplish your plan?

Ms. Fox stated we petitioned for the three properties for a small commercial property; the issue was additional parking was needed. She stated staff recommended acquiring the two additional lots and resubmit the petition with all lots included. There are no plans now; the lots are there for parking but they don't want to agree that both lots will be for parking only. Portions of it will be utilized to suffice the need for now, which is the development of the three lots. We don't want to state today that the two lots will never be used for any other purpose.

Mr. Pannell stated he did understand that to be what Staff meant. The reason to deny rezoning of the two southern lots was because it was not all three lots in the block. The Staff does not want to rezone for light industrial use next to residential.

Ms. Fox stated they are requesting what they understood was proposed to them by Staff.

Mr. Pannell stated if Staff recommendation is accepted, it will remain R-4 and currently it cannot be used for parking.

Mr. Farmer asked what was planned for the lots.

Ms. Fox stated Staff has the preliminary plans; it's a small commercial building.

Mr. Farmer asked what could go there. With all of the setbacks, how big will the building be?

Ms. Fox stated she does not have all of that information with her.

Mr. Aaron Fox, petitioner, stated it was retail use.

Mr. Coleman stated whatever they are planning will have to meet the development standards. The specific plans are not needed at this time because they could change in the future.

Mr. Farmer stated he understood both sides; he wanted to consider the pros and cons of a possible domino effect.

Ms. Fox stated they are attempting to bring economics back into the community. It will be an opportunity for local, small businesses in West Savannah.

Mr. Randolph Scott, City Zoning Administrator, stated Mr. Pannell used the term 'light industrial'. The RB-1 states there would not be any type of light industrial use and it is a transitional zoning.

Mr. Coleman stated the size of the development is not the issue; what the zoning creates for the future use of the neighborhood is the issue. Any zoning changes will create a change in character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Mackey asked Mr. Thomson if the West Savannah Land Use Plan was adopted with the understanding of changes as being proposed were to be considered.

Mr. Thomson replied it was adopted with the goal of not having any non-residential parcels south of Richards. The Comprehensive Plan drew the line at Richards Street to separate the business and residential zones, recognizing the light industrial zone to the east of the area. The Goody-Clancy Study was implemented by the MPC. Staff has been consistent, including the recommendation to deny the first zoning petition. However, after meeting with the Commission and the City Manager, Staff was encouraged to re-evaluate the area and consider the possibility of the Fox's request. The concern of Staff was if all five lots were zoned for retail, there would be the opportunity to put two retail buildings because two of the lots were separated by a lane from the other three lots. Staff believes that would not meet basic site requirements and did not want to create a position of failure. The Staff's recommendation moves them cautiously to their goal while being sensitive to the needs of residential neighbors.

Mr. Mackey stated all of planning meetings for West Savannah, there were no objections to the Plan as it is and as it was adopted. If every time someone wants to change the plan, what is the need of having a plan? Mr. Mackey stated from his point of view, it was clear to all and it was taken to Council, who also approved it. But if we keep going back and changing what was put in place, what is the need of having anything put in place?

Mr. Ragsdale stated if the Board is considering this, the Board should look at amending the Future Land Use Plan as well. Where will the line stop moving southward? If it was previously decided that south of Richard Street was to be residential and change of that is being contemplated needs to be addressed first.

Individual zoning and rezoning requests could be heard at that point. Until the southern border is determined, that needs to be considered first.

Ms. Pamela Howard - Oglesby, area resident, thanked Mr. Scott for correcting that light industrial is not on the western side of Lathrop. She agreed with Mr. Mackey regarding making changes in the area. She stated it is different from the Midtown and Thomas Square rezoning. She stated Lathrop needs to be looked at and a determination needs to be made regarding what's going to happen in that area. She stated that south of Richards is 'bad property' that will eventually transition out. Now is the opportunity to do something economically sound on East Lathrop that can support the residential houses in the immediate area. She stated one of residents stated to her that a store in the area would be helpful. This is the midpoint of the neighborhood which is predominately residential with no retail to support it. Even though the Fellwood frontage will be make it a mixed usage, there is a question of whether the residents will be able to afford the rent to start their own small business and grow. She stated the residents are trying to establish themselves to economically support their own neighborhoods conveniently and to reduce the distance of having to go to Bay Street for small conveniences.

Mr. Todd stated there are 18 lots that front East Lathrop. He asked if she would support similar zoning all the way down the frontage.

Ms. Howard - Oglesby stated yes, for transitioning out the residential. People have lived there for years, but at what point do we as responsible people look at the situation and realize the current state is not good? The homes on the south are filled with renters that come and go. The homes will deteriorate slowly, so transition slowly.

Mr. Scott stated that Lathrop a secondary arterial street.

Ms. Fox responded to Mr. Mackey by reading from the current Georgia code, "While the Future Land Use Map is not intended to dictate specific activities on individual parcels of land. It is not enforceable in and of itself. It should indicate that community's preferences for the general locations of land uses are consistent with the needs, goals, and policies developed in other elements of the plan."

Mr. Mackey stated he intends to vote no and his mind will not change.

Ms. Fox agreed that he had that right and the code came from 11-110-2-4 Minimal Local Planning Standards of Georgia Code.

Mr. Ragsdale motioned to continue with acceptance from the applicant, so that the Future Land Use Map can be properly reviewed and determined if amendment is needed, in order to accommodate the use along East Lathrop Avenue.

Mr. Thomson stated the public would be involved in the review.

Mr. Todd agreed with doing the process correctly yet extended caution for those in neighborhood to be careful of what you ask for. After considering the setbacks, there is not much developable room left on the property for a sizeable business to operate. Then the variances will ensue, resulting in additional encroachment in the residential neighborhood.

Mr. Manigault stated it is not the responsibility of the Board to change neighborhood; the Board is only to recommend what the neighborhood thinks they can live with. He suggested reviewing the Future Land Use Map.

Board Action:

Postpone Item - to review and amend Land Use as appropriate for area and petition. Possible hearing - PASS on June 8, 2010 MPC Meeting.

Vote Results

Motion: Adam Ragsdale

Second: Timothy Mackey

Ben Farmer	- Aye
Stephen Lufburrow	- Aye
Timothy Mackey	- Aye
Lacy Manigault	- Aye
Tanya Milton	- Aye
Susan Myers	- Aye
Jon Pannell	- Aye
Adam Ragsdale	- Aye
Jon Todd	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye
Russ Abolt	- Not Present
Michael Brown	- Not Present
Shedrick Coleman	- Aye
Ellis Cook	- Not Present

X. REGULAR BUSINESS

Amended Master Plan / General Development Plan

12. [Savannah Highlands - Phase 2](#)

Attachment: [staff rpt.pdf](#)

Attachment: [20100422112950124.pdf](#)

Savannah Highlands (Highlands at Godley Station - Tract L)
Highlands Boulevard
Sunburst Properties, Inc., Owner

Chad Zittrouer, Agent
Aldermanic District: 1
County Commission District: 7
PIN: 2-1016 -02-021 (portion)
MPC File No. M-100304-87268-2
MPC Reference File No. M-050413-38354-2 and S-070618-36237-2

Jim Hansen, MPC Project Planner

Variations are requested for lot width and lot area.

Mr. Todd mentioned to the Board and public that he is in an independent contractor for Landmark 24 Realty, which is a subsidiary of Landmark 24 Development. Per Mr. Todd, Landmark 24 Development sold this tract but there is no current affiliation with him and the petitioner.

Mr. Hansen presented the petition to the Board. The request is to amend the master plan for Savannah Highlands. It was amended previously for a townhome provision. The current request is an amendment to that plan to allow for a partial townhome development (four are currently built) with the remaining to-be-developed lots as single-family detached structures (40' width; 4,000 feet in area). To accommodate this request, the petitioner is requesting two variations: a 20' lot width variance from the required 60', and a 2,000 square foot lot area variance from the required 6,000 square foot lot. The MPC staff recommends that the requested master plan amendment be denied. Further, it is recommended that the requested lot width and lot area variations be denied. Though there has been no public feedback, there is still concern that the character of the 40' lot is not in character with the overall development of the area. The MPC Staff did recommend support of a 45' lot and/or development of rear-loading (rear lane access to the lots). An additional concern is that a 40' wide lot is nothing more than a small garage; the style of the structures to be built on the property is too small.

Mr. Chad Zittrouer, engineer with Kern-Coleman representing the petitioner, stated there is 50' buffer separating the multi-family and the 60' lots. The purpose of the buffer is to differentiate the two areas which allows the petitioner to offer different options for potential buyers. The initial master plan called for 91 townhome units; currently, 20 have been built. The proposed plan replaces the remaining 71 units with 45 detached units on 40' lots. He stated the petitioner has reduced his density by 63%, which is why they do not want the 45'. He requested not looking at it as strictly a variance, but recognize they are increasing the townhome lots by 33%, which is an upgrade. This reduces the need to build an entire 8-unit building; the same size unit can be built individually as needed. He believes the required front-loaded 40' lots do not have a detrimental affect.

Mr. Lufburrow stated he is concerned about products that don't last the test of time and possibly creating blight down the road. This particular size lot with front-loading houses has been problematic in the past and that may be the

concern of the Staff. There are some that have already bought lots based on the existing decision of the Board.

Mr. Farmer stated the line between attached and detached homes have been blurred. The land value will be so low of a 40' lot with a detached house that there will little difference between townhomes and single-family detached. From an aesthetic point of view, it looks better than garage-shaped houses. He stated he is not in favor of 40' wide single-family detached lots. Putting the garages in the back helps it visually and using 45' lots helps also.

Mr. Zittrouer stated they would lose about five lots if they use 45' lots in this phase.

Mr. Manigault asked what is the difference in the cost of the 40' lot with a house versus a townhouse?

Mr. Zittrouer explained because it is a subdivision with an existing infrastructure, he stands to recoup a portion of the money invested in 45 lots. The lot value is not going up based on the acreage of the smaller lot. He stated he is 'eating' the majority of the five lots.

Mr. Manigault asked if you continue to build townhouses, they won't be sold. Money will still be lost because inventory does not make money.

Mr. Zittrouer stated he could go to a different style of townhome such as single level, or no garages in an effort to recoup some money.

Mr. Manigault asked if existing homes on the larger lots to the back of the development?

Mr. Zittrouer stated there are 20 homes on 60' lots.

Mr. Manigault asked if the smaller homes would be in front of the larger, more expensive homes, wouldn't that be harder to sell?

Mr. Zittrouer stated no; there are separate access roads for the smaller front homes and the larger back ones.

Mr. Coleman stated the character of townhomes will be different than any single-family development. The density argument is inappropriate. The character of single-family homes on 40' lots will not give the character that townhomes provide as a development regarding the integrity of the neighborhood. We need to consider quality of life beyond the initial investment. The people that live there later on will have to live with the decisions the developer and planning board make. It is important to consider how it will look as a complete development and not as individual lots. Rear lane access is one of the ways to mitigate those concerns about width. There is no intent to place undue burden on the developer but consider the petitioner is requesting the Board to take a serious step backward on the lot size that have already had problems. Nothing is different, just a lot size is being changed.

Criteria has to be addressed and considered.

Mr. Sam Walker, petitioner, stated that due to concerns of the Board a delay may be necessary. He stated the homes are very desirable and cute; not a garage that one would see in the front. He stated the townhouses were not selling until they were sold below cost.

Mr. Coleman stated sometimes what is brought in on paper is different in reality. He thanked Mr. Walker for his willingness to delay this petition, and stated he could not guarantee it would sway the position of the Board but it would be considered with anything presented.

Mr. Farmer asked are they different phases? There must be covenants and restrictions in the first phase and some have already bought the properties. How will that be managed?

Mr. Walker stated these will have different covenants and restrictions from the single-family community; it is separate phase.

Mr. Farmer stated you could sell the lots to someone else. If they are rezoned as 40' lots and the plans may not be what actually ends up on the lots. The concern is that you are very limited as to what can be done on a 40' lot. If the lots are not worth much, then five less lots will not break you.

Mr. Coleman recommended the petitioner work with Staff for a favorable recommendation.

Board Action:

Postpone Item - May 18, 2010 meeting for petitioner to readjust petition request with staff consultation. - PASS

Vote Results

Motion: Ben Farmer

Second: Tanya Milton

Russ Abolt - Not Present

Michael Brown - Not Present

Shedrick Coleman - Aye

Ellis Cook - Not Present

Ben Farmer - Aye

Stephen Lufburrow - Aye

Timothy Mackey - Not Present

Lacy Manigault - Aye

Tanya Milton - Aye

Susan Myers - Aye

Jon Pannell - Aye

Adam Ragsdale	- Aye
Jon Todd	- Aye
Joseph Welch	- Aye

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

XII. ADJOURNMENT

13. [Submittal](#)

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the April 27, 2010 Regular MPC Meeting adjourned at 3:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas L. Thomson
Executive Director

The Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission provides meeting summary minutes which are adopted by the respective Board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.