

**MINUTES
TOWN OF PITTSBORO
PLANNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 5, 2012 7:00 PM**

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Kenneth Hoyle, John Clifford, Shannon Plummer, Alfreda Alston, Rob Butler, Bob Mc Connaughey

Members Absent: Karl Shaffer, Raeford Bland.

Staff Present: Stuart Bass, Planning Director. Ileana Platon, Administrative Support Specialist. Paul Messick, Town Attorney.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kenneth Hoyle called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and requested a brief moment of silence.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 6, 2012

Motion made by Mr. Hoyle for approval of the minutes of February 6, 2012. Mr. Plummer requested a spelling correction on page eight.

Mr. Clifford made motion for approval, Mr. Butler seconded; approved unanimously.

Chairman Hoyle advised that Mr. Bland and Mr. Shaffer will be absent tonight. Present tonight is alternate Mr. Rob Butler and Bob McConnaughey.

C. OLD BUSINESS

None presented.

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Proposed Subdivision Development – Cornwallis Commons

Mr. Bass presented the Board with a proposal that was brought forth for a different style of subdivision development called Pocket Neighborhoods or Cottage Houses. The living units are clustered around an open space that is common to the subdivision. He has attached three articles obtained from the internet describing this style of development. The property owner and the design team of this development are present tonight and would like to give a presentation of their concept.

Mike Dasher, the property owner introduced himself to the Board and also introduced Taylor Hobbs, Architect and Brad Rhinehalt, Consulting Engineer.

Mr. Dasher provided information on his credentials as a Contractor that has worked mostly with non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity in Durham and Wake counties and Builders of Hope. He explained to the board that the property was purchased by his parents to build their home. On December 2011 they began constructions of the home and ran water and sewer lines into the property. The home is almost completed and now they want to do something with the remaining land. The idea is to build a Pocket Neighborhood popularized by an architect named Bross Chafin from the Seattle area. This is a group of neighboring houses gathered around shared space with a clear sense of territory and stewardship. The idea is that you know when you are entering the neighborhood, an area that is cared for by the surrounding home owners. Benefits of a Pocket neighborhood are smaller footprints allowing for preservation of natural resources, more share and less disturbed space. This is a housing alternative that allows for a more sense of community; houses face a lawn and not a street. It provides a missing middle between a high density multifamily arrangement and a sprawling single family subdivision. At this time Mr. Dasher was presenting a slide show providing a visual of the homes and the plans of the neighborhood. The slides showed a visual of some common design patterns and the shared space. Mr. Dasher continued by saying that an active common lawn is an active space not an area to be looked at. On that space there can be gathering places like a community building, benches, play areas or trails. One common idea is the layering of spaces, meaning that you go from a shared space to a personal space. Another common design pattern is the idea of limited vehicular access. Isolated parking creates some preserved space for living. These homes do not provide the ability to park your car in your driveway or attached garage, the parking is kept out of the living area.

Mr. Hoyle asked where in the map were the houses built for Habitat of Humanity and Mr. Dasher provided a brief description of the entire surrounding area.

Questions were asked by **Mr. Clifford** and **Ms. Alston** on which roads would access the property.

Mr. Dasher advised that it would be Cornwallis Road through 15-501 and another through Moncure Road.

Mr. Dasher explained that the projects' prospective is to do something different based on the stands of the housing market and his own desire and preference to do something that has not been done in this area. To work with the site's natural features and to limit without disturbing the surrounding area. With his background and interest in design and architecture he would like to offer something that is unique and can benefit small spaces. The proposed site plan shows that the property runs all the way to Roberson Creek.

Mr. Plummer asked about the size of the land parcel the amount of homes and zoning.

Mr. Dasher responded that the parcel was 3.3 acres, twelve homes were designed.

Mr. Bass stated that the area is zoned R-12, this is an obstacle and that is why he wanted to present the information to the board. Text amendments would have to be done to specifically describe this kind of development and allow it. At this time the smallest lot size allowed is 12,000 feet.

Mr. Plummer continued by asking if the homes get deeded individually to each owner and if there is an Association that shares the common space.

Mr. Dasher's response was yes and the Association pays the taxes for the common area.

Mr. Hoyle said this reminds his very much of Southern Village in Chapel Hill.

Mr. Hobbs explained that the size of each home lot would be 45 X70, but it varies, some are larger. The homes are placed in an east side direction primarily for solar access, this would be the first concept of this kind in Chatham County.

Mr. Clifford then asked about the house being built on part of the property which is more of a traditional conventional type structure and if this project was thought of after this house was constructed.

Mr. Dasher explained that his parents wanted to have a home that sat on a traditional legal lot.

Mr. Hoyle asked Mr. Bass how many feet is the required buff off Roberson Creek. The response from Mr. Bass was a 50 feet buff.

Mr. Butler questioned if this amount of homes on three acres could be permitted through a text amendment.

Mr. Bass said that the idea would be to look at some other ordinances throughout the country and draft a text amendment where this type of development would be permitted.

Chairman Hoyle questioned the vegetation on the property and if they would preserve as much as possible, also with the houses being as close as they are had it been taken under consideration that there needs to be easy access for Fire Trucks and Emergency vehicles.

He was advised by **Mr. Dasher** that the vegetation would be mostly trees and a large amount would be preserved, by keeping the housing units in three distinctive lines it enables them to preserve more. In reference to the Fire Trucks and Emergency vehicles they have had considerable conversations with the Fire Marshall and Chief and they have been very helpful in providing feedback and this plan incorporates their feedback. Some of their recommendations are wider entrance drives for radius per truck, a new fire hydrant near the courtyard and the discussion of sprinklers in some of the houses.

Mr. Hoyle then asked Mr. Bass how does the concept of building this many number of units relate to our moratorium since it is similar to a sub division.

Mr. Bass responded that it would be part of the allocation process as it stands now; it is right at the threshold of a three bedroom home. It just changed last December to fifty four hundred gallons.

Mr. Plummer asked how soon would they be submitting the formal application and **Mr. Dasher's** response was very close and feels very comfortable with the current layout. The purpose to introduce this idea is to get feedback from the planning board before they move forward with any big and expensive designs.

Mr. Hoyle considers it a good concept, it was a very interesting presentation but the main concern is the protection of Roberson Creek.

Mr. Plummer also liked the presentation and the idea of a close community where everyone would know each other in the neighborhood but wants to make sure that the board is cautious and does not create a text amendment which allows anyone who owns three acres to build twelve houses on it.

Mr. Bass said some of the examples he has looked at limits the number of houses allowed. The challenge now is to craft something that fits the concept of the builders and also protects properties and places in the future.

At this time **Mr. Butler** asked if the number of units could be reduced if twelve is not a feasible number on that parcel of land.

Mr. Dasher said with the traditional cult de sac arrangement they could do between six to eight units and showed other plans with less home sites.

Mr. Hoyle inquired about the parking and where its location would be and if it included handicap parking.

Mr. Dasher advised him that the parking would be in the front and they would dedicate some spaces for handicap parking. In addition the way they have the plans arranged they would have one covered parking and one uncovered parking space per unit.

Mr. Plummer then asked if each home owner would have a roll out garbage container or would there be a main dumpster and recycle bin.

The response from **Mr. Dasher** was that they could assign a fenced in area by the drive specifically for that purpose.

Chairman Hoyle asked if there were any more questions and since there were none he thanked Mr. Dasher and his associated for their presentation and wished them luck. He then addressed Mr. Bass and asked if he had any summation in regards to the presentation at question.

Mr. Bass informed that the next step would be to draft some text to allow this to happen and bring it to the planning board to work on the details.

E. BOARD MEMBER CONCERNS

Mr. Plummer asked where they were at in regards to the land use plan. Mr. Bass stated he met with Paul Horne Triangle J COG and gave them the draft version of the land use plan that was submitted and copies of everybody's comments. They are going to help with the edits, presentation of the documents and comments then they will put the whole thing together.

Mr. Bass then provided the board with the future land use categories for review. In reference to the Tattoo & Gaming ordinance it will be place on the agenda at the Public meeting on March 26.

Mr. Shannon had some questions about the Small Street Bed and Breakfast specifically the storage unit in the back. He thought that unit was for storage and heard they may be converting it into three rental cottages. He also wanted to know if they were allowed to run a restaurant and asked if once a site plan is submitted could it be changed afterward.

Mr. Bass advised that a site plan has a one year time frame.

Mr. Hoyle commented that his belief was that the building on the back was for storage and is quite sure that a restaurant was not approved by the board and suggested they go back and review the minutes.

Mr. Messick explained that the location is on a C-2 zoning and they can't prohibit a restaurant, also a site plan is for structures not for use.

F. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Planning Board meeting was scheduled for Monday, April 2, 2012 at 7p.m.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Hoyle asked for motion to adjourn, **Ms. Alston** made motion to adjourn.

Mr. Clifford seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

