

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Voller and Town of Pittsboro Board of Commissioners

FROM: Stuart Bass, Town Planner
Fred Royal, Town Engineer
Paul Horne, Parks Planner
Bryan Gruesbeck, Town Manager

SUBJECT: REZ-2013- 02
Chatham Park LLC
Public Hearing

DATE: July 18, 2013

Introduction

Staff has reviewed the Chatham Park Planned Development District Master Plan, dated May 2013 and has met on several occasions with Chatham Park LLC representative, Philip Culpepper to discuss the Master Plan. We most recently met on Thursday, July 18th, 2013.

Background

Chatham Park LLC is proposing to rezone approximately 7,000 acres of land within the Town's Extraterritorial Planning Jurisdiction. The property is primarily vacant and undeveloped, located on the eastern side of Pittsboro. The proposed development would house around 50,000 people at full build out, increasing the population of Pittsboro 12 and half fold.

Current zoning districts associated with the property include Highway Commercial, Conditional Use (C-2 CU), Highway Commercial (C2), Mixed Use Planned Development (MUPD), Residential-Agricultural (RA), Residential-Agricultural 2 Acres (RA-2), Residential-Agricultural 5 Acres (R-A5).

The request is to apply the Planned Development District (PDD) to the property.

This district is established and intended to promote innovative land planning, design and layout of large development projects that may not otherwise be permitted under general zoning district standards, subdivision regulations, or other development requirements. (The words “standards”, “requirements”, and “regulations” are used interchangeably in Article V when referring to development standards). The PDD district promotes innovative land planning, design and layout by:

- (1) Reducing or eliminating the inflexibility that sometimes results from strict application of zoning and development standards or regulations that were designed primarily for individual lots;
- (2) Allowing greater freedom in selecting the means to provide access, light, open space, and design amenities;
- (3) Allowing greater freedom for a broad mix of various land uses in the same development;
- (4) Promoting quality urban design and environmentally sensitive development by allowing development to take advantage of special site characteristics, locations, and land uses;
- (5) Encouraging quality urban design by allowing higher densities when such increases are supported by superior design or the provision of additional amenities; and
- (6) Advancing public health, safety and general welfare.

In return for greater flexibility, planned developments in this district are expected to deliver communities of exceptional design, character and quality that preserve critical environmental resources and provide open space amenities. Such communities incorporate creative design in the layout of buildings, open space, and circulation; assure compatibility with surrounding land uses and neighborhood character; and provide greater efficiency in the layout and provision of roads, utilities, and other infrastructure. Because flexibility is essential for the development of such communities, variations from otherwise applicable regulations and standards may be granted with the adoption of the required Planned Development District Master Plan (PDD Master Plan).

The intent of the Master Plan is demonstrate how the proposed development would satisfy the specific requirements and broad intent of the PDD Zoning District

A Public Hearing is scheduled for July 22, 2013.

Staff Input

Based on our review and discussions, staff has the following general comments that may warrant further discussion with the Town Board of Commissioners if so desired:

1. The Town has identified anticipated or potential ordinances that, when they become effective, should be referenced for inclusion in the PDD: Stormwater Ordinance for New Development, Sedimentation and Erosion Control, Tree Protection Ordinance.
2. Discussion of the NCDOT Complete Streets Design Manual as a design standard to help identify the meaning of the term “superior design”. Discuss other design standards that may be appropriate.
3. Discussion as to how 22,000 dwelling units was derived. i.e.: methods, models and assumptions.
4. Discussion on land preservation, natural resources and open spaces. The Master Plan proposes to preserve two park areas, riparian buffers, floodplains and wetlands. Consideration of the intent or meaning of the terms “critical environmental resources” and “open space amenities” as described on Page 3 would be helpful. Other related topics include information describing how the two park sites were identified and selected, other natural areas considered and the criteria for the selection.
5. The “high density option” could mean almost any type of density and built-upon area across the PDD, as long as 70 percent built upon area is not reached. We believe that it is in the Town’s best interest for the Master Plan to clearly state that the priority is for “clustered development” for the retail hubs as well as the residential and commercial/industrial areas to the maximum extent practical. Total street lengths and total utility service lengths (water distribution, sewer collection and reuse lines) should be minimized. This would serve to minimize Town costs moving forward for maintenance and repairs.
6. The Town is expected to deliver potable water. A discussion of demand projections, time-lines and utility up-grades would be prudent.
7. Other related topics such as construction phasing, local road alignment and construction, public and private right of way issues, sewer collection, treatment and reuse system ownership, delivery of other services such as police protection and fire protection.
8. Discussion of financial considerations.

9. Discussion of future Development Agreement(s) and what key elements are assumed to be included. Staff and Chatham Park LLC have agreed, in principle, that Chatham Park LLC will assume costs that the Town of Pittsboro would incur during the construction of the Development Agreement.

Recommendations

1. Conduct the Public Hearing. This is the second hearing to solicit public comments, to provide an opportunity for the public to address the Board with regard to this rezoning request.
2. Consider holding a special Work Session either prior to or as a part of the August 12th regular business meeting agenda to consider this request.