

MINUTES
Planning Board Regular Meeting
Douglass Community Center, 1185 W. Pennsylvania Avenue
Thursday, May 19, 2022, at 6:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Carroll called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

The following Planning Board members were present: Chair Gary Carroll, Vice Chair Diane Westbrook, Kim Wade and Cooper Carter.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Kim Wade made a motion, which was seconded by Cooper Carter, to approve the Minutes of the April 21, 2022 regular meeting. The motion carried by a vote of 3-0 with Diane Westbrook abstaining due to her absence from the April meeting.

3. PUBLIC FORUMS

a. PD-05-22: Planned Development - Preliminary Development Plan for Phases 3B, 4 and 5 of Caropines (continued from April 21, 2022)

Bob Koontz, on behalf of Caropine Ventures, LLC and 71st Partners, LLC, submitted a request to develop 29 single-family residential lots and 15 cottage lots in Phase 3B, 54 townhome lots in Phase 4 and 120 condominium units in Phase 5 of Caropines.

Cooper Carter made a motion, which was seconded by Diane Westbrook to reconvene the public forum. The motion carried.

Mr. Koontz addressed the Board and withdrew the application on behalf of the applicant.

BJ Grieve asked Mr. Koontz if the intent was to completely withdraw the application and reapply at a later date and Mr. Koontz confirmed.

Cooper Carter made a motion, which was seconded by Diane Westbrook, to close the public forum. The motion carried.

b. PD-02-22: Planned Development - Preliminary Development Plan for Ace Hardware

Bob Koontz, on behalf of Rhetsen Companies, Inc., submitted a request to develop Phase 1 of a Planned Development on the south side of Airport Road between Capital Drive and Lindbergh Place to include a hardware supply store and other land uses that are permitted in the General Business (GB) zoning district.

Chairman Carroll confirmed that there were no conflicts of interest among the members of the Board.

Diane Westbrook made a motion, which was seconded by Kim Wade, to open the public forum. The motion carried.

Jennifer Hunt stated that the Preliminary Development Plan application includes a new 64,825 SF Ace Hardware building on 9.11 acres, extending Capital Drive to Airport Road, extending Olivetree Lane to NC Hwy 22 and connecting the greenway trail from Reservoir Park to the Sandhills Community College Horticultural Gardens as Phase 1 of the Planned Development. The Traffic Impact Analysis recommended several traffic improvements and the Town Engineer requested additional information regarding what improvements would be made as part of Phase 1.

Cooper Carter asked the airport had provided any additional comments.

Ms. Hunt responded that the current PDP application addressed the concerns that had been expressed by the airport.

James Michel, Town Engineer, stated that the TIA for the Caropines project and the TIA for the Ace Hardware project recommended improvements that essentially overlapped and the combination of improvements for both projects would have helped to improve the situation. With the withdrawal of the Caropines application, there is not a clear timeline as to when those recommended improvements will be completed. The TIA for this project only addresses a portion of the improvements and when you remove the improvements to be made by another entity the level of service will be worse that is currently shown. Mr. Michel stated that he did not think the two entities were necessarily working together. They just had overlapping requirements that were coming in at about the same time.

Mr. Carter asked if the TIA for this project assumed the improvements for Caropines.

Mr. Michel responded that the TIA does assume improvements to be completed by others. Ace Hardware was proposing improvements on one side of the traffic circle and Caropines was proposing improvements on the opposite side. If the Caropines project goes away, only one side of the traffic circle will be improved.

Mr. Carter asked if the TIA for Ace Hardware is solid or if it is making bad assumptions.

Mr. Michel responded that the Ace Hardware TIA assumed that the Caropines improvements would be completed so it will need to be reevaluated.

Mr. Koontz stated that the developer of Caropines is required to make certain traffic improvements as part of the Conceptual Development Plan for Caropines regardless of what happens with the Ace Hardware project. NCDOT is requiring Ace Hardware to make the improvements on its side of the roundabout with the understanding that in the future those same improvements will be made on the Caropines side of the traffic circle.

Mr. Carter stated that the Town Council should be made aware that there seems to be an assumption that improvements to the west side of the traffic circle will be made.

Chairman Carroll asked Mr. Michel if the level of service would be slightly lower without the Caropines improvements.

Mr. Michel responded that if they were to rerun the analysis and assuming that those improvements were not made, the level of service would show lower than if they assumed that the Caropines improvements will be completed.

Mr. Koontz stated that if development of Caropines stops, the improvements will not be needed.

Diane Westbrook stated that it was her understanding that the improvements on one side were somewhat dependent on the improvements made on the other side.

Mr. Michel responded that the TIA looks at the traffic circle as a whole.

Ms. Westbrook commented that the level of service will drop with the Caropines improvements.

Mr. Koontz responded that is with full buildout of the Caropines development, so if no development occurs at Caropines then those improvements will not be made. The Caropines TIA triggers improvements when a certain number of units are constructed. If the next phases of Caropines are developed the improvements will need to be made.

Mr. Carter asked if the Town is at risk for resourcing improvements if the traffic circle becomes highly congested or will the state be responsible for those improvements.

Mr. Michel stated that those are state roads so any improvements would be up to NCDOT. He is not aware of anything that would require the Town to step in and make the improvements.

Mr. Koontz stated that the reason the public forum on the PDP was delayed was because the agreement with the airport was finalized on the date the request for a delay was due so they did not have time to modify the CDP to make it work based on the agreement with the Airport. The airport did not object to the CDP when it was presented to the Town Council.

The Ace Hardware building will be 55,000 SF with a 9,500 SF greenhouse area and an outdoor nursery area on 9.11 acres. Water and sewer lines are existing and will serve this project. A total of 166 parking spaces are required and 176 spaces are being provided. Lighting will meet the UDO standards and signage is addressed in the CDP application. A total of 2.52 acres of open space is required with 1.26 acres being usable open space. The first phase will provide all of the required open space for the project. A Watershed Protection Permit allowing up to 70% impervious surface was granted by the Town Council. This project will add 5.65 acres of impervious surface and there are still 3.18 acres of impervious surface that can be developed.

Mr. Koontz provided a brief overview of the traffic improvements that will be made as part of the PDP.

Mr. Grieve inquired about the status of the area adjacent to Airport Road and asked if the airport had acquired that property.

Mr. Koontz responded that there is an agreement in place and discussions with the airport are ongoing but he was not privy to all of those details.

Suzanne Coleman, 225 N. May Street, inquired about the disposition of the current Ace Hardware building and parking lot.

Mr. Koontz responded that the owner is looking at opportunities to repurpose the building as soon as possible.

Diane Westbrook, made a motion, which was seconded by Kim Wade to close the public forum. The motion carried.

Discussion ensued among the Board members.

Cooper Carter made a motion, which was seconded by Kim Wade, to adopt the following transmission to the Town Council as a result of the May 19, 2022 preliminary forum on PD-02-22 Southern Pines Ace Hardware:

The information presented at the forum indicated that the following issues be considered in applying the criteria for a PDP application:

The Town Engineer briefed the Planning Board about his concerns regarding the needed improvements in the vicinity of the traffic circle and the Planning Board shares his concerns and recommends that the Town Council consider the overall impacts to traffic.

In addition, the following issue was raised during the forum, but does not seem to apply in determining whether the criteria for a PDP are satisfied:

The PB recommends that the Town Council condition the installation of wayfinding signage along the greenway trail connecting Ace Hardware that would allow additional connectivity to the Horticultural Gardens and the Town's greenway system.

The motion carried.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business was discussed.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Grieve stated that the June regular meeting may be cancelled.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Kim Wade made a motion, which was seconded by Cooper Carter, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Cindy Williams
Secretary to the Planning Board