

MINUTES
Planning Board Regular Meeting
E.S. Douglass Community Center, 1185 W. Pennsylvania Avenue
Thursday, March 21, 2024, at 6:00 PM

Vice Chair Wade called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Vice Chair Kim Wade, Andy Bleggi, Matthew Walden, John Earp, Jennifer Garner and Monica Harvey were present.

Andy Bleggi made a motion, which was seconded by Matthew Walden, to approve the Minutes of the February 22, 2024 regular meeting. The motion carried.

Matthew Walden made a motion, which was seconded by Andy Bleggi, to approve a change in the order of the agenda. The motion carried.

PRELIMINARY FORUMS:

PD-01-24: Planned Development District - Preliminary Development Plan for Belle Meade Retirement Community

On behalf of St. Joseph of the Pines, Inc., Thomas Van Camp and Dan Jewell have submitted a Planned Development District – Preliminary Development Plan application pursuant to §2.18.5 of the Town of Southern Pines Unified Development Ordinance for the addition of 40 residential units on the north side of the already existing Belle Meade continuing care retirement center on a portion of the parcel identified as PIN 858315743819 (PARID 00040807). Two existing commercial buildings on the north side of the Belle Meade campus will be demolished to make way for the additional 40 senior living townhomes.

Matthew Walden made a motion, which was seconded by Andy Bleggi, to open the preliminary forum. The motion carried.

Senior Planner Alaina Mallette provided an overview of the application and staff report for PD-01-24 accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation.

Chuck Hill of Thomas & Hutton engineering firm, present on behalf of the applicant, addressed the Board and stated that the approved Conceptual Development plan allows up to 44 new residential units but they are requesting 40 new units. Based on their review, the Preliminary Development Plan is consistent with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and promotes its objectives. St. Joseph of the Pines was founded in 1948 and is part of the Trinity Health Senior Community Organization serving seniors in several states with two campuses being in Southern Pines. The existing cottages are fully occupied and there is typically a waiting list.

Mr. Hill stated that the buildings have been designed to be compatible with the community. The community garden and the dog park will be relocated elsewhere within the development and primary access to the new units will be from Gossman Drive and relocated Waters Drive. Public utilities are available, a stormwater system will be installed, and the post-development runoff will be less than pre-development. They will be making a minor modification to an existing stormwater pond to control the peak flows for the project.

Andy Bleggi asked if any deviations were being requested and Mr. Hill responded that there were none.

Andy Bleggi made a motion, which was seconded by Matthew Walden, to close the preliminary forum. The motion carried.

Matthew Walden made a motion, which was seconded by Monica Harvey, to adopt for transmission to the Town Council that no issues were raised as a result of the March 21, 2024 preliminary forum on application PD-01-24 for Belle Meade Phase 2. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.

SU-01-24 Special Use Permit to Amend the Boundaries of the Mid-South Master Plan

On behalf of PILLCSUB, LLC, Paul Saathoff with Koontz Jones Design has applied for a Special Use Permit to amend the Mid-South Master Plan approved in 1988 in conjunction with Conditional Use Permit CU-08-88. The amendment proposes the removal of ± 9.26 acres from the Master Plan that is located in Pinehurst's jurisdiction and includes the northern-most portion of Palmer Drive between Knoll Road and Midland Road. The subject properties are identified as a portion of PIN: 857200264820 (PARID: 00041026) as well as a portion of Palmer Drive right-of-way (PARID: 20231023). The subject property includes a portion of the Knoll Road Greenway that is maintained by the Town of Southern Pines, which connects Morganton Road and the Mid-South Club to Midland Road.

Andy Bleggi made a motion, which was seconded by Matthew Walden, to open the preliminary forum. The motion carried.

Ms. Mallette provided an overview of the application and staff report for SU-01-24 accompanied by a Power Point presentation.

Ms. Mallette stated that the same proposal was submitted previously but was ultimately withdrawn. It was communicated to the applicant at that time that open space was a concern of Planning staff and the Planning Board, and the applicant has addressed that issue in the current application.

The text of the 1988 Master Plan states “All areas between the golf course corridors and the backs of residential lots or property buffer shall remain as Natural Area/Open Space... [and that t]he Open Space areas shall have walking/jogging trails developed within for use by all residents.” Adjacent to open space is landscape buffering which is relevant because of the 60 ft. buffer. The Master Plan also states “A minimum 25’ buffer screen will be established around the perimeter of the site...In addition, the area between the cleared golf corridor and the back of residential lot lines shall remain as a natural buffer.”

Ms. Mallette stated that if the request is approved, approximately 10 acres along Palmer Drive would be removed from Southern Pines’ entitlement and would be zoned RS-30, a residential zoning district with a 30,000 SF minimum lot size, which would allow approximately eight (8) lots. The property could also be rezoned.

Monica Harvey asked if future plans to extend the Knoll Road Greenway would be impacted by the relinquishment of the property.

Ms. Mallette responded that the applicant has included in their narrative that they will maintain and retain that portion of the Greenway but that project has not yet been designed and approved.

Ms. Harvey asked if there was language the Board could suggest with regard to the Greenway.

Ms. Mallette responded that in staff’s recommendation to the Town Council, she will mention in staff’s recommendation to the Town Council that one of the conditions of approval could be that the Knoll Road Greenway remain in its current location per the 2005 recorded easement and that it shall continue to be maintained by the Town of Southern Pines and open to the public.

Paul Saathoff of Koontz Jones Design, representing the applicant, stated that they have submitted exhibits showing that the open space requirement would still be met with the removal of the subject area. The density would also remain the same and they would still comply with the density requirements for the overall project. They are proposing that the current entrance drive remain as is and be controlled by the homeowners association and the greenway easement would remain as is currently and would not be impacted.

John Earp asked who owns the road.

Bob Levy stated that PILLSUB owns the road and would convey the road to the homeowners’ association.

Jennifer Garner asked why the HOA does not already own the road.

Mr. Levy responded that it is process of the developer owning the roads and turning them over as development occurs.

Ms. Garner asked Mr. Levy if he expects the HOA to own and maintain the road with the Pinehurst lots around it.

Mr. Levy responded yes because it would still be the main entrance into the community off of Knoll Road and those property owners would also pay dues.

Andy Bleggi asked if the signage would remain and Mr. Levy responded yes.

Mr. Bleggi asked if the HOA board had discussed this plan and Mr. Levy responded that it was part of an interim turnover agreement created several years ago and fully disclosed at that time.

Ms. Harvey asked if the applicant was taking undeveloped lots and selling them to be developed.

Ms. Garner responded that no lots currently exist and that it is currently a beautiful entrance to a gated community with natural plantings.

Mr. Bleggi stated that there would be the potential for the area to be developed as individual lots in the future.

Mr. Saathoff said they would be 30,000 SF lots.

Ms. Harvey asked if they could be developed as they are currently.

Mr. Saathoff responded that they could develop lots in that area if approved but it is in Pinehurst's jurisdiction so they are requesting that the acreage be removed from the master plan and be subject to Pinehurst's zoning.

Mr. Earp asked if the lots would be accessed from Palmer Drive.

Mr. Saathoff responded that access would be off of Palmer Drive.

Gary Podlogar, 10 Plantation Drive, stated that the 9.2 acres and the area east of the current gatehouse were always intended to be open space, that the original master plan shows no development in that area and that most of the space is a buffer.

Charles Buckman, 19 Plantation Drive, stated that the original master plan shows trees and no development in the area so they do not feel that it was ever the intent to build homes in that location. He also expressed concerns regarding traffic.

Tim Muehler, 19 Deacon Palmer Drive, encouraged the Board to confirm that the required amount of open space exists and expressed concerns regarding safety and traffic issues.

Mike Hanlin and Barbara Hanlin, 6 Plantation Drive, stated that their greatest concern was traffic and asked if it was possible for the Town to require that the street end in a cul-de-sac or make it a 3-way stop if the application is approved.

Jack Deep, 130 Manning Square, stated that school traffic is ridiculous and that the developer was keeping with the original plan.

Attorney Tom Van Camp, representing the applicant, stated that this is possible now because of the additional of Knoll Road and that traffic is an issue even without the additional homes.

Andy Bleggi made a motion, which was seconded by Matthew Walden, to close the preliminary forum. The motion carried.

Monica Harvey made a motion, which was seconded by Matthew Walden, to adopt the following list of issues for transmission to the Town Council as a result of the March 21, 2024 Preliminary Forum on application SU-01-24:

The information presented at the forum indicated that the following issues be considered in applying the criteria for a SUP to application SU-01-24:

1. The original intent of the development was for the open space to remain open space.
2. A question of whether Southern Pines has any enforceability
3. Recommended engaging the HOA with mutual consensus regarding the plan for the road
4. The Town maintaining the greenway trail per the existing easement.

The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

No new business was discussed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Mallette introduced new Planner Mason Mattox.

Andy Bleggi made a motion, which was seconded by Matthew Walden, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:21 PM.

An audio recording of the meeting and any related PowerPoint presentations are available upon request.

Respectfully submitted:

Cindy Williams
Secretary to the Planning Board