

VILLAGE OF WESLEY CHAPEL
PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Wesley Chapel Town Hall
6490 Weddington Road, Wesley Chapel, NC 28104
July 27, 2020 – 7:00 PM

Planning Board Members Present: Chair John Souza, Chuck Adams, Deb Bledsoe, Vince Gahren: Alternates Sherry Killion (sitting as regular member), and Karl Schneeberger

Member Absent: Michael Kenary

Others Present: Council Member Mike Como, Clerk Cheryl Bennett, Planning/Zoning Administrator Robyn Byers, Ph.D.

1. Pledge, Invocation, and Determination of Quorum

Chair John Souza led the pledge, and Chuck Adams gave the invocation. A quorum was present.

2. Public Comments - none

3. Additions, Deletions and Adoption of Agenda

Deb Bledsoe motioned to approve the agenda; Vince Gahren seconded the motion.
The motion passed unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes from the June 22, 2020 Regular Meeting

Deb Bledsoe motioned to approve the June 22, 2020 minutes; Sherry Killion seconded the motion.
The motion passed unanimously.

5. Appoint new Vice Chair to the Planning Board

Chuck Adams nominated Deb Bledsoe to be Vice Chair. Vince Gahren seconded the motion.
The motion passed unanimously

Deb Bledsoe was sworn in as Vice Chair by Clerk Cheryl Bennett. John Souza reviewed the role of the Vice-Chair.

6. Council Member In

Council Member Como noted we will miss our Planning and Zoning Administrator Robyn Byers who submitted her resignation; her last day will be Thursday. There is a special meeting tomorrow night to post her job. He noted the playground equipment is en-route. There are three or four development proposal requests to Union County for land in or near Wesley Chapel but on unincorporated land. Planning Board members joined him in telling the Planner they will miss her and to wish her well in her new job.

7. New Business

a. Establish zoning for lots annexed into Wesley Chapel 2020

Planner Byers noted 8 lots were annexed into the Village effective June 30, 2020. She noted in her report she had recommended all lots be zoned RUC, but the 8 acre parcel on Cuthbertson Road might better be zoned R-40. Chair John Souza motioned to recommend the 8 acre parcel be zoned R-40, and the other annexed parcels be zoned RUC. Vice Chair Bledsoe seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Chair John Souza motioned to approve the statement of reasonableness that the RUC zoning district and R-40 zoning district were created for this specific purpose, and the statement of consistency that it supports Goal 1 of our Land Use Plan, to maintain the strong single family low-density residential character of the Village. Vice Chair Bledsoe seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

b. Preliminary Plat for Heritage – Phase 2A

Planner Byers reported Phase 2A is for 30 acres in Wesley Chapel (and 16 acres in Indian Trail), which includes 17 lots in our Village. There is a lot of flood plain in the acreage. A lot of the approvals from Phase 1 apply to the entire subdivision. The preliminary plat was approved in 2017 but did not have construction drawings. Our engineer sent an updated letter since packets were sent out. Todd Fisher, Kolter's engineer for this phase, was present. Vice Chair Deb Bledsoe motioned to recommend approval of Phase 2A preliminary plat of Heritage. Vince Gahren seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

In the next phase the Planner asked Kolter to move some lots because they had flood land in the back of the lots and to move the stormwater pond.

8. Old Business

a. RA-40 v. R-40 discussion

The Planner made text changes as requested at the last meeting. Vice Chair Deb Bledsoe motioned to recommend approval of the text amendment with the statement of reasonableness that it is reasonable since it creates a zone that would allow the Village to retain its rural and agricultural character as supported by the Land Use Plan, and the statement of consistency that it is consistent with the Village's Land Use Plan as it encourages the continued rural character of the Village. Sherry Killion seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Next steps are to possibly have a Village re-zoning after the applicable areas are determined; possibly on the east side of Jim Parker Road and south of New Town Road.

b. Tree Ordinance Updates

Deb Bledsoe and Sandy Ells began the ordinance work and pulled together information from neighboring towns. They also talked to Wil Ortiz from Union Power and the Urban Forester. This language would replace the old section 155.075. Chuck Adams inquired if a homeowner could cut down a large tree in their yard, the Planner replied they could unless it is in a tree save area, and from now on the tree save area will be restricted to common area. Several definitions will have to be added. We currently have a list of approved plants in the ordinance, this text refers to the list approved by the Urban Forester instead. The text will apply to new non-residential development, but the currently approved shopping center will still just adhere to what was originally approved in their CUP. There will be a reference added to the zoning ordinance to refer to the text which is in the subdivision ordinance. It will apply to major and minor subdivisions, but not to administrative subdivisions (which have a maximum of three lots).

Discussion was held on an incentive for additional tree canopy which was included in the proposed text, it allowed a maximum up to 10% reduction in required parking. There was discussion that our parking standards are not that high, judging from parking at the town hall and at the shopping center. Another suggestion was an incentive such as a designation like “tree friendly neighborhood”. The word “minimum” was added in the first paragraph before the tree canopy of 30 percent. Another point of discussion was under “Maintenance of Trees” 155.075 (J) (d.) where it says “All dead or unhealthy trees can be removed.” Added was “as determined by a certified arborist.” The amount of tree save area required exclusive of rights-of-way, utility easements, and any area covered by existing ponds and lakes is 30% of the rest of the site. Sherry Killion noted there has been overplanting at other subdivision entrances, and trees will have to be removed down the road. Planner Byers said landscaping plans are approved by the urban forester, and it may be good to keep the trees for a number of years, even if ultimately they are not all kept. The Urban Forester is currently reviewing the draft and it will come back next month.

c. Comprehensive Plan Updates

We have received 718 responses to the survey and it is still open. Planner Byers has done an outline and a build-out analysis. A question was posed on the effect Covid-19 might have on development; Planner Byers felt it will create more development pressure, since people can move further out while they telecommute.

Weddington is re-doing their conservation subdivisions ordinance and will have a charette with input from an expert in the field, Randall Arendt.

The survey responses show a community center was preferred at town hall, not at the park and there was support for small and local businesses and for greenways. The Planner suggested a bicycle and pedestrian plan study.

9. Other Business

Chuck Adams commented about the recent variance hearing for Jay Weitzel who requested a variance to go into the side yard setback for a garage addition, and which was denied by the Board of Adjustment. The lot is next to common area. Chair Souza commented perhaps we could consider a text change to relax setbacks when next to common area.

10. Adjourn

Deb Bledsoe motioned to adjourn; Chuck Adams seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Bennett, Clerk

Chairman John Souza