

Minutes of Meeting
Peachtree City – Council Committee
May 28, 1999
7:00 p.m.

A committee appointed by City Council met on Wednesday, May 28, 1999, at 11:00 a.m. in the Floy Farr room of the Library to meet with owners of properties located at the northwest corner of Highway 54 and Walt Banks Road. Committee members present were: Mayor Bob Lenox, Councilmembers Annie McMenamin and Carol Fritz, Jim Basinger, Jim Williams, and City Attorney, Rick Lindsey. Those representing the property owners were: Attorney Doug Dillard, Bill Lassiter, Bob Adams, and Rick Schlosser.

Lenox explained that Attorney Doug Dillard had contacted him concerning the property in question. Mr. Dillard represented Bill Lassiter, the owner of 33 acres that was recently denied rezoning for the Mews project. Mr. Dillard wanted to meet with city officials to discuss the development of the property. Lenox said the property in question contained a total of 73 acres. He described the property as: 33 acres owned by Mr. Lassiter, 20 acres owned by Paul Heard, and two 20-acre tracts to be developed by Bob Adams Homes. Lenox said the purpose of the meeting was to “brain storm” for ideas for a desirable development.

Rick Lindsey said because there had been litigation concerning the property in the past, all parties involved in the discussion that day had agreed that they would not use any of the discussion that day for future litigation. Dillard said they had contacted the city in the spirit of cooperation and they were open to suggestions; however, if an agreement could not be reached, they would do what they would have to do in order to develop their property to its best use.

Lenox said that he had currently been in Addison, Texas and discovered a downtown development that was exactly 73 acres (the same size as the property in question). Lenox said the development had a six-story apartment complex with 3,000 units, 250,000 square feet of retail space, a city complex, as well as green space and a park for fairs and city events. Lenox said he was surprised at just how much could be developed on 73 acres. Lenox said he had a vision for the 73 acres located in Peachtree City. He wanted to see it developed as an area where people would like to congregate.

Dillard said he felt it was good to involve everyone in the discussion. He said Lassiter was prepared to develop the property as zoned, but that he had called Lenox in regard to two conditions that were placed on the property. One condition was that no curb cut would be allowed onto Highway 54, and the other was a requirement to build a frontage road from Walt Banks Road to Sumner Road. Dillard said Lassiter was prepared to fund the traffic study and the road alignment, but that it was impossible to provide the access road all the way to Sumner Road because of current development taking place in the desired location for the road. Dillard said they wanted to come up with a resolution and he offered an alternative. Dillard proposed that Lassiter be allowed one curb cut on Highway 54 and/or to provide an access road from Walt Banks to the traffic light at the Heard property (across from Stienmart).

— Rick Schlosser said he represented Paul Heard and that Mr. Heard was not a developer. Heard's property was up for sale with two options to purchase. Mr. Adams had a contract to purchase the back portion of his property, and John Callaway had an option to purchase the front portion of his property. He said that Heard was asking a price that would dictate commercial zoning for the front portion and residential zoning for the rear portion. Annie McMenamin said she could not see herself voting to rezone any property in Peachtree City for a commercial use, unless there was a very good and very unusual reason.

Lenox felt it was logical for residents to be able to travel within the proposed development without having to get onto Highway 54. He did not feel there needed to be additional median cuts on Highway 54. McMenamin suggested the project might be an excellent candidate for "round-a-bouts."

Lenox felt the real issue was design. He wanted a unique development. McMenamin said that Peachtree City was not the same community Lenox had seen in Texas. She did not intend to rezone any additional commercial property or apartments in Peachtree City. Lenox said his vision did not concern how the property was zoned, but rather that it would have a unique design, that could be a community focal point.

— Dillard felt Lassiter already had the zoning and density to develop just about any kind of project that he wanted. He said the only limitations were parking requirements and the maximum square footage for each retail shop. He said there were no use restrictions.

McMenamin said she felt the traffic for the development would come from Peachtree City, rather than from the surrounding area. Dillard said it was a good commercial site because the traffic was already there. Basinger said the basic issue was the amount of commercial development that could be developed due to the size limitations. Dillard felt the 32,000 square foot size restriction was unreasonable, but they were not going to fight that issue because it had already been resolved in court. The issue he wanted to resolve was how to develop the access road.

A citizen in attendance, Bob Gasko, asked what the City would get in return if they were to make significant changes to the zoning conditions. He felt that the citizens had continued to make compromises, but that the developer continued to ask for more and more without making any compromises of their own. Dillard did not feel that the developer needed to make any additional compromises because it was impossible to meet the current requirements.

— Lenox again stressed that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss design. He said he liked to go places just for the purpose of being there. He said Virginia Highlands was an area that he frequents. Lenox said developers would always seek to develop their property to the best and highest dollar use possible. He said he only mentioned the development in Texas to give everyone an idea of just how big a development could be built on 73 acres.

Dillard said Lassiter could develop just about anything he wanted. McMenamin said that the citizens' comments about the development had been very well documented. She asked if Dillard could prepare

a drawing showing what it was they would like to develop. Dillard said that before they spent money on planning the development, he wanted to come to an agreement on the concept of the plan. He asked Williams how long it would take for him to sketch something out showing what could be developed as zoned.

Lenox instructed Williams to provide a sketch of the area so that they could draw different "bubble diagrams" to brainstorm ideas. Fritz said that, like McMenamin, she would not be interested in re-zoning any additional land with commercial zoning. Lenox organized a brainstorming meeting to be held the next day. Among those to be in attendance were: Lenox, Williams, Dillard, and John Callaway. He also called for an additional committee meeting to be held the following Wednesday, June 2, 1999. The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.


Nancy Faulkner, City Clerk