

City of Peachtree City
WORKSHOP
Minutes of Meeting
February 6, 2007
6:30 p.m.

The City Council of Peachtree City met in a joint workshop session with the Planning Commission on Tuesday, February 6, 2007, at 6:35 p.m. Council Members attending were: Mayor Harold Logsdon, Steve Boone, Stuart Kourajian, Cyndi Plunkett, and Judi Rutherford. Planning Commission members attending were: Marty Mullin, Larry Roach, Theo Scott, and Patrick Staples.

Staff members attending were: Assistant City Manager/Developmental Services Director Colin Halterman, Administrative Services Director/City Clerk Jane Miller, City Planner David Rast, Fire Marshal John Dailey, and City Attorney Ted Meeker.

The purpose of the workshop was to discuss the West Village annexation requests. Rast told Council that staff and the Planning Commission had been working with John Wieland Homes & Neighborhoods and Levitt & Sons on their plans. Changes had been made to both plans based on comments from the Planning Commission, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), and the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA). The density had been reduced in both plans.

Dan Fields of John Wieland Homes & Neighborhoods went over the plan for the Connector Village. (A copy of the PowerPoint is included in the official meeting file.) He pointed out that the proposed plan met the following components of the City's Comprehensive Plan:

- To protect environmentally sensitive areas from development while extending the open space concept throughout future development;
- To establish a continuous planning process for Peachtree City and promote the full participation of City residents;
- To provide opportunities for an appropriate mix of dwelling types, sizes and prices in order to meet the current and projected needs of City residents of all social-economic groups in accordance with their financial capabilities, mobility and preferences; and
- To provide a full range of passive and active recreational facilities and services conveniently located for City residents.

Fields compared the proposed density of the Fayette County portion of the Connector Village (495 homes, 380 gross acres, 1.30 units/gross acre) to Georgian Park (195 homes, 214 gross acres, 0.91 units), Planterra (436 homes, 306 acres, 1.42 units/gross acre), Ashton Park (30 homes, 15 gross acres, 1.94 units/gross acre), and Ardenlee (155 homes, 75 gross acres, 2.05 units/gross acre).

Fields went over the features of a good land plan as stated by current respected land planners. The features included:

- The neighborhood had a discernible center;
- Most dwellings were within a five-minute walk to the center;
- Variety of dwelling types;
- Streets within the neighborhood formed a connected network, which dispersed traffic; and
- Streets were relatively narrow and shaded by rows of trees, which slowed traffic, creating an environment suitable for pedestrians and bicycles (and golf carts).

Fields went over the benefits to the plan, which included:

- MacDuff Parkway completion;
- Great lawn and interior pocket parks;
- Connecting streets;
- Interconnected buffers and cart paths;
- Variety of housing types and price points;
- Tree-lined streets and natural buffers;
- 167 acres of open space/natural buffers; and
- Sustainable and timeless architecture.

Fields showed drawings of the plan, which showed the interconnection of the streets. He noted that parallel parking along portions of MacDuff Parkway was needed for the streetscape and for traffic-calming. The divided median on MacDuff would tighten as the road approached the village section. The parallel parking, which would serve the guests at the homes along MacDuff Parkway, would be 100 feet from the intersections so it would not interfere with visibility at the intersections. Alley access to the back of the homes created the streetscape. He added that the retail at the village center was added at the request of the Planning Commission. Fields said a tree survey was prepared to help determine the specimen trees to save, and many of the park areas throughout the plan were developed based on the tree survey.

Fields said the typical lot size on the western side of the development would be 100 feet to 115 feet wide. The homes would be in the \$500,000-\$600,000 price range. The property lines would not extend into the buffers so the owners would not encroach on the creek. The buffers would be preserved in perpetuity. He showed a drawing of the typical 95-foot wide lot with buffers and trees in the rear yard. The cart path would meander through the backyard tree buffer. The typical MacDuff Parkway lot would be served with an alley and have a 50-foot wide lot.

Fields said the plan received a unanimous vote from the Planning Commission. They were moving in the right direction. Discussion continued on some issues. He continued that it was important to get Council's input along the way.

Kathy Zickert from Levitt & Sons told Council that, based on comments they had received, their plan had changed considerably and had improved. The proposed number of units had dropped from 752 to 699. She continued that they had also changed the unit mix. They had been advised to consider a quadraplex of townhomes, and they added approximately 100 units. It would be the typical quad product. The developer had also added another access point, eliminated the gate, and created pods with greenspace rather than cul-de-sacs. However, it would be difficult to connect the pods without using stream crossings, which they wanted to avoid as much as possible. By eliminating the cul-de-sacs, there would be more than 100 acres of open space with walking trails that would connect to Wieland's development and to the cart path system. Every lot had its own greenspace, which made the lots look bigger and was a nice amenity for the package. The pods contained different setbacks, lot sizes, and housing styles. The buffers off the stream had increased. The total open space was 228.7 acres; the usable open space was in excess of 100 acres. She noted that the GRTA and ARC input echoed many of the same concerns the City had.

Rutherford asked if the quad units were attached. Zickert said this was not a multi-family product. The quads would be four detached houses centered on a courtyard.

Kourajian asked how much the total acreage was and how much acreage was developable. Zickert said the overall density was 1.73 units per acre for 403 acres. All but approximately 128 acres was developable.

Fields said their proposal was 495 lots for 380 acres. Plunkett asked Fields about the paths off MacDuff Parkway. Fields clarified that the cart path was on one side and a sidewalk was on the other side of the parkway. Rutherford asked if the sidewalks would be narrow enough so they could not be used by golf carts. Fields said they would. Rutherford and Plunkett noted that they would need to ensure the golf cart lights were shielded from the road. Fields said he understood that and it would be considered. Boone wanted to ensure there was enough room for cars to pass between the median and the parallel parking. Fields said the engineering drawings would show that better and said that the design would follow traffic safety guidelines.

Plunkett noted that the majority of parks seemed to be for the residents. Fields said they would be residential parks that would be maintained by the homeowners association, but he noted there were a few that could be shared with the City for public use. Rutherford noted there were no multi-purpose fields in the plan. Fields said there were not, but they were looking at expanding the Baseball Soccer Complex as part of the process.

Staples said the Wieland plan had his vote because it was moving in the right direction. They were not working in a vacuum. Council would get more information on the cost benefits than the Planning Commission had received. The Commission approved the plan based on the information they had. Rutherford said Council did not have a secret formula to share.

Plunkett asked the commissioners, since they felt the plan was moving in the right direction, if they felt the plan was still a fluid document. Scott said they had looked at preserving as many trees as possible, ensuring there were undisturbed areas, and the interconnectivity of the total project. The changes were very good from what they had started with to what they had now. Maintaining trees and open space was the top parameter the Planning Commission looked at. The information was still limited. There were still traffic studies to be done. Scott said the commissioners felt the parallel parking would be a good traffic-calming device. Staples added that they had looked at the positive attributes of the community and how the plan correlated with them. One of the reasons they looked at open space was because of the density.

Rutherford asked if there were a variety of price points. Fields said the prices ranged from the high \$200,000 to \$500,000 plus. The size ranged from 2,500 square feet to 4,500 square feet. Rutherford asked if there would be a variety of housing types. Fields said the multi-story homes would have the master bedroom on the first floor. The homes along MacDuff Parkway would be narrower, longer homes with rear entry garages or detached garages. The larger homes would be similar to the homes in River Oaks in Tyrone.

Plunkett asked if there would be a separate amenities area from Centennial. Fields said that was the current plan. Staples noted that the plan for Centennial had shown more trees saved than actually had been saved. He asked Fields for assurance that would not happen in this area. Fields said there were areas in Centennial where more trees should have been saved. However, the Village Green was a popular gathering place for the community. It was nice to have, and the caveat was there would be some space preserved for that type of activity.

Kourajian asked the dimensions of the biggest lots. Fields said the lots along the western boundary were 100-115 feet wide and were typically one-acre lots. The lot sizes were trimmed down so the lot line did not go all the way to Line Creek and to protect the environment. The lot range was from 22,000 square feet to 28,000 square feet, but would look much larger. Forty percent of the development would be on one-quarter-acre lots.

Staples asked Fields about the architecture. Fields said the architecture would probably follow the same theme as in Centennial. The homes would not look as wide, but would have depth in the rear.

Rutherford asked Dailey to comment on the plan. Dailey said the Fire Department had been concerned about the parallel parking along MacDuff Parkway. It was good to see it was in sections. It was not ideal. The trucks ranged from nine feet to 16 feet in width. Plunkett noted there appeared to be three large cul-de-sacs and asked if it would be a problem servicing those areas. Dailey said that, based on the overview, there were not an excessive number of cul-de-sacs in the Levitt & Sons plan, and there appeared to be accessibility.

Kourajian asked Zickert about the lot sizes in the Levitt & Sons plan. Zickert said the lots ranged from 7,200 square feet (60 feet x 120 feet) to 9,600 square feet (80 feet x 120 feet). As with the Wieland plans, the lots lines did not go far back, so there would be greenspace behind the lots. She explained that their residents usually did not want big lots or to take care of yards, so Levitt took care of the yards. Rutherford asked about the size of the homes. Zickert said they were 1,500 square feet to 3,000 square feet, if the home was on a basement lot. There were 12 to 15 different floor plans. Each floor plan had approximately five elevations. The model park would also be the second entrance to the development. The quad product would cost approximately \$180,000, and the balance of the property would be \$200,000 and above depending on size and upgrades.

Logsdon asked how long it would take to build out the development. Zickert said the construction was market-driven, but 18-24 months was anticipated. The building would be done in pods. Having different product types available in each pod gave that advantage.

Staples noted that the Planning Commission's concern with the Levitt & Sons plan was there had been no architectural deviation. He said the developer had agreed to co-mingle types. Scott said he would like to see wooden cart bridges over the creek. Zickert said she would ask about the bridges, but they did not want to damage the stream. She added that they were willing to consider some way for the public to use the passive recreation areas, such as a conservation easement to the creek. People would enjoy walking along the creek. She would also get an answer regarding the golf cart connection. There would also be playground in the clubhouse area for visiting grandchildren.

Residents who spoke about the annexations included Linda Wojcik, Richard Spain, Phyllis Aguayo, Dana Kinzer, Dennis Chase, and Robert DeMas. Their comments included:

- City should gain something from the developments;
- Projects should be an enhancement to the City;
- Open land and park areas should be donated to the City and open to all residents;
- There were questions as to how much of the open space was not buildable to begin with
- There was too much density on sensitive land;
- There were concerns about the Peach Pit and noise from the blasting at the rock quarry in Tyrone;
- The property would be low density if it developed under the County's zoning;
- The property would be low density if it were annexed and developed according to the City's Land Use Plan;
- Residents in the area would shop, dine, and spend money in the City;
- People chose to live in cluster subdivisions;
- The area would develop and bring traffic whether it was in the City or not; it would be better if the City controlled it;

- The northern piece of property had been clear-cut previously and should be restored;
- The City would benefit from the extension of MacDuff Parkway at no expense to the taxpayer; and
- The fight for perfection would lose the good that could come from the developments.

There were also concerns about how close the homes in the Levitt & Sons project would be. Zickert said the developer would obey the international fire code and had not finalized the plans. Dailey added that the distance between the homes was addressed in the Building Code. Rast said that was not something that was looked at at this point, but would be addressed.

Rutherford noted that the Levitt & Sons development would be designed for people ages 55 and over who did not want lawns to take care of. She continued that there was no requirement for the City to annex the property. Each Council Member would look at the proposed projects long and hard before making a decision. Some saw the annexation as additional income from property taxes, while others saw it as more of an expense. Wieland's original plan had included soccer fields, which the City would have to maintain. She reiterated that there was no obligation to annex the property.

Rutherford asked for clarification regarding the Peach Pit. Fields explained that it was an area that had been used as a dump. The study had been completed, and no hazardous materials had been found. It was construction debris.

Zickert noted that Levitt & Sons needed to replant the northern piece of property that had been clear-cut. She said that portion the property was challenged in terms of vegetation. She reiterated that the development would not touch Line Creek.

Rast commented regarding the density issue. He said the Planning Commission was comfortable with the units proposed. The impact fees had not been addressed yet, and the impact fee committee could look at using the fees to offset the costs of improvements. He continued that the projects had been designed, so far, so the road improvements, extension of MacDuff Parkway, and the bridge over the railroad tracks would be done at no expense to the City. The impact fee committee would also look at the impact on the Police Department, Fire Department, and on the recreation facilities. The density played a big part in determining the impact fees. Until the density was determined, they could not submit the impact fees for review. Staff and the Planning Commission did not have an issue with the density. As the density decreased, elements of the plans would be lost. He said guidance was needed.

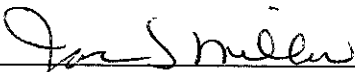
Logsdon asked why the impact fees could not be determined with the proposed density. It would be at least 30 days before Council would get to look at the plan. Rast said a recommendation for the impact fees had to be part of the zoning for the property. They needed to know the number of homes that would be served by fire and police.

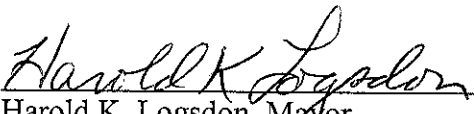
Rutherford said the committee needed to look at the perceived needs of the area. There was historical data available from other projects. Staples said the Planning Commission could not give Council everything they wanted until they saw the financials. A full breadth of information was needed. Rutherford said density was not an appropriate discussion for the workshop.

Zickert noted that her company had agreed to do certain things, but those things depended on the density and how much the impact fees were. She said they were not afraid to slow down the process to avoid any misunderstanding. Rutherford added that they should not be afraid to slow the process down to make sure it was the best plan for the City. Meeker said there needed to be an identification of what the capital needs would be.

Wojcik asked Council to consider adding two more citizens to the impact fee committee so the residents would feel more involved in the process. Logsdon said he would consider the suggestion.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.


Jane Miller, City Clerks


Harold K. Logsdon, Mayor


Pamela Dufresne, Recording Secretary