



**City of Greer**  
**Planning Commission Minutes**  
**April 16, 2018**

**Members Present:** Judy Jones, Vice Chairman  
John Holland  
Brian Martin  
Micky Montgomery  
Suzanne Traenkle

**Member(s) Absent:** Mark Hopper, Chairman  
William Lavender

**Staff Present:** Kelli McCormick, AICP, Planning Manager  
Brandon McMahan, Zoning Coordinator  
Brandy Blake, Development Coordinator

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**I. Call to Order**

Ms. Jones called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and read the opening remarks.

**A. Introduction of New Commissioner**

Ms. Jones recognized Kelli McCormick to speak.

Ms. McCormick introduced John Holland, a new Commissioner, to the Planning Commission. Mr. Holland stated that he had served on the Planning Commission before and was happy to be serving again.

**II. Public Forum**

Ms. Jones read a brief statement about conducting the public forum section of the meeting and introduced the first person signed in to speak.

Greg Mitchell, representative of Mitsubishi Polyester Film, stated he was present to speak in opposition of the proposed development for Hood Road, Briar Ridge. Mr. Mitchell stated that he is an environmental safety and health engineer for Mitsubishi. He gave a brief history of Mitsubishi and its location in Greer. He stated that Mitsubishi encourages growth in the community, but they were concerned that the proposed development would add to the congestion and to the safety concerns with Hood Road and will also have a negative impact on their ability to invest in future growth at their location. He stated that Mitsubishi, as a company, is looking for further expansion in the USA and that they look to the local Greer site management to invest in the existing Mitsubishi Polymers business, but also to host and support investments from other business units. He stated that Mitsubishi feels that they have a responsibility to the local community. He advised that Mitsubishi has well established community advisory panel that

meets regularly about issues such as safety, business, and environmental concerns. He stated that currently there is a single abandoned residence on Hood Road and no other residentially zoned properties. He advised that the businesses on Hood Road are expanding and increasing truck traffic on Hood Road, Suber Road, and Buncombe Road. He stated that in the summer of 2017, a traffic study was performed at the request of Mitsubishi employees due to traffic safety. He stated that the study provided several recommendations to improve traffic, but that study did not take into account a possible residential development on Hood Road. He stated that the entrances to this development are located in areas of high truck traffic. He stated that Mitsubishi is requesting an updated traffic study to consider all the current and planned development. He advised, in summary, there were three things Mitsubishi would like the Commission to consider when deciding the proposed request. First, the safety and congestion on Hood Road and surrounding roads. Second, the future impact on Mitsubishi and the possibility of expansion in the future and the ability to attract future investment. Third, the history of the land that is considered being developed.

Steve (Ned) Newcomer, resident of Brushy Meadows subdivision, stated he was present to speak in opposition of the proposed development for Henderson Gap Road, Branchwood. He stated that he spoke at the last meeting in opposition. He stated that he was concerned about the density, the condition of the road, and overcrowding of the schools. He stated that there has been a lot of expansion in the near area and that the infrastructure could not handle the increase. He stated that this development will also remove more wooded area. He approached the Commission and presented them with a picture on his cell phone of an accident that had recently happened on Henderson Gap Road (exhibit A). He stated that accidents happen on this road often.

Merle Faulk, resident of Brushy Meadows subdivision, stated she was present to speak in opposition of the proposed development for Henderson Gap Road, Branchwood, and that she is representing many residents in the Brushy Meadows subdivision. She advised that she has been a resident of Greer for years and was against haphazard scattering of neighborhoods. She stated that she is concerned about density and that there is only one entrance to the proposed development on an old country road that was not designed to handle the kind of volume. She stated that there are children walking and riding their bikes to surrounding schools on Henderson Gap Road and it creates a dangerous situation.

Arlene Wertz, resident of Rich Glen subdivision, stated she was present to speak in opposition of the proposed development for Henderson Gap Road, Branchwood. She advised that many of the residents of Rich Glen and that there are many in opposition due to traffic concerns and safety issues. She stated that wild animals are roaming in the neighborhood due to the woodland area being cut down.

Richard Spilvalo, resident of Rich Glen subdivision, stated he was in opposition to the proposed development for Henderson Gap Road, Branchwood, due to safety concerns of the road. He asked that if the Commission did approve the proposed development to include the specifics of the approval in the motion. He stated that in motion to approve Rich Glen subdivision, there were no specifics of the approval and there is nothing to hold anyone accountable.

### **III. Approval of Minutes**

**ACTION** – Mr. Martin made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 19, 2018 Planning Commission Meeting as submitted. Mr. Montgomery seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 3 to 0. Mr. Holland abstained from the vote. Mr. Lavender and Mr. Hopper were absent from the vote.

#### **IV. Public Hearing**

##### **A. AN 2018-06**

Ms. Jones opened the public hearing for AN 2018-06.

Ms. McCormick gave the information for the request. She presented an aerial map, zoning & floodplain map, land use map, street view, and site plan for the property.

Seeing that there was no one present to speak for or against this request, Ms. Jones closed the public hearing.

#### **V. Old Business**

Ms. Jones stated that there was one item of old business to be heard. She advised that AN 2018-05 was held by the Commission until such time as a traffic study was completed and presented to the Commission for review. She stated that the applicant has provided that traffic study and was ready to present it to the Commission.

She stated that staff would give a brief summary of the request before the applicant would present.

Ms. McCormick briefly reviewed the request and the history for the Commission. She stated that after the traffic study was reviewed at the meeting, it would be available for the public and the public could contact staff for copies of that study and help reading it.

Ms. Jones asked the applicant, Micah Fraley, to approach the podium and present the traffic study.

Mr. Fraley, engineer for Bluewater Civil Design, stated that he was present to answer any questions from the public and the Commission. He stated that he lives in the community and understands the concerns of the public. He presented the information from traffic study and briefly described how the study was conducted. He stated that the developer is open to suggestions from the Commission on density and anything else that can bring this development to Greer.

Mr. Martin asked Mr. Fraley if he was aware of any other townhome communities off of secondary roads similar to the one being proposed. Mr. Fraley stated that they had not looked into that information but could if they Commission wishes.

Mr. Martin stated the times the traffic count was conducted and the areas to specify for the public. He stated that it was not a study to track the number of the total trips for the day similar to the Counties study.

Ms. McCormick advised that any road improvements would be permitted by the County.

Mr. Martin briefly updated Mr. Holland on some of the findings from the previous meeting concerning density of surrounding neighborhoods.

Mr. Fraley stated that most of the developments in that area have a very large flood plain and most of the open space in those developments could not be developed or the density would be higher. He advised that the developer was looking for recommendations from the Commission.

Ms. McCormick advised that there are townhome developments in progress on Ansel School Road and Abner Creek Road that are more dense than the proposed development on Henderson Gap Road.

Mr. Martin stated that his biggest concern is about the density and he would be in favor of reducing the density down to that similar to an R-12 zoning. He stated that he is also concerned about the impact on the adjoining property owners of Riverside Chase, and would be in favor of a non-disturbance buffer of 25ft or 50ft to protect the residents.

He stated that he does not think a townhome community is suitable for the area but he does believe that the property owner should have the opportunity to develop the property in a meaningful way and that the density should be dropped down to at least that of a R-12 zoning.

Mr. Holland asked if the site plan took into account adding turn lanes to the development. Mr. Fraley stated no because the traffic study did not indicate that turning lanes were needed.

Mr. Martin stated that traffic was an issue but the Planning Commission's job was to guide the development of communities and in his opinion a townhome development was not cohesive with the surrounding community. He stated that the Commission had to take into consideration the overall aspects of those surrounding communities such as value, aesthetics, and how this type of development will impact those communities. He stated that he doesn't believe that putting a townhome development with a larger density than any other communities around it will enhance or assist those communities.

Ms. Traenkle stated that the traffic in this area was an issue and stated that a traffic light or turn lane should be included in the design of the proposed development to improve conditions. She stated that she agreed with Mr. Martin, that the density was an issue as well.

Mr. Fraley stated that if the property were developed under the current zoning district of R-12, it would create more traffic than with townhomes.

Mr. Holland asked Mr. Fraley what the price point on the townhomes will be. Mr. Fraley stated that he doesn't have that information but they would be upscale townhomes. Mr. Holland stated that he wanted to know that to find out what type of buyer they would be trying to attract.

Ms. McCormick advised the Commission of the previous motion and proceedings of Planning Commission and Council.

Mr. Holland asked Mr. Fraley if there was enough room in the development to add turning lanes and still have 62 units. Mr. Fraley stated that he had not researched that specific design so he was not sure but that would be something that the County would have to approve since Henderson Gap Road is a county road.

Mr. Holland asked Ms. McCormick if sidewalks would be required. Ms. McCormick stated yes and it was shown on the plan provided.

Ms. McCormick stated that if turn lanes were added they may be able to fit within the right of way but if not, the developer would be looking to acquire property.

Mr. Fraley stated that the safety on the road is out of the developer's control. He stated that speed humps could help with the speed on the road but there are only a few things that are within the developers control to improve the situation.

**ACTION-** Mr. Martin made a motion to approve AN 2018-05 for DRD zoning with a maximum of 35 total units and a 50ft non-disturbance area at the southern boundary of the development adjacent to the Riverside Chase subdivision. Mr. Holland seconded the motion.

Ms. Traenkle asked Mr. Martin if his concern is the type of development or the density. Mr. Martin stated that townhomes are a concern but the density is his biggest issue.

With no other discussion, the motion carried with a vote of 4 to 1. Ms. Jones voting in opposition.

Ms. McCormick advised the public on the future steps of the request.

## **VI. New Business**

### **A. AN 2018-06**

Ms. Jones read a brief statement about conducting the business meeting and opened the business meeting for AN 2018-06.

Ms. McCormick presented the staff report and recommendation for the request.

Alex Thompson, Gray Engineering, gave a brief history and overview of the request.

Mr. Holland asked if there was only going to be one entrance to the south of the site. Mr. Thompson advised yes, there would only be one entrance but there is an all-weather emergency access off of Mitchell road.

Ms. Jones asked Mr. Thompson why there was not another entrance provided. Mr. Thompson stated that SCDOT would not allow another that close to the intersection.

Ms. Jones asked if there were any additional parking spaces added. Mr. Thompson advised no.

**ACTION** – Mr. Holland made a motion to approve AN 2018-06 as presented. Suzanne Traenkle seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 5 to 0.

### **B. SUB 2018-04**

Ms. Jones opened the business meeting for SUB 2018-04.

Ms. McCormick presented provided a brief history for the request and presented staff's analysis and recommendation.

Milton Shockley, applicant, gave a brief history of the property and ownership. He stated that years ago they found out that the adjacent property had been contaminated and a parking lot had been put over it and the contamination leached onto the property of discussion. He stated that there has been a design for a subdivision in place for the property for years but due to contamination and mitigation it had not been executed. He advised that at this time the property has been cleared by DHEC for development and that they were excited to do so.

Mr. Martin asked if the developer was required to disclose the information to potential buyers of residential lots. Mr. Shockley stated that he didn't know if they were required to disclose but they do put the information on the plats and in the restrictive covenants. He stated they also require the builders to have a vapor barrier.

Mr. Martin asked what the separation or screening along the residential and commercial properties are going to look like.

Ms. McCormick advised that the developer would not have to buffer according to the City's requirements.

Mr. Shockley stated that the property adjacent to the parking lot was below grade and the screening would have to be significant to hide the cars in the parking lot from the houses below.

Mr. Martin stated that he was concerned about the screening.

**ACTION** – Mr. Holland made a motion to approve SUB 2018-04 as recommended by staff. Mr. Montgomery seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 5 to 0.

## **VII. Other Business**

### **A. Planning and Zoning Report**

Mr. McMahan updated the Commission on upcoming training dates and opportunities.

## **VIII. Executive Session**

There was no executive session.

## **IX. Adjourn**

There being no other business to discuss, Mr. Holland made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Martin seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:11pm.