



**OAK RIDGE PLANNING & ZONING BOARD MEETING
MAY 23, 2019 – 7:00 P.M.
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Members Present

Ron Simpson, Chair
Bobbi Baker, Vice Chair
Nancy Stoudemire
Patti Paslaru
Larry Stafford
Jason Streck, Alternate (Sitting)

Staff Present

Sean Taylor, Planning Director
Sandra Smith, Town Clerk

Members Absent

Tammy Gardner
Ed Treacy, Alternate
Steve Wilson (Not sitting)

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ron Simpson at 7:00 p.m.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Patti Paslaru made a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Bobbi Baker seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (6-0).

3. APPROVE MINUTES

Nancy Stoudemire made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 25, 2019 meeting. Bobbi Baker seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (6-0).

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. SP-19-02: The Hindu Society of North Carolina North Central Region Greensboro is submitting a site plan for approval of a 20,406-square-foot temple. The property is located on Alcorn Road, 2,253 feet northwest of Northwest School Road and addressed as 7751 Alcorn Road. It is Guilford County Tax Parcels 0162321, 016320, 0162364 and 0162365, consisting of approximately 8.93 acres, zoned RS-40 (Residential), Greensboro (GW-III) Overlay. It is owned by The Hindu Society of North Carolina North Central Region Greensboro.

Planning Director Sean Taylor read the property description into the record and presented the staff report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes. Taylor stated that a lighting plan has been requested of the applicant and that a driveway permit will be required. He said the site plan meets all

other technical requirements. Staff recommended conditional approval based on submittal and approval of complete lighting, landscaping, erosion and sediment control, and stormwater plans along with driveway entrance plans.

Patti Paslaru asked whether the Town limits the size of a building, and Taylor said the size limit on the footprint of a building is 30,000 square feet and the proposed square footage of the temple is 20,406. Paslaru asked if turn lanes would be required on Alcorn Road, and Taylor said that will be up to NCDOT. He reminded the Board that the property is not within the Scenic Corridor, and some requirements for the recently approved site plan for Summit Church do not apply here.

Bobbi Baker asked when the pond would be constructed, and Taylor said that question could be better answered by the project engineers. He said it would be required at the time of total build-out on the property. He added that the Town's stormwater engineers are currently reviewing the plan. Baker said the property is surrounded by a fair number of homes, and she wanted to be sure the stormwater could be controlled. She also expressed concern about the playground, as shown on the plan, being wedged between two parking areas. Taylor said the future elements were just added on the plan for stormwater control purposes and they may not end up specifically where they are shown on the map. Baker asked about the height of the building, and Taylor said she could ask the applicant, but that churches are given leeway for spires.

Taylor pointed out that although a billboard was shown on the original site plan that was emailed to the Board, Town ordinances would not allow that unless the billboard is the primary use of the property. Currently, the primary use would have to either be a church or a billboard. He compared a billboard to a cell tower. Taylor said another change on the revised site plan is that the engineers had originally shown a 10-foot planting yard along the utility easement, but that had been revised to show a 30-foot planting yard that overlaps the utility easement.

Baker asked about the area to the east that is marked "undeveloped" on the site plan. Taylor said that would serve as the wooded buffer. Baker asked about the area marked for the "future residence" and whether it would have a separate driveway; Taylor said the residence would enter through the parking lot and would not have a separate road.

Taylor pointed out that the original site plan also did not show 15 trees in the parking area, which are required. The revised site plan reflects that change.

Larry Stafford asked if the additional items required must be approved by the Board or if staff could do it. Taylor said it could be done by staff once all ordinance requirements are met.

Simpson asked about the 30-foot tree conservation area, and Taylor explained that nothing is currently planted in some areas of the planting yard so plantings would have to be installed. Simpson said he wanted to be sure there was a visual break between the parcels for the adjacent property owners.

Andrew Christ of Fleming Engineering, who was representing the applicant, introduced himself and said the applicant intended to build everything shown on the plan but that it would be done in phases. He said the height of the building would be about 40 feet and that there may be some religious statutes around the building, but nothing else. Baker asked how many stories tall the building would be, and Christ said one.

Baker asked Christ about the pond area and whether the property would be graded so that stormwater went into the pond rather than the neighbors' properties. Christ said yes and that no more water would be discharged toward the neighbors than is discharged currently. Jason Streck asked if the pond was an aesthetic feature, and Christ said it was just designed to keep and release water slowly and that he did not think the neighbors would see it.

Nancy Stoudemire asked if the pond would be fenced, and Christ said not necessarily. Stoudemire asked if it would have plantings around it, like a rain garden. Christ said potentially but that had not been determined yet.

Stoudemire asked about the location of the dumpster and said that it might be visible from the road. Christ said thicker pavement was needed to accommodate heavy garbage trucks, which had determined the location. Larry Stafford asked if the dumpster would have a fence around it; Taylor responded that the Town's ordinance required that the dumpster be fully enclosed and gated.

Simpson asked if the area between the road and the building would be grassed, and Christ said yes.

Baker asked if the proposed playground area would definitely be located where it was shown on the site plan. Christ said it could be shifted.

Jason Streck asked if there were any requirements for installing a fence around a retention pond. Taylor said it all depends on whether the pond is going to be broad and shallow or if it was going to be more narrow and deep like the one in front of Bojangles'.

Regarding the location of the playground, Stoudemire said that as a parent, she thought it was important to have the playground close to the proposed future athletic field so that parents might be able to see their children in both areas.

Jason Streck moved to approve the site plan with the conditions as recommended in the staff report. Patti Paslaru seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (6-0).

B. Recommendation of appointment of Maureena Shepherd as Board alternate.

Simpson said the application for appointment of Maureena Shepherd would typically be tabled since she was unable to attend the meeting. Paslaru said she would still like to discuss the issue, saying that she had some concerns about appointing a real estate agent to the Board because of decisions they would make, either consciously or subconsciously. Simpson said he thought it was reasonable not to pack the board with those in the banking, construction and real estate industries,

but he added that former Board member Carl Leybourne was in real estate and Simpson said he had learned a lot from Leybourne. Simpson said he had found Leybourne's comments to be helpful and he never thought Leybourne had a bias. Paslaru said there was already one real estate agent on the Board, and she asked how many more Board members felt were appropriate.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Rita Lewandowski, Jr., 5202 Golden Acres Road, expressed concern about runoff from the proposed new construction. She pointed out that the horse farm at Peeples Road and Alcorn Road floods a lot because of water running into the creek, and she urged the Board to look more carefully at stormwater. Referring to the pond on the Hindu temple property, she asked how much more the area would flood and what would happen afterward.

Taylor responded that the addition of the retention pond on the property would probably improve nearby flooding because water is currently unimpeded as it flows into the creek. He said the Town now has stormwater engineers, and he added that project engineers have been proactive in meeting with Taylor and the Town's stormwater engineers and making sure all state requirements are met. He said the purpose of the pond is to catch the water and slow it down before it runs into the creek and that the applicant must adhere to certain state requirements.

Lewandowski also pointed out that now a pond with possible standing water would be situated behind her house.

Taylor said there are wet and dry retention ponds and said he is not really a big fan of wet retention ponds because he feels like they are a mosquito breeding ground. He said the type of pond being proposed on the Hindu temple property is not like that, adding that seepage rates must be determined to keep water from running unimpeded into the creek. Taylor responded that the Town had also adopted the Jordan Lake Rules.

Additional conversation ensued.

- Rita Lewandowski, Sr., 5006 Golden Acres Road and who also owns 5202 Golden Acres Road, said the proposed Hindu temple will be 40 feet tall, which she characterized as pretty tall, but the Town does not put any limit on the height of spires. She said no privacy fencing has been proposed, and she had spoken with Taylor about the possibility of asking that more cryptomeria to be planted along the property line, but he said the Town could not make that a requirement. She said that it would be difficult for them to bear that expense and that they would now have to look at a 40-foot-tall building. She also said that they had ponies and animals in the rear of their property abutting the Hindu temple property and they were afraid they might have to change the fencing and put up signs.

Simpson said there were still things that had to be approved by the Town Planner and the Town would try to be fair to all parties involved.

Lewandowski said there were only about four properties that would really be impacted because their back yards adjoin the Hindu temple property.

Additional conversation ensued.

Stoudemire asked about the tree ordinance and the landscape buffer and asked if it was stated that the trees must be evergreens and that they must attain a certain height. Taylor said he thought the Town may need to look at the ordinance.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Patti Paslaru made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. Bobbi Baker seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (6-0).

Respectfully Submitted:

Sandra B. Smith, NCCMC, CMC
Town Clerk

Ronald D. Simpson
Chair