



OAK RIDGE PLANNING & ZONING BOARD MEETING
AUGUST 26, 2021 - 7:00 P.M.
(Meeting held electronically via the Zoom platform)

This meeting was conducted remotely under N. C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.24 by use of simultaneous communication using the Zoom online platform and in which Planning & Zoning Board members participated by simultaneous communication. Planning & Zoning Board members were joined and participated in the entire meeting, unless otherwise noted.

MINUTES

Board Members Present

Nancy Stoudemire, Chair
Jason Streck, Vice Chair
Ron Simpson
Patti Paslaru
Patrick Fiorentino
Larry Stafford
Tammy Gardner

Staff Present

Sandra Smith, Town Clerk
Sean Taylor, Planning Director

Board Members Absent

Maureena Shepherd, Alternate
Rick Schlaginhaufen, Alternate
Megan Dyson, Alternate

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy Stoudemire at 7:01 p.m.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Patti Paslaru moved to approve the agenda after removing the public hearing at the applicant's request, and Jason Streck seconded. Via roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously (7-0).

3. APPROVE MINUTES

Jason Streck motioned to approve the minutes of the July 22, 2021 meeting, and Ron Simpson seconded. Via roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously (7-0).

4. NEW BUSINESS

- A. SUB-21-04: Lakeside.** The property is located North of Bentrige Forest Drive, approximately 1,150 feet north of the intersection of Vanhoy Road and Bentrige Forest Drive, in Oak Ridge Township. It is Forsyth County Tax Parcel 6990-30-1268.00, consisting of approximately 35.6 acres. It is owned by Mary A. Leight.

Planning Director 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. He said his comments were included in the staff report, and he recommended conditional approval contingent upon planning staff, Environmental Health, Soil and Erosion Control, and stormwater engineers' approval of all subdivision technical requirements as set forth in the Town's Code of Ordinances.

Stoudemire said that this was not a public hearing but that Norris Clayton, the project engineer, was present to answer any questions.

Simpson said it looked like the Board was being asked to approve a plan for a narrow strip of land that touches Belews Lake, although there are many more lots on the map. He asked what is located immediately adjacent to the area proposed.

Taylor responded that the area shown is the only portion within Oak Ridge's jurisdiction and that all other lots are in Forsyth County. He said some lots will be split by the county line, but if the main structure is in the Guilford County portion, it will be taxed by Guilford County.

Simpson asked if the remainder of the plan was subject to approval by another jurisdiction, and Taylor said yes. Simpson asked if the entrance is in Oak Ridge, and Taylor said the entrance is in Stokesdale, which required the applicant to get approval from three separate jurisdictions.

Patrick Fiorentino asked if the approval had been obtained from the other municipalities.

Norris Clayton of the engineering firm Hugh Creed Associates, 1306 W. Wendover Avenue, Greensboro, spoke for the applicant, saying approvals had been granted by Forsyth County, and the entrance had been approved by Stokesdale. He said this request was simply to get Oak Ridge's portion approved.

Larry Stafford made a motion to conditionally approve SUB-21-04 as presented, and Patrick Fiorentino seconded. Via roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously (7-0).

- B. SP-21-02:** Vertical Bridge REIT, LLC, 700 Park of Commerce Drive, Boca Raton FL (Doug Barker, representative) requested approval of a site plan for new stealth wireless communications facility (monopine tower) and associated equipment. The property is located at the dead end (stub) of Golden Oaks Drive, approximately 300 feet east of the intersection of Golden Oaks Drive and Golden Acres Road, bordering I-73 along the western border of the property. It is Guilford County Tax Parcel #167280, consisting of approximately 13.95 acres, and zoned AG (Agricultural), Greensboro (GW-III) watershed. It is owned by Triad Community Church.

Planning Director 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. Pending resolution of the items noted in the staff report and pending any discretionary decisions by the Board as noted in the staff report such as appearance of the faux tree, effective screening, etc., he recommended conditional

approval contingent upon all technical and discretionary requirements set forth by the Planning & Zoning Board being met.

Simpson asked what items requested by staff had not been met. Taylor said he had been waiting for the applicant to submit a tree survey, which has now been received. He said the Board can determine the type of monopine structure to be approved and whether the proposed screening is appropriate. He said he knew the Board had reviewed other such structures in the past.

Simpson asked how much the structure would be camouflaged and how tall it was.

Doug Barker, 304 Springwater Trail, Woodstock, GA, spoke on behalf of the applicant. He said the tower does need to be taller than nearby trees and the one proposed is 125 feet. Barker said that is fairly short as industry standards go. He said in the tree survey, the tallest surrounding tree was about 100 feet tall and most of the trees were around 85 feet tall. He said there is the power line easement on one side and the Interstate on the other, with woods surrounding the proposed location of the tower.

Simpson asked how far the location is from the nearest house, and Barker said more than 400 feet and probably closer to 500 feet. He added that the power line easement is between the location and closest house.

Fiorentino asked if any of the trees shown on the Tree Survey would be removed by the tower installation. Barker said the tower would be located on a 13+-acre site and the approximately one-quarter acre site that would be disturbed was adjacent to the highway. Fiorentino asked how many trees would be removed, and Barker said it was miniscule amount, perhaps 10 or 15 in the one-quarter acre area.

Fiorentino asked if precautions were taken to ensure the remaining trees would survive. Taylor noted that there were two trees, noting numbers 5 and 8 on the tree survey, that are part of the affected area. Barker added that they did not have the rights to disturb trees outside of that one-quarter-acre area.

Tammy Gardner asked where the access to the tower was, and Barker said it would be accessed from Golden Oaks Drive. She asked if trees would be taken out at the entrance to the site, and Barker said the power line easement was currently in that area. Gardner asked if another 30 feet would be added to that easement, and Barker said yes.

Streck said the majority of the trees were owned by someone else and loblolly pines were often planted in this area. He asked if the Town had control over the tree removal. Barker said that Streck was correct, and that they only had the right to remove trees in the one-quarter-acre area. Streck said the Board was asking about trees to help hide the tower, but the applicant actually does not have a lot of control. He said if the property gets clear cut, that is the responsibility of the property owner. Taylor agreed.

Paslaru asked if cell towers are allowed on property zoned AG (Agricultural). Taylor said yes, that it was a use by right.

Larry Stafford said he hoped the tower did not look like the one located on the property beside Oak Ridge Town Park.

Stoudemire asked the difference between the current coverage area and the proposed area. Barker asked if the Board was looking at the maps in color or black and white, and Stoudemire said black and white. Barker said the color versions of the map show a significant difference in coverage.

Stoudemire suggested the Board go through the staff report to make sure questions about the discretionary items had been answered. She said the tower would be about 24 feet taller than the surrounding trees, and Paslaru said it would only be visible from I-73 and it was in a good spot to be camouflaged by existing trees. Stoudemire said there seemed to be general consensus about the screening and the type of the pole. She asked for a motion.

Jason Streck made a motion to conditionally approve SUB-21-02 as presented, and Patti Paslaru seconded. Via roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously (7-0).

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Simpson called attention to the recent open house on the village feel concept so that guidelines could be developed to make clearer the type of development wanted in the Town in the future. He said the outcome would directly affect the Planning & Zoning Board and Historic Preservation Commission.
- Stoudemire asked if the Board would like to have a booth at Heritage Day on September 25 so the Board could explain to residents exactly what it does.
- Taylor said a limited agriculture ordinance would be introduced the following month, which deals with raising chickens and other such activities. He said he would send information out to the Board prior to the meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Patti Paslaru moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m., and Jason Streck seconded. Via roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously (7-0).