



**OAK RIDGE PLANNING & ZONING BOARD MEETING
DECEMBER 17, 2015 - 7:00 P.M.
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Members Present

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

Staff Present

Bill Bruce, Planning Director
Sandra Smith, Town Clerk

Members Absent

Carl Leybourne
Tammy Gardner
Brian Eichlin, Alternate

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Bobbi Baker made a **motion** to approve the agenda. **Nancy Stoudemire** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (6-0).

3. APPROVE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 19, 2015, MEETING

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

4. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENT OF ED TREACY AS P&Z ALTERNATE

Patti Paslaru made a **motion** to recommend the Town Council appoint Ed Treacy as an alternate to the Board. **Larry Stafford** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (6-0).

5. PUBLIC HEARING

Oak Ridge Future Land Use Plan Update. The Oak Ridge Future Land Use Plan Update Steering Committee presented the Oak Ridge Future Land Use Plan Update for adoption.

Simpson said the Land Use Plan is a guiding document frequently used by the Planning & Zoning Board. He reported that the steering committee who developed that plan was made up of 12 volunteers, three of whom are also members of the Planning & Zoning Board.

Ann Schneider and Bob Dischinger, members of the Land Use Plan Update steering committee, presented the plan, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes. Schneider said she represented the Historic Preservation Commission on the steering committee, and that there were representatives from each Town board/commission as well as other groups, such as the Merchants of Oak Ridge, the building/development industry, the agricultural community, etc. She said the committee did not start out agreeing on everything; after several months of meetings on different topics, they began developing a vision statement and came to a strong consensus that the plan represents a clear and appropriate vision. The committee was appointed by Town Council in September 2014 and began by holding an open house and soliciting comments from residents. Over a 15-month period, they worked through many issues. Another open house was held in November to unveil the draft plan and the committee overwhelmingly received positive comments on their work.

Dischinger explained that there were two main changes to the town core. The committee proposed changing the shape of the core to a circle drawn in a $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile radius of the intersection of N.C. 68 and Oak Ridge Road. In addition, a transition zone of about an additional $\frac{1}{4}$ mile was included, which could allow for additional development in that area if it was contiguous with existing town core development. The commercial core remains largely unchanged, he said.

Dischinger said the second major change is a proposal to allow up to two residential units per acre in the town core. The change is being proposed in response to a desire for more affordable housing and housing types. Dischinger said the change in density would be market-driven, and that environmental and historic features would still need to be taken into account before such development could take place. He explained that although this is higher density than is typically seen in Oak Ridge, it is still not like Greensboro, which has water, sewer and allows density of up to 12 units per acre. He added that RS-40 and larger lots will still be allowed in the town core as well.

Schneider said safeguards had been added to the plan to retain the historic and small-town charm of the Town, and that conservation subdivisions were being encouraged in the town core. An on-site visit with staff would be required prior to submitting a plan for development. She said the goal was to provide a stronger incentive to set aside distinctive areas. If the draft plan is

approved, the Town's ordinances would need to be updated to reflect it. Schneider said the plan had been well publicized with an open house which more than 150 people attended, advertisements and three articles in the Northwest Observer. She asked the Board for its support of the plan in the form of a positive recommendation to the Town Council.

Simpson opened the public hearing.

Proponents:

- Debbie Shoenfeld, vice chair of the Historic Preservation Commission, spoke in favor of the plan. She said she particularly supported the plan's Goal #2, which would allow for higher density in the town core and would allow young people, older couples and families that prefer to live in a smaller home to do so.
- Ed Treacy, who served on the steering committee, said he favored the plan because only RS-40 or conservation subdivisions would be allowed. He said his friends and neighbors, who moved to Oak Ridge for the rural setting and large lots, were comfortable with that as well.
- Sandra Smith, who served on the steering committee representing the agricultural and legacy property owners, spoke in favor of the plan. She said it includes incentives for farmers and strives to retain open space and historic vistas. Smith also read a letter from Sam Anders, an Oak Ridge resident, who is also in favor of the plan.
- Dischinger read a letter in support from Rich Spiker, a committee member who was unable to attend the meeting.
- Schneider said Historic Preservation Commission members Paul Woolf, Caroline Ruch and Mac McAtee supported the plan, and she had emails in support from Oak Ridge residents Brian Middleton, Barbara Engel, and Anna and Steve Jolly.

Opposition:

- None

The public hearing was closed.

The Board discussed the proposed plan and asked questions. Paslaru asked for clarification on the transition zone and the difference between the Town Core Transition Zone and the Commercial Town Core Transition Zone. Paslaru also asked for clarification on the street and neighborhood connectivity goal, and Wilson asked specifically about the connection to Scoggins Road.

Bobbi Baker made a **motion** to recommend approval of the Land Use Plan Update. **Nancy Stoudemire** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (6-0).

6. NEW BUSINESS

Subdivision Case # Sub-15-20: Westergaard, Craig B. The property is located on Bunch Road, approximately 700 feet west of Gumwood Road, in Oak Ridge Township. The proposed subdivision consists of six lots for a total of approximately 18.8 acres. The property is Guilford County Tax Parcels 0163109, 0163110, and 0163112, is zoned AG, and is in the Greensboro (GW-III) Watershed Overlay Zone. It is owned by Craig B. Westergaard. The designer is Land Solutions, PC.

Bruce presented the staff report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes. He said three existing lots will be reconfigured to create a total of six lots. Most of the lots will have access from Bunch Road, although one large parcel will have access from Gumwood Road. Bruce said the subdivision plan meets the requirements of the ordinance and that he recommended approval.

Steve Wilson made a **motion** to approve the subdivision plan. **Patti Paslaru** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

8. ADJOURNMENT

Bobbi Baker made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m. **Patti Paslaru** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (6-0).

Respectfully Submitted:



Sandra B. Smith, CMC, Town Clerk



Ron Simpson, Chair