

**Planning Commission
Minutes
January 24, 2017**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Smith, Chris Moore, Brittany Johnson, & Joan Schmid

MEMBERS ABSENT: Winfred Pieterse, Gerald Williams, & Bernard Jones

OTHERS PRESENT: Matt Millwood, Janet Grant, & Debra Grant

I. Call to Order

II. Welcome: *Mr. Chris Moore (acting Chairman) welcomed the newly seated member Ms. Joan Schmid to the Board.*

III. Minutes: The minutes for November 22, 2016; **Mr. Paul Smith made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted, seconded by Ms. Brittany Johnson; the motion carried 4 to 0.**

IV. Public Hearing: None

V. Consideration:

- 1. Review and recommend a text amendment request from the City of Georgetown & Board of Zoning Appeals to Article V, Section 511 (Accessory Use) of the City of Georgetown Zoning ordinance.** **Matt Millwood/City Staff** told the Board that this request came from the BZA because of the influx of request they get for variances for accessory structures for residential and commercial. The Board asked that we submit a request for a text amendment so there will be some clear wordage in the ordinance. The ordinance now allows up to 3 accessory structures, 600 sq. ft. each for residential zoning districts, the proposed change would be to allow a limit of three (3) per parcel not to exceed 600 sq. ft. in combined gross surface area, and shall be no more than 20 ft. in height. The Commercial and industrial zoning districts shall limit accessory uses, buildings and structures to 10% of the gross square footage of the parcel and a site plan shall be approved by the Zoning Administrator. This request is because the residential lots are commonly very small and chopped up. The commercial lots are much larger and after some research the Staff feels that 10% of the gross square footage would be appropriate. **Mr. Chris Moore** had concerns about residential lots that may be 1 acre or more, he felt that limiting them to just 600 sq. ft. would be inadequate, and asked if something could be included to give the larger lots consideration. **Matt** said some kind of provisions could be put in for larger lots, however the ordinance as it is written now would not allow any larger accessory structures. **Ms. Joan Schmid** asked if the City had a maximum lot coverage stipulation in the ordinance. **Matt** said he has never seen anything in the ordinance about a maximum lot coverage, he felt that the setbacks govern the boundaries. **Ms. Joan Schmid** said her concern was that someone with a small lot would want to put in a 600 sq. ft. structure and have no yard space left. **Mr. Moore** said because this was sent from BZA he feels like if it is recommended to City Council and approved this would help with the many variances they are seeing, and if someone has a larger lot they can go to BZA for a variance if needed. **Ms. Schmid** said she feels the proposed change would read better if it was listed as 501.1 (Residential) and 501.2 (Commercial & Industrial). **Matt** said if a motion was given it could include the sub-sections as specified by Ms. Schmid.

Public Input: None

Motion: Ms. Brittany Johnson made a motion to approve the recommendation as submitted with the sub-sections being made 501.1 (Residential) and 501.2 (Commercial & Industrial), seconded by Ms. Schmid; the motion carried 4 to 0 by a roll call vote.

- 2. Review and approve an easement plat for the City of Georgetown, showing a 15' access easement on the designated one (1) acre site behind Georgetown Middle School, for a newly proposed water tower. Matt Millwood/City Staff** said the City needs an easement for access of the water tower and the Land Development says that the Planning Commission has to approve all easements. **Will Cook/City Water Department** said that the City water tower will be placed on this site and an easement (15 ft.) is needed for access to the tower, this project should begin in August or September. **Ms. Schmid** asked if this project will cause any drainage issues. **Will Cook** said no because there is an emergency overflow pond installed.

Public Input: None

Motion: Mr. Chris Moore made a motion to approve as submitted, seconded by Ms. Brittany Johnson; the motion carried 4 to 0 by a roll call vote.

- 3. Review and recommend a text amendment request from the City of Georgetown to Article VII, Section 702.2 (minimum area of PD) of the City of Georgetown Zoning ordinance. Matt Millwood/City Staff** told the Board that this request comes from upper management of the City to have it presented to this Board for a recommendation to City Council. Currently the minimum required acreage is 10 contiguous acres of land for a PD, the request is for that to be moved down to 5 acres. The 10 acres was put into place by the 2011 Comprehensive Plan to stop spot zoning in the City. There are a few areas in town that this request may help with development and infill. The Bethel AME Church, owners of the Carolinian Inn wants to do some alterations which this request may help them do, the Winyah Fishing Village does not have the required 10 acres but want to do a Planned Development. Matt also said he spoke with the Building Official that remembered a couple of years ago that there was a vacant lot next to Hickory Knolls on Church Street that developers wanted to come in and do some type of multi-family or PD but it did not meet the 10 acres, these are some examples the Staff has heard. The negative side may be that we have more spot zoning, however lowering this may draw more businesses into town. **Mr. Smith** asked for Staff's recommendation. **Matt** said he did not have a recommendation on it, because he was in favor of moving the acreage up, and feels there are not a lot of tracks in town that are not developed, he said he is split on this issue. **Ms. Schmid** asked if someone wanted to develop 10 acres or more could they do it in phases. **Matt** said yes they could. **Ms. Schmid** said that would eliminate a hardship on developers. Her concerns are that making the required acreage smaller may cause a loss of a lot of green space, she feels this would be better if the ordinance stipulates a percentage as buildable land, and it would still have to include mix uses. This should help with spot zoning. **Ms. Johnson** asked what was used to change the acreage to 10 and felt maybe that should be considered before making a change. **Matt** said there was a sub-committee that research this and came up with the 10 acres. **Mr. Chris Moore** asked if this item needed some type of action tonight or can they table it and get more information. Matt said it is up to the Board on how to move forward.

Board Discussion: The Board agreed to table the item for more information. Matt asked that the Board members to email him any thoughts on the issue.

- VI. **Board Discussion: Matt told the Board he included some draft ordinance items in their packets, not for any formal action, but for them to look over and send him any thoughts on them:**
1. **Short-Term Vacation Rentals**, this was brought to Staff's attention because of some people that are renting out rooms or their homes and we are getting complaints and cannot police it because there is nothing in the ordinance.
 2. **Outdoor Open Displays**, this is being looked at because there are businesses that have a lot of stuff outside their business that looks bad and we need something in the ordinance, this has been model a lot to Surfside's ordinance.
 3. **Flexible Design District**, this would be a new zoning district that would give some flexibility. This would not require a mix use and this has been modeled after Myrtle Beach's ordinance. The Winyah Fishing Village is an example of how this may help developers.
 4. **Update the PC board on Comp. Plan and new REDD zoning district**, this will be done once we get more information for WRCOG concerning the Steel Mill property. Mr. Smith asked if anyone was in contact with the Steel Mill owners. Matt said that is above him and he had no knowledge of anything.

Ms. Schmid made comments on the short term vacation rentals by saying this could be regulated by the Building Codes. The enforcement needs to be done by the Code Enforcement or the Police Department. A definition of overcrowding should be put in the ordinance.

- VII. **Board Elections: Chris Moore made a motion to table the elections to the next meeting, seconded by Brittany Johnson; the motion carried 4 to 0 by a roll call vote.**
- VIII. **Adjournment:** With there being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted By,

*Debra Grant
Board Secretary*