

The Town of Summerville Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes
May 17, 2021

This meeting of the Town of Summerville Planning Commission was held in Town Council Chambers and was attended by Commission Members, Jim Reaves, Chairman; Kevin Carroll; Tom Hart; Charlie Stoudenmire; Betty Profit; and Elaine Segelken. Jonathan Lee was unable to attend. Staff in attendance included Jessi Shuler, AICP, Director of Planning.

Jim Reaves, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

Approval of Minutes:

The Chairman asked if there were any edits or additions to the minutes from the meeting on April 19, 2021. Hearing none, the minutes were accepted as presented.

Public Hearings:

The first public hearing opened at 4:01 PM and was for the request to rezone TMS#137-06-11-002, located at 404 W. Richardson Avenue, approximately 0.60 acres, and owned by William A. & Frances L. Harbeson, from GR-2, General Residential, to GR-5, General Residential. (Council District 2) Mr. Reaves introduced the item and asked if the applicant was in attendance. The applicant Mike Taylor stated that he was representing the owners, as he currently has the property under contract. He explained that he plans to subdivide the lot and build a house for him and his family on the corner. The existing house is only about five feet from the other side property line, so it appears that there could have been another house on the corner in the past. Mr. Taylor noted that he had contacted all of the other property owners on this block and all had given a written or verbal okay to his plans.

Gary Brewer of 209 S. Laurel Street stated that his family had owned the house that he lives in for the past 80 years, and there had never been another house on that property. He also noted that he had not be contacted by Mr. Taylor about his plans. He explained that he didn't personally have a problem with another house being built on the lot, but only if the zoning remains GR-2 because the GR-5 zoning would allow townhomes or smaller homes. He doesn't want the same thing to happen that happened with the Ayers apartments and wants to maintain the integrity of the street. Mr. Reaves asked Mr. Brewer if he knew that his property was already zoned GR-5. Mr. Brewer responded that he just found that out, and he never would have approved it if he'd known.

Tom Haskell of 214 S. Laurel Street informed the Commission that he just moved to his house 14 months ago. He stressed that he also is not opposed to another home, but he doesn't understand why the property needs to be rezoned to GR-5. He doesn't want a large complex with multiple dwellings.

With no further comments this public hearing was closed at 4:09 PM.

Old Business

There were no items under Old Business.

New Business:

The first item under New Business was New Street Names. Ms. Shuler stated that they had no new street names to review this month.

The second item under New Business was the request to rezone TMS#137-06-11-002, located at 404 W. Richardson Avenue, approximately 0.60 acres, and owned by William A. & Frances L. Harbeson, from GR-2, General Residential, to GR-5, General Residential. (Council District 2) Mr. Carroll made a motion

to recommend approval of the request to Town Council with Mr. Reaves making the second for purposes of discussion.

Ms. Segelken questioned the differences between GR-2 and GR-5. Ms. Shuler explained that the primary difference was the minimum lot size – 20,000 sf for GR-2 and 8,500 sf for GR-5. They also had slightly different setbacks. She further explained that GR-5 only allows for townhomes as a conditional use if it is part of the entire block face. Ms. Shuler also noted that since this block is in the Historic District, the BAR would have to approve demolition of any homes on the block in order to allow for townhomes, and she felt that approval would be extremely unlikely. Ms. Segelken mentioned that she was initially concerned about rezoning the corner of a block that is entirely GR-2, but that her concern was eased when she found out that it was only being requested to allow an additional residence to be built. Mr. Hart detailed that he'd spoken to both Mr. Taylor and Mr. Brewer, and he believed that there was a misunderstanding about the rezoning request. He asked for confirmation from Mr. Taylor that he only intended to build one house, and Mr. Taylor confirmed. He then asked Mr. Brewer if he would be okay with the rezoning if the conditions don't allow townhomes. Mr. Brewer responded that that would ease his concerns, but then asked about Mr. Taylor's intentions for the existing Sears house on the property. Mr. Taylor stressed that he has lived in Summerville his whole life. He plans to do a few minor improvements to the Sears house, such as adding a rock drive and a fence before either selling the property or renting it out. Mr. Stoudenmire pointed out that Mr. Brewer was challenging Mr. Taylor's request for the GR-5 zoning when his own property was zoned GR-5. Mr. Carroll questioned how the lot was planned to be subdivided. Ms. Shuler showed the proposed subdivision on the screen, and Mr. Taylor detailed that each lot would be about 80 feet wide and he planned to build about a 2,500 sf house. Mr. Brewer agreed that he was more comfortable with the request after understanding the conditions necessary to allow townhomes, but he questioned why this could not be accomplished through a variance. Ms. Shuler explained that multiple variances would be required, and Mr. Reaves also noted that it had to do with real property laws.

Following the discussion, the question was called and the motion carried unanimously.

Miscellaneous:

Mr. Reaves reminded the Commission members about the upcoming training opportunities.

Adjourn

With no further business for the Commission, Ms. Segelken made a motion to adjourn with Mr. Carroll making the second. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 4:26 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jessi Shuler, AICP
Director of Planning

Date: June 21, 2021

Approved: 
Jim Reaves, Chairman or Kevin Carroll, Vice Chairman