

PRESENT: C. Bragg, Chairman
R. Harris, Vice Chairman
D. Henderson
L. Howdyshell
K. Leonard
B. Schindler
R. Thomas

A. Vane, Planner II
E. Goodloe, Planner I
D. Wolfe, Director of Community Development

ABSENT:

VIRGINIA: At the Called Meeting of the Augusta County Planning Commission held on Tuesday, April 11, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. in the Community Development Conference Room, Augusta County Government Center Verona, Virginia.

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The Planning Commission reviewed the following rezoning request which will be considered at the Public Hearing.

Hughes Boardwalk, LLC
81 Quicks Mill Road
Verona, VA

Wilson Investments, LLC
corner of Tinkling Springs Road and
Goose Creek Road, Fishersville, VA

F & P Homes, Inc.
15 West High Street
Stuarts Draft, VA

Stuarts Draft Ruritan Charities Club
Schneider Park, Wayne Avenue
Stuarts Draft, VA

Consolidated Edison Development Inc.
Goose Creek Road and Jefferson Highway
Fishersville, VA

Chairman

Secretary

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D. Wolfe, Director of Community Development

ABSENT:

VIRGINIA: At the Regular Meeting of the Augusta County Planning Commission held on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room, Augusta County Government Center Verona, Virginia.

Mrs. Carolyn Bragg introduced David Henderson as the new Planning Commission representing the Pastures District.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Mrs. Carolyn Bragg stated as there were seven (7) members present, there was a quorum.

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Minutes

Mr. Randy Harris moved to approve the minutes of the called and regular meeting held on March 14, 2023.

Mr. Kyle Leonard seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

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Public Hearing

Mrs. Bragg stated that there were five (5) items on the agenda for the Public Hearing.

Ms. Alidia Vane introduced the first agenda item as A request to add a Public Use Overlay (PUO) for a school on approximately 1.93 acres (TMP 036A4 1 8) owned by Hughes Boardwalk, LLC located at 81 Quicks Mill Rd in Verona in the North River Magisterial District. The property is located within an Urban Service Overlay District, in an Urban Service Area of the Comprehensive Plan, planned for Medium Density Residential. The proposed usage of the property is to add a Public Use Overlay over the current Single Family Residential (SF-15) zoning in order to relocate a school.

Mrs. Bragg asked if the applicant was present and wished to speak.

Robin Puryear, Vice President of Educational Services with Keys Academy stated that they are licensed for 24 students and are looking for a location that will work for them so that services are not interrupted

Mrs. Bragg opened the public hearing asking if anyone present wished to speak on the request.

With none to speak Mrs. Bragg closed the public hearing.

Mr. Larry Howdyshell stated that he felt this was a good use for the building and made a motion to approve the request.

Mr. Bill Schindler seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Ms. Vane introduced the next agenda item as A request to amend previously-adopted proffers on approximately 2.38 acres owned by Wilson Investments, LLC (TMP 067N 3 31 and 067N 3 32) located on the corner of Tinkling Spring Rd. and Goose Creek Rd. in Fishersville in the Wayne Magisterial District. The property is located within an Urban Service Overlay, in an Urban Service Area of the Comprehensive Plan, planned for Business. The purpose of the request is to amend proffers to allow one additional right-in-right-out entrance onto Tinkling Spring Rd. (Rte. 285).

Mrs. Bragg asked if the applicant was present and wished to speak.

Derek Reardon with Wilson stated that he would answer any questions regarding the request.

Mrs. Bragg opened the public hearing asking if anyone present wished to speak on the request.

Remonia Fisher of 192 Buckboard Road asked if the second entrance would be close to the stop light.

Ms. Vane stated the entrance would be on parcel 32.

With none left to speak Mrs. Bragg closed the public hearing.

Mr. Robert Thomas made a motion to approve the request.

Mr. Howdyshell seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Ms. Vane introduced the next agenda item as A request to rezone from General Business to Single Family Residential approximately 0.21 acres owned by F&P Homes Inc. (TMP 084A 1 1 14) located at 15 West High St. Lot B in Stuarts Draft in the South River Magisterial District. The property is located within an Urban Service Overlay, in an Urban Service Area of the Comprehensive Plan, planned for Medium Density Residential. The purpose of the request is to rezone the property in order to build an approximately 1,300 sq. ft. single family dwelling on the vacant lot.

Mrs. Bragg asked if the applicant was present and wished to speak.

Francisco Rivera, stated he felt the rezoning made sense for a house. He state that the neighbors he spoke with said they would rather see a house than a business.

Mrs. Bragg opened the public hearing.

With none to speak Mrs. Bragg closed the public hearing.

Mr. Leonard stated that the addition of a house would better serve the community and made a motion to approve the request.

Mr. Harris seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Ms. Vane introduced the request to rezone from Single Family Residential to General Business approximately 2.42 acres owned by the Stuarts Draft Ruritan Charities Club (TMP 084 99B portion) located at Schneider Park on Wayne Ave. in Stuarts Draft in the South River Magisterial District. The property is located within an Urban Service Overlay, in an Urban Service Area of the Comprehensive Plan, planned for Urban Open Space. The purpose of the request is to rezone the portion of TMP 084 99B to match the rest of the park, which is zoned General Business, and in order for pickleball courts or other recreational uses to be built with a Special Use Permit.

Mrs. Bragg asked if the owner was present and wished to speak.

Louis Gage, President of the Stuarts Draft Ruritan Club stated they wanted to unify the property to all be zoned General Business.

Mrs. Bragg opened the public hearing.

With none to speak on the request Mrs. Bragg closed the public hearing.

Mrs. Bragg state that she would abstain from the vote as she was a member of the Stuarts Draft Ruritan Club.

Mr. Harris commended the Ruritan Club members on their nice park and made a motion to approve the request.

Mr. Schindler seconded the motion.

The motion passed with six (6) in favor and one (1) abstained vote.

Ms. Vane introduce the final item on the agenda as A request for a substantial accord determination pursuant to Virginia State Code Section 15.2-2232 for the Consolidated Edison Development, Inc. Special Use Permit request to construct and operate a small-scale solar energy system (3 MW) on property owned by Elm Spring LLC (TMP 067 76, 067 76H, 067 76K, 067 78) located between Goose Creek Rd and Jefferson Highway in Fishersville in the Wayne Magisterial District. Total acreage for all parcels is approximately 207 acres and the proposed acreage to be developed with photovoltaic panels is approximately 25 acres. Parcels included in this request are located within an Urban Service Overlay, within an Urban Service Area of the Comprehensive Plan, planned for Community Mixed Use and Medium Density Residential.

Mrs. Bragg asked if the applicant was present and wished to speak.

Kevin Comer with Antares Group stated that the property owner wanted to improve the financial operations of the property with little impact to the tenant farmer. Mr. Comer stated that power from the solar panels would help to service up to 650 homes and that they would be working with Dominion Energy.

Jeff Lord, project lead, stated that the solar panels would be a compliment to agriculture.

Lindsey Nelson, project developer, discussed the pilot program to graze sheep on the property where the panels will be located.

Mr. Comer stated that a meeting was held for community members and conducted house visits with neighbors to discuss the solar panels.

Stephen Quina stated that there would be 3 storm water basins for the run off from the project. He stated that the runoff would be less than what it currently is.

Mr. Comer addressed the policies that staff had mentioned in their reports for the project, touching on the impact to farm lands and setbacks.

Mr. Howdyshell asked if the panels were stationary or tracking.

Mr. Comer stated that they were tracking panels.

Mr. Howdyshell asked how many people would be employed at the site.

Lord stated that once the panels were installed they would not be manned on a daily basis, that they would be remotely monitored and probably have a yearly onsite inspection.

Mr. Schindler aske who would be responsible for any damage done by the livestock on the property.

Mr. Comer stated that that is something left to be worked out.

Mrs. Bragg opened the public hearing asking if anyone present wished to speak on the request.

Phil Martin, Executive Director of Augusta Water, noted the availability of public water and sewer in the area. He stated that if the property were to be developed as predicted by the comprehensive plan they are looking at an estimated revenue of 1.8 million dollars from water and sewer fees.

Dr. Virginia Badget, owner of Elm Springs Farm, stated that they had no plan to sell the property for development. They want to maintain the farm in agriculture.

Mick Anderson of 73 Hickory Hills Ln. would like to see the property stay as a farm and felt the solar panels were an inappropriate use for the property.

Lisa Puzio asked that the request be denied.

Jack Barber of 169 Windsor Dr. spoke in favor of the request.

Bobby Whitescarver of 164 Whiskey Creek Rd. spoke in favor of the request.

Nancy Sorrells, speaking on behalf of the Alliance for Augusta County, also spoke in favor of the request.

Julia Woosley of 1666 Goose Creek Rd. also spoke in favor of the request.

Robert Woosley of 1666 Goose Creek Rd. was in favor of the request.

Wayne Nolde of 210 Cider Mill Rd. supported the request.

Teresa Biby of 71 Hickory Hill Rd. spoke against the request.

Ben Pumphrey of 1705 Goose Creek Rd. had no problems with solar and supported the request.

Remonia Fisher of 192 Buckboard Rd. shared her concern with the wildlife in the area and any effects the panels would have on the water systems.

Ann Fisher of 1422 Goose Creek Rd. was concerned with the effects on her well water.

With none left to speak, Mrs. Bragg closed the public hearing.

Mr. Thomas stated that a lot of times the wishes of the property owners get lost. He stated he felt the property owner should get to decide what happens with their property.

Mr. Thomas made a motion to find the request to be in substantial accord with the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Schindler shared his support for the request.

Mr. Leonard state that he would like to see houses because that's what the county needs. He stated that with the long-term planning of the county this would not be in substantial accord.

Mr. Howdyshell stated he felt this was a good place for solar. He stated it saves agriculture property and provides extra income.

Mrs. Bragg shared her concern with the infrastructure and development. She did not support the request.

Mr. Schindler seconded the motion which carried with a 4 to 3 vote with Mr. Thomas, Mr. Schindler, Mr. Henderson, and Mr. Howdyshell voting in favor and Mrs. Bragg, Mr. Harris, and Mr. Leonard voting against.

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Staff Reports

Ms. Vane gave an update on the Comprehensive Plan and Economic Development Strategic Plan and stated that four (4) proposals had been received.

Ms. Goodloe reviewed with the commissioners the agenda items for the May 2023 Board of Zoning Appeals meeting. No comments were submitted.

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Adjournment

With there being no further business to discuss, Mr. Schindler made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Thomas seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Chairman

Secretary