**STATESBORO PLANNING COMMISSION**

**January 13, 2015**

**3:00 P.M.**

**City Hall Council Chambers**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Present**: Planning Commission Members: Rev. E. Charles Lee, Rick Barr, Nick Propps, Holmes Ramsey, April Stafford, David McLendon and Jeremy Ragan. City of Statesboro Staff: Director of Planning and Development Mandi Cody and Development Clerk Cindy Clifton.

1. **Call to Order**

Commissioner Propps called the meeting to order at 3:04 P.M.

1. **Motion to Approve Order of the Meeting Agenda**

Commissioner Stafford made a motion to approve the order of the meeting agenda; seconded by Commissioner Ramsey. Motion carried 7 to 0.

1. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Motion made by Commissioner Barr; second by Commissioner McLendon to approve minutes for the December 17, 2014 and October 14, 2014 meetings. Motion carried 7 to 0.

1. **New Business**
2. **APPLICATION # RZ 14-10-01**: Estate of Martha C. Benson c/o Dr. Robert M. Benson, Jr., Executor requests a zoning map amendment for 4.41 acres of property located at 1301 Fair Road from R3 (Medium Density Multiple Family Residential) zoning district to CR (Commercial Retail) zoning district to permit the use of the property for a free standing fuel dispensing station with convenience store to be owned and operated by Enmark Stations, Inc. and for development of a hotel/motel or other use compatible with the Enmark Station (Tax Parcel Number MS62000054B000).

**APPLICATION # V 14-10-02:** Estate of Martha C. Benson c/o Dr. Robert M. Benson, Jr., Executor requests a variance from Section 1002 regarding building height from the allowed 35’ or three (3) story building height to four (4) stories for property located at 1301 Fair Road (Tax Parcel Number MS62000054B000).

Mandi Cody presented the rezone and height variance to the Planning Commission. She then answered questions from the Commissioners and explained that the Department of Planning and Development had received an extremely large amount of opposition against the proposed concept plan of building a gas station and a four story hotel.

Attorney Stephen T. Rushing spoke as a representative on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Rushing gave a short presentation regarding the history of the subject site and explained the willingness of his client to use natural colors, deem lighting, landscaping, and buffers to provide an upscaled commercial retail site. He then answered questioned from the commission.

Fifteen residents of Woodlawn Subdivision and other property owners near the subject site spoke in opposition of the request.

Commissioner Barr made a motion to recommend denial of the requested rezone application number RZ 14-10-01. Commissioner McLendon seconded the motion and it carried 7 to 0. Then Commissioner Stafford made a motion to recommend denial of the requested height variance application number V 14-10-02. Commissioner Barr seconded the motion and it carried 7 to 0.

1. **APPLICATION # RZ 14-11-03:** Brason Investments LLC requests a zoning map amendment for .38 acres of property located at 101 Hawthorne Road from R20 (Single Family Residential) zoning district to O (Office) zoning district to utilize the existing single family residence as an office (Tax Parcel Number MS74000085000).

Mandi Cody presented the rezone case and expressed the staff’s concern about spot zoning. She also explained if City Council were to make a finding that the area around the subject site was going to change then the rezone would be in line with present conditions and the projected future needs of the City. She then answered questions from the Commissioners.

John Dotson of Maxwell Reddick and Associates spoke as a representative on the behalf of the applicant and answered questions from the commission. Mr. Dotson stated that at the current time he was not sure of the applicant’s exact plans and explained that the applicant was not present because he was out of town on business.

Bryan Davis, Property Manager for Hendley Properties addressed the commission. Mr. Davis stated that Hendley Properties would like to know the applicant’s plan of action and possibly see a design of the proposed plans. He explained that they did not oppose at this time, but also wanted to make sure that the design was nice in appearance and would not pose any conflict with the rental properties surrounding the subject site owned by Hendley properties.

After discussion, Mr. Dotson requested that the map amendment application be tabled to allow an opportunity for the applicant to reconsider his request or bring a proposed concept plan back before the commission during it’s February meeting. The commission agreed.

1. **APPLICATION # RZ 14-11-05:** Asia World Co. Inc Charles Tsang requests a zoning map amendment to 2 acres of property located at 400 Knight Road from R4 (High Density Residential) zoning district to CR (Commercial Retail) zoning district for the purpose of developing a commercial retail center (Tax Parcel Number MS62000005B000).

Mandi Cody presented the rezone request along with the staffs recommended conditions if approved. She explained that the staff’s recommended conditions were to provide guidance and restrictions for what could be developed on the site in the future due to the applicant currently not having a proposed concept plan. Ms. Cody then answered questions from the Commissioners.

Realtor Sam Dipolito spoke as a representative on behalf of the applicant and answered questions. He explained that at the current time the applicant did not have any proposed plans and had not indicated that redevelopment of the site was going to take place any time soon. Mr. Dipolito stated that the current apartments on the site were out of date and would require a complete renovation that would be very costly to applicant and the applicant felt his money would be better spent redeveloping the site as a retail shopping center.

Commissioner Ragan made a motion to recommend approval with the staff recommended conditions as listed in the staff report. Commissioner Stafford seconded the motion and it carried 7 to 0.

1. **APPLICATION # RZ 14-12-01:** John Ray Hendley requests a zoning map amendment for .31 acres of property located at South College Street from R20 (Single Family Residential) zoning district to R3 (Medium Density Multiple Family Residential) zoning district to allow for the development of single family duplexes (Tax Parcel Number S21000003000).

Mandi Cody presented the rezone and then answered questions from the Commissioners.

Bryan Davis, Property Manager for Hendley Properties, spoke on the behalf of the rezone request and explained that the request would allow for them to use this vacant lot as a site to add a single family duplex and provided shared parking for the duplexes that they are currently renovating on the adjoining lot. He then answered questions from the commission.

Commissioner Stafford made a motion to recommend approval of the rezone request application number RZ 14-12-01. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion and it carried 7 to 0.

1. **APPLICATION # SE 14-10-03:** Rick Mock requests a special exception be granted pursuant to the Statesboro Zoning Ordinance to allow the operation of a used car dealership in the CR (Commercial Retail) zoning district (Tax Parcel Number MS43000018000).

Mandi Cody presented the special exception and explained that due to issues regarding Life Safety Standards and being unable to make successful contact with the applicant to resolve the issues that she recommended denial of the request.

The applicant was not present.

Commissioner Stafford made a motion to recommend denial of the request as recommended by staff. Commissioner Barr seconded the motion and it carried 7 to 0.

1. **APPLICATION # V 14-11-01:** Statesboro Hospitality requests a variance from Article XV of the Statesboro Zoning Ordinance to increase the sign height and style from the required (8) eight foot monument sign to a (15) fifteen foot freestanding pole sign for the parcel’s southern property line that fronts the Veteran’s Memorial Parkway. (Tax Parcel Number MS75000007001).

Mandi Cody presented the sign variance and explained due to the rising topography of the subject site that fronts Veteran’s Memorial Parkway that the staff recommended approval of the request. She then answered questions from the commission.

The applicant spoke and explained due to the rise of the bypass that a 8’ tall sign would not be visible to travelers from the bypass.

Commissioner Barr made a motion to recommend approval of the sign variance request. Commissioner Ramsey seconded the motion and it carried 7 to 0.

1. **APPLICATION # V 14-11-02:** Suites at Market District. LLC requests a variance from Article XV of the Statesboro Zoning Ordinance to allow for an additional monument style ground sign for businesses located within a PUD/CR (Planned Unit Development) zoning district. (Tax Parcel Number MS74000198A10A).

Mandi Cody presented the sign variance and explained that a variance of the same nature had been previously approved by city council but expired before two of the three businesses exercised the rights allowed by the variance; and now the remaining two businesses are requesting the variance at hand to allow them to construct roadside signs. She then answered questions from the Commissioners.

Will Self, owner of Action Signs, spoke on behalf of the applicants and answered questions.

After discussion, Commissioner Stafford made a motion to recommend approval of the sign variance request. Commissioner McLendon seconded the motion and it carried 7 to 0.

1. **APPLICATION # V 14-11-04:** Connections Ministries of Statesboro, Inc., requests a variance from Article XV of the Statesboro Zoning Ordinance to increase the aggregate building sign square footage from the permissible eighty (80) square feet aggregate allowance to an aggregate of 200 square feet for a nonresidential use within Sign District 1 (Tax Parcel Number 107000005004).

Mandi Cody presented the sign variance and explained that the requested increase of aggregate sign square footage was not an extreme request when you consider the acreage of the property and the massive square footage of the building. She then referred questions to Will Self, owner of Action Signs.

Mr. Self, spoke on behalf of the applicant and answered questions from the commission. Shawn Fox of Connections Ministries of Statesboro also spoke and explained the need for the proposed signage.

Commissioner Ramsey made a motion to recommend approval of the sign variance request. Commissioner McLendon seconded the motion and it carried 7 to 0.

1. **Announcements**

There were no announcements.

1. **Adjourn**

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 P.M. by Commissioner Stafford. Commissioner Ragan seconded the motion and it carried 7-0.

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**Chair – Nick Propps**

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**Secretary – Mandi Cody**

**Director of Planning and Development**