

Planning Board Minutes & Proceedings

March 3, 2009

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Meeting called to order by Chairman Carl Stewart at 4:00PM. **Members present:** Sue Roskosh, Zachary Landis, Phil Leary and Anthony Harwell. **Members absent:** Randy Braddy Ezekiel Johnson, Earl Wallace, and Clem Saccareccia. Also present: City Attorney, Donald Holmes; Planning Director, Jim Lee; Assistant Planning Director, Debbie Banks and Recording Secretary, Pam Sprouse.

Motion made by Sue Roskosh to approve the minutes of the February 3, 2009 meeting. Seconded by Anthony Harwell. All members present voted affirmative. Motion carried.

Jim Lee read "To Appeal Any Decision."

Mr. Stewart requested that any Ex Parte Communication be disclosed prior to each case.

NEW BUSINESS

Case PB 09-01 **Address:** Downtown Riverfront/Downtown Business Zoning Districts
 Applicant: Property & Business Owners group from the districts

Request: To amend the uses in Sections 94-161 and 94-162 pertaining to zoning and to Section 94-262 pertaining to required number of parking spaces.

(Public Hearing)

Mr. Lee advised that in October of last year a group of business and property owners came to the City Manager with a request to expand the uses in the Downtown Business and Riverfront zoning districts. A group of business owners and Ms. Julie Sorenson did the legwork of looking at other zoning districts, and that most of the proposed changes to the two zoning districts came from a successful model of Deland. He added that this is more geared toward business as an economic stimulus offering greater opportunities to business community in the downtown area.

Ms. Angel Murtagh, a downtown business (Angela's of Palatka, Inc.) and property owner, commented that these are rough economic times and we need to think outside the box. She added that there is a lot of history, and long time family-owned businesses downtown. There have been a lot of businesses that have tried to come into the downtown area that could not come to light, as the current zoning would not allow for the use, such as a grocer or pet store, which is needed to accommodate those that come by boat, or are staying in a hotel that may not allow pets or even second story residents in this area. She mentioned that parking requirements were also a problem for some business to locate downtown, that when most of these buildings were built, there were no parking requirements, adding that the requirements need to be relaxed for downtown to thrive again. She ended by saying that she believed that the Deland model was a good tool that proved to be successful, as their downtown area once looked a lot like ours does. She thanked Ms. Sorenson for her time and efforts in making this proposal possible.

Mr. Lee stated that he and Ms. Banks have been involved throughout this process and recommend approval of the request, advising that the proposed changes are in red, and the reduction of parking space requirements was for commercial uses.

Ms. Murtagh also commented that our downtown area was thriving in the 70's and if Deland can do it, we can do it.

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Case PB 09-01 Downtown Riverfront/Downtown Business Zoning Districts - continued

Sam Deputy, 623 St. Johns Ave. advised that Downtown Palatka Inc., met in January and voted to recommend this passage and move it forward. He reiterated, that they are struggling downtown and of the existing businesses there, a lot of them are long-time family owned. He ended by saying that this change needs to come about versus having any more empty buildings.

Normand J. Jutras, 412 Mulholland Park, spoke in favor of the request and stated he believed that this was a good step in the right direction and that most historic districts, take into affect the requirements of the times of older buildings.

(Regular Meeting)

Motion made by Phil Leary to recommend approval to the City Commission of these modifications to the ordinance as submitted. Seconded by Sue Roskosh. All members present voted affirmative. Motion carried.

Case PB 07-36 **Address:** 722 River Street (42-10-27-6850-0500-0022)
Applicant: Cypress Mills L.L.C.

Request: To amend the Future Land Use Map from Industrial to Medium Density Residential.

(Public Hearing)

Mr. Lee gave a brief overview of the request, explaining that the intent of this request is to remove the current industrial designation and change to Medium Density Residential Future Land Use, which will then be consistent to the two sides of the approved Planned Unit Development. If approved by the City Commission, it will be forwarded to the Department of Community Affairs as a small-scale amendment. He recommended approval of the request.

Norman J. Jutras, 412 Mulholland Park, advised that this is the last remaining parcel of the Florida Furniture site that was labeled industrial and it needs to be converted.

Mr. Landis asked Mr. Jurtras if this request were approved, would that help move his project forward.

Mr. Jutras advised that this is part of what is needed, that they have been working with several State Departments, including the Department of Environmental Protection, the Water Management District and the Governor's Council. That working with the state is a long process. He further advised that they recently submitted an application for a \$500,000.00 grant, to work along with the City and the State, to clean and treat the water from the 400-acre basin (basin #16) before the water goes into the St. Johns River.

(Regular Meeting)

Motion made by Zachary Landis to approve the request to amend the Future Land Use Map from Industrial to Medium Density Residential. Seconded by Phil Leary. All present voted affirmative. Motion carried.

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OLD BUSINESS

Case PB 08-29 **Address:** N 16th from Reid Street to St. Johns Ave.
 Applicant: St. Johns Automotive Real Estate LLC
 Agent: Juli Holmes

Request: To close that portion of N 16th St from Reid Street to St. Johns Ave.

(Public Hearing)

Ms. Lee advised that the applicant requested to continue this request until the April 7, 2009 meeting as they are waiting on traffic counts.

(Regular Meeting)

Motion made by Phil Leary to table this case until the April 7, 2009 meeting at 4:00 pm. Seconded by Sue Roskosh. All present voted affirmative. Motion carried.

Motion made by Phil Leary for adjournment at 4:39 pm. Seconded by Sue Roskosh. All present voted affirmative. Motion carried.