



February 14, 2022 7:00 PM
Town of Garner Planning Commission Minutes
Council Meeting Room
900 7th Avenue · Garner, North Carolina 27529

I. Call to Order

Mr. Blasco called the regular meeting of the Town of Garner Planning Commission to order at 7:01 p.m. on Monday, February 14, 2022.

II. Roll Call

The Secretary conducted the roll call for the meeting.

Members present: Jon Blasco, Chair; Phillip Jefferson, Vice Chair; Gina Avent; Ralph Carson; Vang Moua; Sherry Phillips; and Michael Voiland.

Staff in attendance: Mr. Jeff Triezenberg, Planning Director; Mr. David Bamford, Planning Services Manager; Ms. Gaby Lontos-Lawler, Senior Planner – Transportation; Ms. Terri Jones, Town Attorney; and Mr. Brian Godfrey, Planning Technician.

III. Invocation

Mr. Jefferson gave the invocation.

IV. Induction of New Member

Mr. Carson was sworn in as a Planning Commissioner.

V. Minutes

Regular Meeting Minutes December 13, 2021 – Mr. Voiland made a motion to approve the presented minutes of the December 13th meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jefferson. The vote to approve was unanimous.

V. Old/New Business:

A. Conditional Zoning Map Amendment Request:

CZ-MP-21-09, 1316-1330 W. Garner Road – Tier 2 Conditional zoning map amendment request (CZ-MP-21-09) submitted by Concept 8 Holdings, LLC, to rezone 9.36 +/- acres along the northeast side of West Garner Road from Single-Family Residential (R-20) and Multifamily (MF-1) to master planned Multifamily (MF-1 C248) Conditional. The site is located between 1316 and 1330 West Garner Road and may be further identified as Wake County PIN #'s **1711252571, 1711252635, 1711252787, 1711250755, 1711250946, 1711158950, 1711158845, and 1711157997.**

Staff/Commission Discussion: Mr. Bamford presented the zoning portion of the staff report. Mr. Triezenberg presented the master plan portion of the staff report. Mr. Blasco asked whether staff's recommendation was informed by the proposed road alignment as a foremost concern. Mr. Carson asked whether staff preferred to have the connection to Curtiss Drive shown in earlier proposals from the applicant. Mr. Carson asked whether a Curtiss Drive connection would include a waterline connection. Mr. Carson asked whether any studies had been done on traffic impacts for the proposed road connections.

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Mr. Toby Coleman, of Smith Anderson, spoke on behalf of the project. Ms. Avent asked what type of parking was planned for the units. Ms. Avent asked if visitor parking spots would be provided. Mr. Carson asked whether the facades of the different types of townhomes would be similar. Mr. Jefferson asked whether there would be front porches on the townhomes. Mr. Jefferson asked whether the applicant had any concerns about different townhome styles being so close together. Mr. Jefferson asked whether there was an estimated price point for the two types of townhomes. Ms. Phillips asked about the status of the several existing structures on the subject properties. Mr. Blasco asked whether all the properties shared the same owner. Mr. Blasco asked whether the applicant had done any studies/surveys on the quality of the trees on the site. Mr. Blasco asked whether the applicant had yet performed any tree save calculations to understand how much the proposed buffers would be saving.

Mr. Blasco asked if there were any proponents wanting to speak on the matter. Hearing none, Mr. Blasco asked if there were any opponents wants to speak on the matter.

Mr. David Schmidt made the case that the proposed rezoning was inconsistent with the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Schmidt stated that the proposed density was inconsistent with the Plan. Mr. Schmidt also expressed concerns for public safety considering the presence of nearby uses which could potentially be hazardous.

Mr. Robert Motta expressed concerns about impacts to neighbors, including traffic and safety. Mr. Motta also stated concerns related to privacy, water, and wildlife.

Ms. Ann Rivers asked for the Commission to help protect valuable green space and urban forest assets. Ms. Rivers expressed concerns with the proposed density, traffic impacts, stormwater impacts, and noise pollution impacts.

Mr. Blasco asked if there were any other members of the public wanting to speak on the matter. Hearing none, Mr. Blasco closed the public hearing and brought the matter back to the table for additional discussion/motion.

Mr. Voiland asked whether there had been any indication that the trees on the site were special.

Mr. Blasco noted three major points on the application: transportation, density, and tree preservation. Mr. Blasco noted his support for connecting to Villavista Trace, and that he was not sure that any resulting traffic would be significant or excessive. Mr. Blasco considered whether townhomes and greater levels of residential density were appropriate for this location. Mr. Blasco observed the need to preserve trees and stated his appreciation for the 100 feet of buffer on the eastern site boundary. Mr. Blasco stated his preference for reduced density, improved tree protection, and the establishment of the road connections.

Mr. Voiland asked whether the staff would present other alternative diagrams of possible developments in the next meeting.

Mr. Blasco observed that challenging times in housing and development associated with high costs. Mr. Carson expressed concerns that neighbors may have purchased single-family residential lots with the expectation that density would predictably fall within the medium-density range called for in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Carson stated his preference for no more than 5 dwelling units per acre.

Mr. Jefferson stated that the multiple inconsistencies bothered him with the proposal. Mr. Jefferson observed the site to be a gateway into Garner and stated his preference for tree preservation and character-enhancement. Mr. Jefferson stated his preference for the density to be closer to 5 dwelling units per acre.

Mr. Blasco observed that a full tree survey would be an unfair requirement, but that perhaps something to that effect would be a good suggestion. Mr. Jefferson elaborated on the character he would like to see by speaking about the transitional scale of buildings from single-family residential to the proposed townhomes.

Mr. Blasco commented that pushing or orienting townhomes towards W. Garner Road would give the site more of an urban feel while protecting more existing trees. Mr. Jefferson observed how small changes could allow for a more local streetscape.

Ms. Avent stated her agreement with her fellow commissioners and her feeling that the proposed density was excessive. Ms. Avent stated her belief that more thought needed to be given to the proposal.

Ms. Phillips stated her agreement with her fellow commissioners.

RESULT: Table Item until the next Meeting: March 14, 2022 [UNANIMOUS]

Motion: Mr. Voiland – I move that the Planning Commission table **CZ-MP-21-09** until the regular meeting of March 14, 2022; and for staff to continue to work with the applicant, taking into account the discussion here tonight.

Second: Ms. Avent

VOTE: Aye: Avent, Blasco, Carson, Jefferson, Moua, Phillips, Voiland

VI. Reports

- A. Presentation – Garner Pedestrian Plan** – Ms. Lontos-Lawler gave a presentation on the Pedestrian Plan. Mr. Carson volunteered to serve on the Plan’s Steering Committee.
- B. Planning Director** – Mr. Triezenberg yielded to Ms. Terri Jones, Town Attorney, who invited Commissioners to the upcoming training for the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA). Mr. Triezenberg noted the Town Council’s denial of the Spring Drive project. Mr. Triezenberg stated that the Commission would be asked to hold a special meeting for the UDO Re-Write in the upcoming months. Mr. Triezenberg gave updates on the department’s staffing and the upcoming Council Retreat.
- C. Planning Commission** – Mr. Moua stated that the Planning Commission had a good conversation. Mr. Moua observed that the Commission must balance existing conditions and character with proposed changes. Mr. Moua observed that the Commission must ask whether the Town wants the proposed change and whether its in character. Mr. Moua stated that he believed that at least one street connection was necessary for the evening’s W. Garner Road proposal. Mr. Moua was grateful to have more time to gain more clarity about the evening’s W. Garner Road proposal.

VII. Adjournment

Having no further matters to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:51 PM.