

**MINUTES OF THE
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
January 18, 2023**

PL(P) 22-43 & Z-22-12-005: An annexation and original zoning request from County CZ-HB (Conditional Zoning - Highway Business) to City CD-RM-18 (Conditional District - Residential Multi-family – 18) for the property identified as 3510 Liberty Road, generally described as west of Liberty Road, north of Edgemont Road, and east of Old US Highway 421 (24.07 acres). (RECOMMENDED APPROVAL)

Mr. Kirkman reviewed the summary information for the subject property and surrounding properties and advised of the condition associated with the request. Mr. Kirkman stated the GSO2040 Comprehensive Plan designates the property as Urban General on the Future Built Form Map and Residential on the Future Land Use Map. Staff determined the proposed original zoning request supports the Comprehensive Plan's Creating Great Places goal to expand Greensboro's citywide network of unique neighborhoods offering residents of all walks of life a variety of quality housing choices and the Building Community Connections goal to maintain stable, attractive, and healthy places to live and raise families. The proposed CD-RM-18 zoning district allows moderate intensity residential uses that support nearby industrial uses and are also compatible with various nearby residential uses. Care should be taken with respect to building orientation, building materials, building height, and visual buffers to ensure an appropriate transition to adjacent and nearby lower density residential uses. Staff recommended approval of the request.

Vice Chair Bryson asked for any questions or comments from the Commissioners. Hearing none, Vice Chair Bryson then asked if the applicant or anyone else wished to speak in favor of the request.

Mike Fox, 400 Bellemeade Street, Suite 800, on behalf of the Koury Corporation, stated that the Commission continued this request in December and the applicant has reduced the scope of the proposal following communication with the neighborhood. The revised request calls for a maximum of 386 dwelling units, approximately half what was previously proposed. He stated that the subject property is adjacent to a future Interstate and located in a corridor that will add significant employment in the area in the coming years. The increase in the City's workforce needs associated increases in housing. Mr. Fox stated that this area is in the Tier 1 growth region and the request is a good buffer for the single-family residential uses behind the highway. He stated that they conducted two neighborhood meetings, where they heard concerns about traffic. The main access point will be on Edgemont Road and the secondary access point will be on Liberty Road. Having the primary access point on Highway 421 should reduce congestion in the Edgemont Road area. He stated that the applicant has worked with its traffic engineering firm, GDOT, and NCDOT to ensure that traffic will be manageable. The applicant is happy to work with the neighbors to address pre-existing safety concerns. Mr. Fox stated that the applicant intends to have a design suitable to the area, and that the existing County Highway Business zoning would permit very intense commercial uses compared to the residential use proposed. He stated that he believes the request is compatible with the GSO2040 Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Skenes asked if the future interstate designation would affect access on Edgemont Road. Mr. Fox stated it will not, and that the signal to the north of the subject property would remain. Ms. Magid asked if there were any prospective renderings of the project. Mr. Fox stated there were no architectural renderings available yet, but displayed an illustrative sketch plan of a potential layout for the development.

Vice Chair Bryson then asked if anyone else wished to speak in favor of the request.

Alan Branson, 3731 Old Julian Road, Julian, stated that he does not oppose the multi-family residential use in this area, but he supports additional traffic safety measures at this intersection of US 421.

With the applicant's speaking time expired, Vice Chair Bryson inquired if there was anyone wishing to speak in opposition of the request.

Bethany Boring, 3201 Liberty Road, stated that she has lived in the neighborhood for 3 years and moved to the area for its rural character, and believes most of her neighbors live there for that reason. The uses in the area are predominately very low density single-family residential, and the request would be up to 18 times as dense. She stated that while the applicant has reduced the scope, the neighbors believe there will be a second phase of development in the future that will create significant disruption. Ms. Boring stated that the requested density does not fit the area, and that smaller homes would be more suited. While the subject property is currently zoned Highway Business, there are significant restrictions conditioned to it. She stated that a Highway Business use could potentially provide benefit to existing residents in the area, which this request will not.

Delzora Able, 3110 Renard Road, stated she was concerned about traffic safety on Liberty Road. The density of the request would add significant traffic to an already unsafe situation, where neighbors have died in motor vehicle accidents. She stated that the proposed density does not fit with the nature of the neighborhood. Ms. Able stated that barriers could not mitigate the noise from the highway, and the increased residents in the area would increase traffic. She stated that the request would have an adverse impact on wildlife in the area.

Vice Chair Bryson inquired if there was anyone else wishing to speak in opposition. Hearing none, Vice Chair Bryson advised the applicant had 5 minutes for rebuttal.

Mr. Fox stated that the applicant conducted a Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) with input from GDOT and NCDOT. Growth in this area is inevitable and if traffic conditions warrant improvements, the responsible agencies will often add them in rapidly developing areas.

Vice Chair Bryson inquired if there was anyone else in support wishing to speak in rebuttal. Hearing none, Vice Chair Bryson advised anyone speaking in opposition had 5 minutes for rebuttal.

Ms. Boring stated that she did not receive notification of the original neighborhood meeting. The developers stated in the second meeting that traffic would be less of an issue with the growth of work-from-home employment, but that the new workforce in the area will mostly be in-person manufacturing. She stated that Liberty Road would be subject to increased overflow traffic when the highway becomes an interstate. Ms. Boring stated that there are no sidewalks in the area and the neighborhood is not walkable at all. Since GTA does not have service in the area, a dense development like this will add automobile traffic. She stated that despite the TIA, the neighbors are highly concerned about traffic.

Vice Chair Bryson asked if there was anyone else in opposition wishing to speak in rebuttal. Hearing none, Vice Chair Bryson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Engle asked if the applicant would be required to add sidewalks. Mr. Kirkman stated the applicant would be responsible for infrastructure improvements and would be required to add sidewalks.

Ms. Skenes asked to clarify how much responsibility the applicant would have for sidewalk construction. Mr. Kirkman stated it would be on the frontage of the subject property along Edgemont and Liberty Roads. Ms. Skenes asked if the area would receive GTA service when

annexed. Noland Tipton stated that GTA would need to show demand to add new bus routes or modify existing routes.

Mr. Engle asked about staff's recommendation of the request. Mr. Kirkman stated staff recommended approval.

Ms. Skenes stated that this request qualifies as a downzoning, and the current conditions permit all uses in the County Highway Business zoning district. She stated that access to main thoroughfares around the subject property is good, and that the Commission cannot make decisions based on what might happen in the area in the future. Ms. Skenes stated that there are existing multi-family residential uses in the area, and she can support the request given the demand for housing in the City.

Ms. Magid stated she agreed with Ms. Skenes.

Mr. Engle stated that he appreciated the input from Ms. Boring and that with the proximity to Old US 421, the need for housing makes this request reasonable.

Mr. Engle then made a motion to annex the property. Ms. Skenes seconded the motion. The Commission voted 8-0, (Ayes: Magid, Alford, Engle, Skenes, Chair O'Connor, Glass, Egbert, Vice Chair Bryson; Nays: 0).

Mr. Engle then stated regarding agenda item Z-22-12-005, the Greensboro Planning and Zoning Commission believes that its action to recommend approval of the original zoning request for the property identified as 3510 Liberty Road from County CZ-HB (Conditional Zoning - Highway Business) to City CD-RM-18 (Conditional District - Residential Multi-family – 18) to be consistent with the adopted GSO2040 Comprehensive Plan and considers the action taken to be reasonable and in the public interest for the following reasons: (1.) The request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Future Built Form Map and Future Land Use Map; (2.) The proposed CD-RM-18 zoning district permits uses which fit the context of surrounding area and limits negative impacts on the adjacent properties; (3.) The request is reasonable due to the size, physical conditions, and other attributes of the area, it will benefit the property owner and surrounding community, and approval is in the public interest. Mr. Alford seconded the motion. The Commission voted 8-0, (Ayes: Magid, Alford, Engle, Skenes, Chair O'Connor, Glass, Egbert, Vice Chair Bryson; Nays: 0). Vice Chair Bryson advised the votes constituted a favorable recommendation and was subject to a public hearing at the Tuesday, February 21, 2023 City Council meeting.