



Founded in 1848

Troy W. Barnhardt
Mayor

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**Town of Mt. Pleasant
Planning & Zoning Meeting
November 9, 2009
7:00 P.M.**

Members Present: James Senecal, Whit Moose, Jr., Penny Suggs, Shirley Freeman
Alternate Member Margaret Strickland.

Staff Present: Adrian Cox Town Administrator, Vagn Hansen Benchmark
Planner, John Murdock Chairman, Joy Eudy Clerk to Board.

Call to Order:

Chairman Murdock called the meeting to order.

Quorum:

Chairman Murdock stated a full quorum was present.

Approval of Agenda:

Chairman Murdock asked if there were any changes to be made to the agenda. Vagn Hansen of Benchmark stated there was one item to be added to the agenda. With the item added, Chairman Murdock entertained a motion to accept the agenda. Motion to accept the agenda with changes, was made by board member Penny Suggs. Second was made by board member James Senecal with all members in favor 5-0.

Approval of Minutes:

Chairman Murdock asked if any changes needed to be made to the minutes of the October 12, 2009 meeting. With no changes to make, Chairman Murdock entertained a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Board member Penny Suggs made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Board member Shirley Freeman seconded the motion with all members in favor 5-0.

Due to technical problems, meeting did not record.

Proposed Text Amendment: TA 2009-07

Chairman Murdock turned this portion of the meeting over to Vagn Hansen of Benchmark.

Vagn Hansen of Benchmark explained the Proposed Text Amendment TA 2009-07 stating this is a UDO Text Amendment to modify the definition of Minor Subdivision in Article 6.3.1 to limit the number of lots allowed to be approved through the Minor Subdivision process and to limit the number of times the process can be used on a parent parcel.

The current definition of a Minor Subdivision allows the unlimited use of the process to create new lots from parent parcels if no new street right-of-way is required.

Vagn Hansen of Benchmark stated there has been no evident abuse of this process from their review of past subdivisions, the potential does exist for the circumvention of a more thorough Planning Board review of subdivision which, because of the number of lots created, would merit more consideration and community input. Vagn Hansen of Benchmark stated the proposed changes to the definition of a Minor Subdivision will most importantly limit the number of lots that can be approved by the Ordinance Administrator to five. These changes will also limit the use of the Minor Subdivision process on parent parcels in a five year period to a single use if the maximum number of lots is created, or the number of uses which will create five lots from the parent parcel. Vagn Hansen said these changes will not prevent the further subdivision of the parent parcel, but will merely shift the review of subsequent subdivisions to the Planning Board through the Major Subdivision process. He stated it is hoped that these changes will limit the potential for the abuse of this expedited review process while ensuring that future divisions of previously subdivided property receive the scrutiny that is warranted in light of their potential impacts.

After some discussion, Chairman Murdock entertained a motion to make a recommendation of the proposed Text Amendment to the Town Board. Board member Whit Moose, Jr. made a motion to recommend to the Town Board regarding the proposed UDO Text Amendment and the Planning Board finds that the proposed Text Amendment is consistent with the plans and policies of the Town of Mt. Pleasant. Board member Penny Suggs seconded the motion with all members in favor 5-0.

Proposed Letter of Support:

Town Administrator Adrian Cox stated he had written a proposed letter of support to Mr. Barry Moose, Division Engineer of the Highway Division in Albemarle, stating that the Town of Mt. Pleasant is very supportive of the Highway 49 widening project. He stated that a portion of Highway 49 transverses through the Mt. Pleasant town limits, and this area has potential to become very congested with vehicles and pedestrians. Mr. Cox stated that the Town of Mt. Pleasant request that

future plans for widening of Highway 49 include an unpaved median through the town limits. Mr. Cox stated he had seen the map and the proposed construction plans indicate that a five lane road with middle turning lanes will be constructed through the town limits. Center lanes that are dedicated to turning pose an incredible risk to both drivers and pedestrians. An unpaved median is a much safer alternative. The median would be grass with small trees planted and would greatly improve the appearance of the roadway.

Board member Penny Suggs wanted to know if this would be cost effective and board member James Senecal wanted to know if we could demand this be done or if this is only a request. Vagn Hansen of Benchmark stated if the Town requests a median that staff would get in touch with the engineers and talk with them about a median. Chairman Murdock stated that there should be adequate access for the businesses in the area to get to their place of business without having to go down the road and turning around and coming back in the other direction to get to their place of business.

Chairman Murdock entertained a motion of support for the installation of a median on Highway 49 within the Town limits as part of the widening of Highway 49 project.

Penny Suggs made a motion to recommend the proposed letter of support from the Town Board to the NC Department of Transportation. Board member James Senecal seconded the motion with all members in favor 5-0.

Staff Report:

Vagn Hansen of Benchmark gave the staff report stating the Town Board approved all 4 Text Amendments that the Planning Board had recommended.

Vagn Hansen stated the Planning Board had approved the rezoning of the property on Highway 73.

Vagn Hansen of Benchmark stated that the Methodist Church had some small changes but everything should be ok with that.

Item Added to Agenda: Potential OI Zoning District

Vagn Hansen of Benchmark stated that over by the Library, Funeral Home, Medical Office and surrounding areas on Cook Street and on the west side of Washington Street is being looked at to be zoned OI, "Office Institutional". This district was established to provide for agencies and offices rendering specialized services and traditional institutional functions. Including but not limited to, governmental facilities and cultural and recreational facilities, educational facilities and charitable institutions.

Property in that area now is zoned RM-1 which is Residential Medium Density. This provides areas for medium density single residential use with a maximum of 3 per acre, also another area is zoned RV (Residential Village.) This provides areas for detached and attached single family homes with a maximum of 8 dwellings per acre.

Potential future zoning is to make that whole area OI "Office Institutional," which would provide more consistency.

There was much discussion about the zoning of the property. There is a resident's home and church property there. Chairman Murdock asked if we should consider enlarging the boundaries and board member James Senecal wanted to know if that would not open up the opportunity for property across the street to be zoned OI.

Board Member James Senecal asked if we should not just issue the Library a variance and let them do what they want and look at this at a later date.

Vagn Hansen of Benchmark stated that we could, but that would be a decision the Board would have to make.

Chairman Murdock stated that we needed some good commercial property in the community. Board members Penny Suggs and James Senecal discussed the possibility of zoning the property in different ways.

Board member Whit Moose Jr. stated first of all, the house that is over in that district is owned by the mother of the person that owns the tax building and second this is something we can do that we haven't had the money to do so why not jump on the county's wagon and let them help us. Third, board member Whit Moose, Jr. stated that we need a long range plan.

Chairman Murdock stated that we need to deal with the issues ahead of time. We need to look at the area. Let the people know what it is zoned now and what it will be zoned.

After discussing this issue, Chairman Murdock entertained a motion to proceed with the potential zoning.

Board member Whit Moose, Jr. made the motion to proceed with the potential zoning. Board member Penny Suggs seconded the motion with 4 members in favor of proceeding and 1 member opposing the vote. Vote 4-1.

Adjournment:

With no further business Chairman Murdock entertained a motion to adjourn. Board member Penny Suggs made a motion to adjourn. Board member Whit Moose, Jr. seconded the motion with all members in favor 5-0.


Chairman John Murdock III


Clerk to Board Joy Eudy