

City of Orangeburg
Planning Commission Minutes
January 26, 2023

Members Present

Guy Best – Chairperson
Stephon Edwards II
William Evans
Paula Payton (via ZOOM)

Members Absent

Jeanna Reynolds
Dr. Shirlan Moseley-Jenkins-Vice-Chairperson

Guests

John Ford, Robert & Company

Staff Members

John D. Singh, Assistant City Administrator
Leann Holloway, Secretary
David Epting, Building Official
Randy Etters, Department of Public Utilities

Citizens from the community **14**
Press present **0**

PUBLIC HEARING 1

Chairman Best opened Public Hearing 1 Consideration of an application for 100% annexation of properties belonging to Crepe Myrtle Village, LLC, 180 Magnolia Street, TMS# 0172-11-01-002.000 and TMS# 0172-11-01-017.000. Chairman Best asked three times if there was anyone to speak at the Public Hearing. There was no one to speak. Chairman Best closed Public Hearing 1.

PUBLIC HEARING 2

Chairman Best opened Public Hearing 2 Consideration of an application for 100% annexation of property belonging to City of Orangeburg, 3397 Broughton Street, TMS# 0151-15-11-001.000. Chairman Best asked three times if there was anyone to speak at the Public Hearing. There was no one to speak. Chairman Best closed Public Hearing 2.

PUBLIC HEARING 3

Chairman Best opened Public Hearing 3 Consideration of a Zoning District Map change from A-1 Residential to B-1 General Business, property belonging to T. Dayle Bolen located at Broughton Street and Caw Caw Drive, TMS #0151-15-11-002.000.

Ms. Barbara Lyons, 404 Oleander Drive, stated, "I have a petition with 37 names on it. My mother, Sylvia Craven, lives on South Circle Drive and wants the property to stay A-1 Residential. This is a nice, quiet neighborhood. I grew up in this neighborhood. Having a business on that corner would increase traffic and cause more crime in the neighborhood. Many of the homeowners have been living in the neighborhood since I was a kid. They bought their homes to live in a quiet residential neighborhood not to have a business move in right next to them. There is already so much traffic on North Road at the intersection of Broughton Street and Chestnut Street. We do not need any more traffic there. Please keep this A-1 Residential so the older homeowners can relax and enjoy their golden years in a nice, quiet, calm neighborhood with very low traffic. Also, the younger generation homeowners deserve

the same for their children. Mr. Bolen is more than welcome to build a house on that property. He and his wife can live there, or they can sell it for someone else to live there. Please help these residents keep this neighborhood by voting against this zoning change and keep the property as A-1 Residential. Another resident, Lula Glover, could not be here and asked me to read her statement. I, Lula Glover, 197 Caw Caw Drive, wish you would consider letting our neighborhood remain a residential street. To change to a business would be a disaster for everyone who lives here. There are cars and trucks with loud pipes flying through the neighborhood already. We seniors have worked hard and want to enjoy a quiet, peaceful life. Please let Caw Caw Drive remain a quiet residential area."

Ms. Linda Glover, 157 South Circle Drive, stated, "I am two streets over from the area of Caw Caw Drive. I agree with many things Ms. Lyons said. If you change our neighborhood from A-1 Residential to B-1 General Business. It will decrease our home values. We will have more traffic. We already have a lot of traffic and noise from Broughton Street and so much growth just outside our City limits with Walmart and the new Bojangles coming, etc. While growth is good, it is not always good for us or our neighborhood. We have a very quiet neighborhood. We do not have a lot of crime. We all know each other and look out for each other. I am afraid if we move from an A-1 Residential to B-1 Business we may not have the safety we have now. I realize I am one of the younger residents, but we have children, seniors, and pets in the neighborhood. I do not think changing it to business is a good idea. There will not be an area for parking if you have a business there. It is also very dangerous coming off North Road onto Broughton Street. If you have a business there, how are we going to control traffic? We have a lot of trouble controlling traffic as it is especially around holidays. Mr. Bolen can tell you what he is going to put there, but once it is changed, he can do anything; there is nothing we can do to stop that. He may tell us he is going to put something really nice there and the next thing you know we have a beer joint or a strip club and an increase of the type of people we do not want in our neighborhood roaming the streets and causing issues. I respectfully request that you not change our neighborhood from A-1 Residential to B-1 General Business. If Mr. Bolen wants to build a house over there, I am okay with that, but I do not think he would want a business moving in down the street from his home in a nice, peaceful neighborhood."

Scarlett Toole, 2315 West Circle Drive, stated, "I agree with the two previous speakers. There are people that have lived in this neighborhood since I was a little girl. It is a nice peaceful area. There is no crime, but putting a business there would increase crime and traffic and the younger residents have children in that area. We also have a house owned by Orangeburg Mental Health Disabilities and sometimes the residents walk the road and could easily get run over. They come off South Circle and come around Caw Caw like somebody shot them out of an airplane. If a person was on the road, they would not be able to get off in time."

Ms. Christine Bair, 153 Caw Caw Drive, stated, "I have been in my house going on 53 years and I do not want our neighborhood to change. Next month, I will be 88 years old. Please leave our neighborhood the way it is."

Ms. Linda Buskey, 137 North Circle Drive, stated, "I agree with all who have spoken so far. I have lived there 20 years. You can raise children there. It is quiet. We cannot tolerate any more traffic. We do not need any businesses in the neighborhood. It is already congested."

The new Bojangles and whatever else is going up there are already going to be increasing our traffic. We would like to keep it a residential neighborhood."

Mr. Stan Finelt, Three Pillars Management, LLC, stated, "We are the gentlemen requesting to rezone, not Mr. Bolen. We are planning to purchase it from him, but I understand he has applied to rezone this property several times and been rejected. I want to shed a little light on the situation. The plan we have in place is the following. We are going to take over from the City the property adjacent to it and we are planning to put higher-end restaurants, something that the City lacks quite a bit. The property in question right now, we are trying to make that a parking lot. There would be adequate amounts of vegetation that would separate the parking lot from the residential community; therefore, any impact is going to be minimal. We have done several other projects within Orangeburg. We have resurrected several manufactured home parks from something that was ugly, bad, and crime ridden to something that tenants are actually proud to live in, so we have been very responsible members of the community. The projected use of this property would be a parking lot so it is not going to be a business."

Ms. Barbara Lyons stated, "Putting a parking lot there is just going to open a can of worms. You cannot even have a parking lot where people are not shooting somebody. If he wants to put nice restaurants down there, that is fine, but they are not going to stay open long because you cannot get people around here to work. Anywhere you go places are closing because you cannot keep employees, so I think it just needs to stay residential. If you want the parking lot, put it right there on the road going in by the school. There are more areas around here they can make a parking lot or move it somewhere else."

Mr. Randy Etters, Department of Public Utilities (DPU), addressed the Planning Commission. He stated, "I represent the Department of Public Utilities. We are loosely affiliated with this project. I will give a little more background. We own the parcel on Chestnut Street. We have a sewer right-of-way that bisects that property and a sewer right-of-way that goes behind the property which we maintain. As you know, the City has developed a very nice state-of-the-art competition-level ball field. It is a beautiful facility, but it does not have much access. DPU used to have a substation on that site. We no longer needed it, so we dismantled it. We are not in the property business so our thought process was to find a developer who is willing to put something on that site then we would trade them the land for those guys to build the boardwalk. The boardwalk would tie in there and go all the way to the ball field. The City recruited the Dixie Youth World Series which will bring 50,000 people to the community. Obviously, there will be a need for places to eat and things to do. They will have a natural boardwalk. They will not be taking out any trees because we already own and maintain the right-of-way which is wide enough for the boardwalk. It will allow people to have a nice, natural walk from that parcel. Initially, the parking lot was going to be on that parcel as well. I think the folks that are looking to do this have decided that they would not be able to get enough parking in that space based on the concept they copied out of Greenville, South Carolina. We do not own that property. The property is owned by Dayle Bolen, so they entered into an agreement with him. The DPU is not involved in that at all, but we did want to shed some light on the intended project. The reason we approached it this way is if you do not maintain some kind of control over the property, it could end up with something nobody wants. So, we felt like we had to tie it to something that the community needs for the project to make sense. Our goal is to raise the quality of life in not only this community, but everywhere we serve. Thank you for your time and I am happy to answer any questions."

Ms. Barbara Lyons stated, "If DPU wants to sell their property for the parking lot there, that is fine, but let Dayle Bolen's property stay residential. We do not need a walkway or a parking lot. If we are going to have 50,000 people coming to play for these ball games that is even more traffic coming through. It needs to remain A-1 residential and let the parking lot or walkway go elsewhere."

Ms. Scarlett Toole stated, "I agree with her. If they are going to put a walkway, traffic is going to increase when they have ball tournaments. We just cannot afford that. We have children there and all they have to do is come to that neighborhood and hit a child then what is the City going to do? What are they going to say? What is going to happen when the crime increases? What is going to happen to our older folks? They want to do a high-end restaurant then they can go to the old Ryan's, but they do not need to increase traffic and certainly we do not need a parking lot. It is time to think of the neighborhood, not money, money, money."

There was no one else to speak at the Public Hearing. Chairman Best closed Public Hearing 3.

REGULAR MEETING

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Payton to approve the minutes for November 17, 2022. The motion was unanimously approved.

New Business

A motion was made by Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Wolfe to nominate Guy Best as Chairperson. The vote was unanimous.

A motion was made by Chairperson Best, seconded by Commissioner Wolfe to nominate Dr. Shirlan Mosley-Jenkins as Vice-Chairperson. The motion was unanimously approved.

Assistant City Administrator John Singh addressed the Planning Commission considering an application for 100% annexation of property belonging to Crepe Myrtle Village, LLC, 180 Magnolia Street, TMS# 0172-11-01-002.000 and TMS# 0172-11-01-017.000. He stated, "Good Evening Commissioners, I come before you to give a quick briefing on this particular action. There are things in our state that are called donut holes. That is a term meaning you have a parcel that is not annexed into the City, but has properties around it that are in the City. In these cases, we can get in a pinch when it comes to emergency services. Currently, when you come off Sprinkle Avenue into Crepe Myrtle, it is in the City, but at the back corner of it is not in the City. So, for law enforcement, fire, etc. the jurisdictions get a little confusing. Of course, we would provide mutual aid, but it is a lot easier for us to have our officers and emergency staff to be aware and know they have full jurisdiction of that area. That is the impetus behind that. We appreciate the property owner taking an interest in annexing into the City."

A motion was made by Chairperson Best, seconded by Commissioner Wolfe to approve the request. The motion was unanimously approved.

Assistant City Administrator John Singh addressed the Planning Commission considering an application for 100% annexation of property belonging to City of Orangeburg, 3397 Broughton Street, TMS# 0151-15-11-001.000. He stated, "In this is a case, there would be a gap for us in the long haul. There are reasons we want to go ahead with what Mr. Etters indicated, with developing commercial space on that property. We would like to get it annexed for reasons such as building inspections and everything else. It just brings a uniform pattern for us in terms of all those jurisdictional things. That is something we are interested in and the reason we co-generated the request for annexation."

Chairperson Best asked, "How large is the piece of property?"

Mr. Etters responded, "That property is approximately 13 acres with about 3 acres being considered wetlands. That is the drainage basin for Caw Caw as well as the stormwater runoff from everything on Chestnut."

Ms. Linda Glover asked, "If part of that is considered wetlands and everything is draining off on that, shouldn't that be something we are protecting? And how is that going to affect the property in that area if we start building on it and we do not have proper drainage? Now we are going to be living in a semi flood zone, which we do not live in at this point because we have adequate drainage. All of us who have lived in the neighborhood know how bad the Prince of Orange Mall used to flood due to poor drainage. They had the same issue across town with the Walmart Grocery near the Edisto River. I want to know how we are going to protect this wetlands area, our properties from possible flooding, and what this build up is going to do to our community. I did not realize it was wetlands, but that seems like something you should be protecting, not trying to destroy."

Mr. Etters responded, "It is a great question. Based on the fact that the DPU has sanitary sewer, water lines, and we collect water from the Caw Caw basin to create water, we are obviously going to protect it as well. That area is a designated wetland. You cannot build on it or do anything to disrupt it. Any plans for construction have to be sent through the Corps of Engineers and an engineering firm for wetland mitigation if needed. In addition, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) and South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) also have to sign off on it. As far as the traffic goes, they are actually going to close one of those curb cuts, so it makes that little acceleration slip that is so dangerous much safer. We will have to wait and see how all that fleshes out. The high traffic count is why the developers are looking out there. How many people have been to Highway 601 lately and seen the growth? It is all because of the traffic counts. The wetlands cannot be touched by law so there would not be any impact on the wetlands. It would hit the storm drain the same as when we had our substation there. This would be the same situation."

A motion was made by Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Wolfe to table the request, and request more information and review by City Council. The motion was unanimously approved.

Assistant City Administrator John Singh addressed the Planning Commission considering a request for a Zoning District Map change from A-1 Residential to B-1 General Business, property belonging to T. Dayle Bolen located at Broughton Street and Caw Caw Drive, TMS #0151-15-11-002.000. He stated, "I would like to state a couple of things for the record. I

want to make clear the rezoning is not to rezone the whole neighborhood. It is only to rezone that piece of property. I want to make sure we are clear on that. It is complicated in every neighborhood or area when you get into a transition. It is a challenge. You all voiced your opinions. The developers presented their plans and so those all need to be factored in. Their intake point will cause additional traffic but if they were coming in Caw Caw that would concern everybody too. That does not look like what they are trying to do. I do think there is a buffer of trees so in some way you would not necessarily see a parking lot. You would have a buffer where it would look similar but again there are things about this that are concerns to a neighborhood. I want to make sure our commissioners understand all those aspects of it as they make their decision. I want to make sure everyone is clear on the wetlands. Wetlands can be mitigated, meaning you can trade property sometimes. That is not what they want to do. I want to make sure the public understands all aspects of that."

Mr. Etters stated, "We cannot risk getting rid of those wetlands because we want to protect them. We are retaining those wetlands. The only piece that will get carved out will be the piece that is developing. DPU is very sensitive to that especially because of our water plant. It is only for the parcel they would be building on not for the wetlands."

Assistant City Administrator Singh stated, "I just wanted to bring all those sides for the commissioners as well as the public so decisions can be made accordingly."

A motion was made by Chairperson Best, seconded by Commissioner Edwards to deny the request. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Chairperson Best, seconded by Commissioner Edwards to adjourn. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



John D. Singh
Assistant City Administrator