

Planning Board Meeting
August 21, 2017
Minutes

Members Present: Ashley Anderson, Lloyd Lancaster, Terry “Allen” Swaim, Kathe Schaecher, Michael Clark, Errol Briggerman and Jonathan A. Olson.

Members Absent: Victoria Curtis and Gilda Wall

Staff Present: Planning Director David Bergmark

Guests Present: Lucius and Sandy Jones, Tommy Scoggins

1. Meeting Called to Order

Chairperson Ashley Anderson called the meeting to order at approximately 7pm and recognized that a quorum was present.

2. Welcome and Recognition of Guests

Ms. Anderson welcomed the public.

3. Chairman and Board Members’ Comments

No comments were made.

4. Adjustment and Approval of Agenda.

Chairperson Anderson asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda; as there were none, she then asked for a motion to approve. Michael Clark made a motion to approve the agenda; Jonathan Olson seconded the motion.

5. Public Comments

Chairperson Anderson asked if anyone signed up for public comments; there were no public comments.

6. Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Anderson asked if there were any adjustments to the minutes or a motion to approve the minutes. Allen Swaim made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous (July 17, 2017) meeting as written. Jonathan Olson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Discussion, Consideration, and Action on the Following Items:

7A. ZM17-02 – Zoning Map Amendment request to rezone 12.75 acres of land (excluding ROW) located at 501 W. Academy Street from R3 to R4.

Mr. Bergmark presented the following report *shown in italics* below.

Item Title:

ZM17-02 – Zoning Map Amendment request to rezone 12.75 acres of land (excluding ROW) located at 501 W. Academy Street from R3 to R4.

Report to the Planning Board:

- *Monday, August 21, 2017*

Specific Action Requested:

- *That the Planning Board consider the proposed rezoning request and make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners, to include a statement of comprehensive plan consistency and reasonableness.*

Applicant:

Lucius Jones

Petition:

The applicant has requested a change in zoning classification for approximately 12.75 acres of property within that parcel identified by PIN # 1784319395 and addressed as 501 W. Academy Street. This area is currently zoned Residential-3 (R3) and is being requested to be rezoned to Residential-4 (R4).

Location and History:

This property is currently vacant and is located within the corporate limits of the Town of Wendell. The current owner, Lucius Jones, has indicated a desire to construct a small single family subdivision on this property.

On November 10, 2015, the Board of Commissioners voted 3-2 to deny a similar request by Kirk Rightmyer and Bob Polanco to rezone this property from R3 to R4.

Justification:

The applicant provided the following justification within their petition:

“This property has been sitting undeveloped since it used to be farm land. The property adjacent is industrial and residential. The single family lots in this area are comparable in size to the requested rezoning. This site is across Academy Street from the Town cemetery.”

“This rezoning request complies with the town land use plan. The development of this property will foster economic development and it will [add approximately \$10 million dollars of taxable property value to the town].”

Project Profile:

PROPERTY LOCATION: 501 W. Academy Short Street

WAKE COUNTY PIN: 1784319395

ZONING DISTRICT: Proposed R4/ Current R3

CROSS REFERENCES:

PROPERTY OWNER: Lucius Jones

APPLICANT: Lucius Jones

PROPERTY SIZE: 12.75 acres

CURRENT LAND USE: Vacant

PROPOSED LAND USE: Single Family Residential

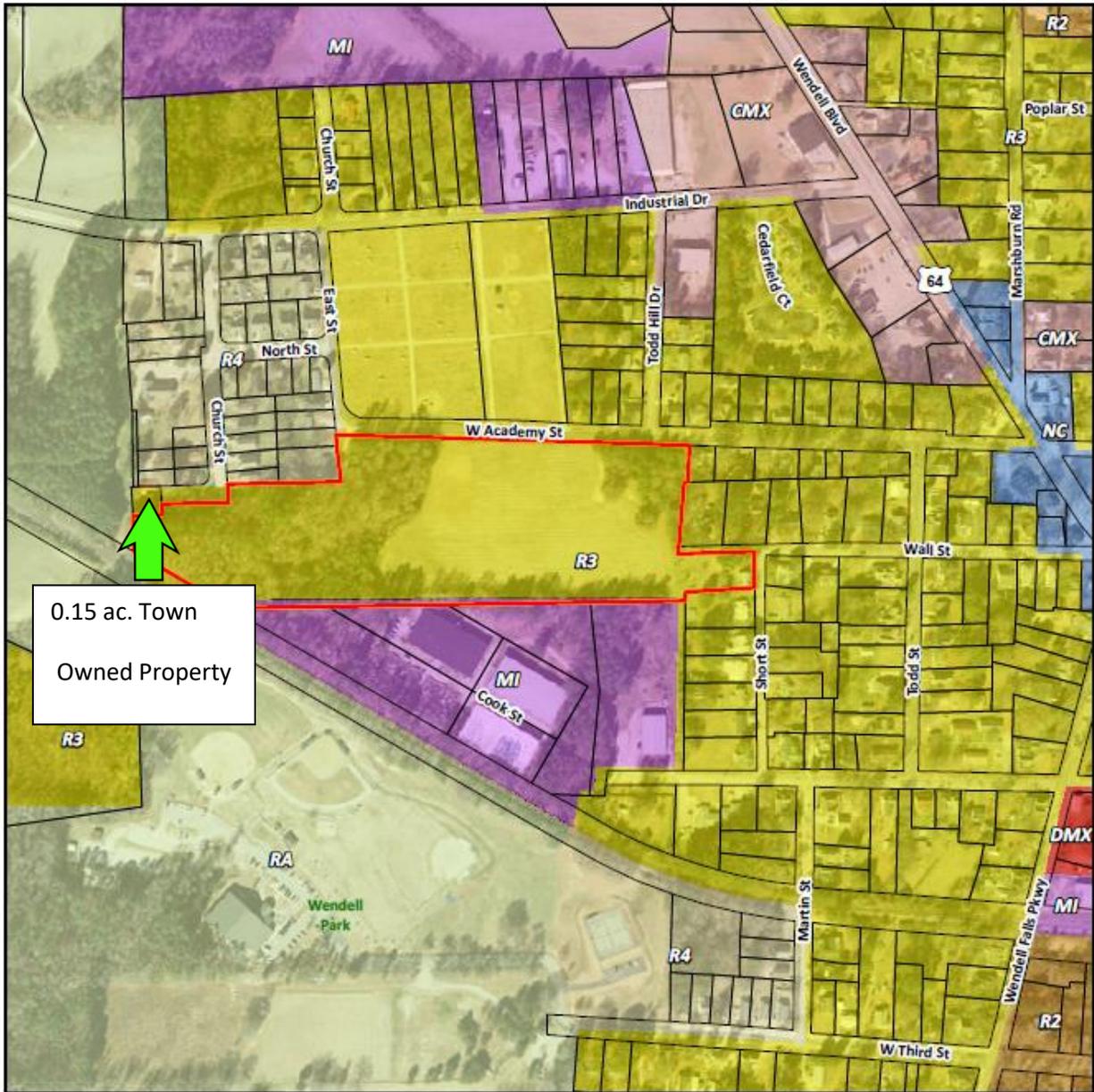
Project Setting – Surrounding Districts and Land uses:

<u>DIRECTION</u>	<u>LANDUSE</u>	<u>ZONING</u>
North	Residential/Cemetery	R3 & R4
South	Manufacturing/Industrial	MI
East	Residential	R3
West	Residential/Farm	R4 & RA

Zoning District:

The property is currently zoned Residential-3 (R3). The applicant has indicated the desire to construct single family residential products at a higher density than the current zoning district allows. The R3 zoning district has a minimum lot size requirement of 10,000 square feet. The requested zoning designation (R4) has a minimum lot size requirement of 6,000 square feet. The only use allowed in the R4 zoning district which is not allowed in the R3 zoning district is ‘Group Care Facilities (More than 6 Residents)’, which requires a Special Use Permit (SUP) in the R4 zoning district. Neither zoning category permits multi-family dwellings.

Current Zoning Map:



Off-Street Parking:

At the time the use changes, parking spaces shall be provided in the amount specified by Chapter 10 of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

Lighting:

Lighting shall be in accordance with the lighting requirements in place at the time of permitting.

Public Utilities:

Development of this site would require extension and connection to municipal water and sewer.

Streets:

All streets and drives shall meet the requirements as set forth in the UDO at the time of development.

Landscaping:

Landscaping shall be required to meet the requirements as set forth in the UDO at the time of development. Residential landscaping would include street trees, front yard plantings, and foundation plantings. Depending on the layout of lots, abutting rear yard plantings and/or street yards could be required.

Stormwater Management:

Development of this site would be required to meet the stormwater standards contained in the UDO at the time of site plan submission.

Comprehensive Plan:

The Wendell Comprehensive Plan defines this section as S6 “Infill Redevelopment Area”.

The Comprehensive Plan states the S6 sector is already urbanized and well served with infrastructure (roads, utilities, etc.), and access to services and amenities. The comprehensive plan lists the following uses as appropriate land uses/development types within this sector: neighborhoods, downtowns, single-family and multifamily residential, commercial uses, civic uses, and light industrial uses.



FRAMEWORK PLAN LEGEND	
	PLAN BOUNDARY
	Railroad
	EXISTING COLLECTOR
	PROPOSED COLLECTOR
	EXISTING THOROUGHFARE
	PROPOSED THOROUGHFARE
	WATER BODIES
	S1 PRESERVED OPEN SPACE
	S2 RESERVED OPEN SPACE
	S3 RESTRICTED GROWTH AREA
	S4 CONTROLLED GROWTH AREA
	S5 INTENDED GROWTH AREA
	S6 INFILL/REDEVELOPMENT AREA
	VILLAGE/TOWN CENTER
	NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER
	WENDELL BLVD GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Statement of Plan Consistency and Reasonableness

- Any recommended change to the zoning map should be accompanied by a statement explaining how the change is consistent with the comprehensive plan, and is reasonable in nature.
 - In staff's opinion, the requested zoning map amendment is consistent with the recommended uses and development types outlined in the Wendell Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the S-6 sector.

Staff Recommendation:

If approved, staff recommends that the request be expanded to include the 0.15 acre Town-owned property at the end of Church Street, so as not to leave a tiny piece of R-3 zoned property surrounded by other districts.

Jonathan Olson asked how many lots the proposed subdivision would consist of within the area to be rezoned. David Bergmark said the R4 zone typically results in approximately 4 dwelling units per acre, which would be about 50 lots.

Reminder about just rezoning – not development plan

Michael Clark asked if there were any environmentally sensitive areas. Mr. Bergmark said he believed there is a stream on the western edge of this lot. Mr. Clark asked if it was an intermittent stream. Mr. Bergmark said he thought so. David Bergmark said any intermittent or perennial stream would be required to be protected as part of the development plan, but could be included as part of the required open space.

Allen Swaim said if the R3 zone requires minimum 10,000 square foot lots and the R4 zone allows minimum 6,000 square foot lots, how does that result in only one additional dwelling unit per acre. Mr. Bergmark said there would be additional open space required for the R4 zone as well, due to the increased number of lots.

A planning board member asked how big of a home could you place on a 6,000 square foot lot. Mr. Bergmark said you could place a very large home on a 6,000 square foot lot. He said there were quite large homes on 3,500 square foot lots in Wendell Falls.

Kathe Schaecher said she thinks the Town Board didn't approve the previous request to rezone this property to R4 because the developer seemed unwilling to share their development plan.

Allen Swaim said the applicant's justification referred to economic development this project would bring. He asked what the economic development was. Mr. Bergmark said the applicant's justification referred to increased tax base which would be created by developing the currently vacant lots. Mr. Swaim said that didn't constitute economic development. Ashley Anderson said there would likely be additional spending generated by the new residents frequenting businesses. Mr. Clark said many businesses had specific population thresholds which needed to be met, which new development would help move the Town towards those thresholds.

Mr. Bergmark asked if the Town Board would like to hear from the applicant. The Planning Board responded in the affirmative. Lucius Jones said developers had been planning on building on this tract for some time. He said he had previously spent \$15,000 putting together a plan to develop this tract in a different manner and was turned down by the Town Board. He said for that reason, he was trying to get the property rezoned prior to creating a development plan. Mr. Jones said anything he built on this land would be better than what is surrounding it and would be regulated by the Town's UDO.

Lloyd Lancaster asked if the applicant envisioned this area being like Jones Landing. Mr. Jones said he did not know yet.

Jonathan Olson asked if this subdivision would be an extension of Wall Street. Mr. Bergmark said any proposed development would have to connect to Wall Street.

Lloyd Lancaster asked if a traffic study had been done to evaluate the traffic impact on Wendell Boulevard and Wendell Falls parkway as a result of a new subdivision at this location. Mr. Bergmark said the number of homes would could be built on this lot would not meet the minimum threshold for when a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) is required.

Allen Swaim asked what size lots existed in the Commander Drive area. Mr. Jones said the lots were typically 10,000 square feet in that area, but a lot of people don't want that much grass. Lloyd Lancaster asked if 10,000 square feet was ¼ acre. Mr. Bergmark said 10,000 square feet was just under ¼ acre in size.

Jonathan Olson made a motion to approve the rezoning request as stated. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-1, with one member abstaining.

Voting in

7B. Discussion and Action on the Draft Town of Wendell Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan

Mr. Bergmark presented the following report *shown in italics* below.

Item Title:

Discussion and Action on the Draft Town of Wendell Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan.

Report to the Planning Board:

Monday, August 21, 2017

Specific Action Requested:

- *The Planning Board is asked to review a draft Pedestrian Plan for the Town of Wendell and make a recommendation to the Town Board.*

Item Summary:

In November of 2014, planning staff submitted a Pedestrian Plan grant application to the NC Department of Transportation for their 2015 call for projects. In April of 2015, the Town of Wendell was notified that its application was accepted and the Town would be the recipient of a Pedestrian Plan Grant. The total plan cost for the pedestrian plan was \$32,000, with the Town paying twenty percent (\$6400).

STANTEC was chosen by DOT as the consultant group to lead plan development. Per NCDOT's requirements, a Pedestrian Plan Steering Committee was formed to guide the planning process and ensure citizen involvement. Wendell's Pedestrian Plan stakeholder committee included representatives from municipal police, downtown business interests, municipal planning staff, DOT, Wake County Public Schools System, an ad-hoc member of CAMPO and one citizen advocate. This committee met several times, beginning in early 2016, to guide key decisions about public engagement and plan goals. In addition to having a presence at Planning Board and Town Board meetings, the Pedestrian Committee hosted two open houses (held at Town Hall and Wendell Elementary School), participated at Wendell's Big Truck Day, conducted on-line surveys, and held a Bike Safety clinic.

The purpose of the Wendell Pedestrian Plan is to evaluate the current pedestrian system in place, determine where pedestrians want to travel, identify existing gaps and obstacles to the pedestrian system, create a list of recommended pedestrian improvements (sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signals, lighting, etc.), prioritize recommended projects for budgeting purposes, and make suggested changes to current codes, ordinances, standards, and policies related to pedestrian travel.

The Pedestrian Plan in itself does not create new development standards related to pedestrian facilities. However, it does make recommendations which could later be incorporated into the UDO or the Town's Standards and Specifications document.

During development of the Pedestrian Plan, STANTEC conducted a detailed on-line survey. The results of this survey showed that the majority of survey participants indicated they currently

walk for recreation. Only ten percent of participants indicated they walked for transportation purposes. However, survey responses strongly indicated that a lack of sidewalks in Wendell contributes to the decision not to walk more, in addition to fear of traffic and concerns over distance or time. Approximately half of survey participants indicated they felt comfortable walking downtown, while local intersections were rated as the least comfortable pedestrian environment.

The draft Pedestrian Plan is 120 pages in total, including numerous tables, maps, resource lists, and best practices. Instructions to download digital copies of the plan were sent to the Planning Board and Town Board on August 7, 2017. Physical copies are also available at Town Hall. In general, the plan can be broken into the following four sections:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| 1) Introduction | (pages 7-16) |
| 2) Existing Conditions | (pages 17-42) |
| 3) Recommendations | (pages 43-66) |
| 4) Implementation | (pages 67+) |

Sidewalk recommendations are contained in Table 3 of the Pedestrian Plan, organized alphabetically by street name. Crossing improvements are contained in Table 4. Table 5 prioritizes sidewalk projects into 'short-term', 'mid-term' and 'long-term' projects, with the higher priority projects listed first in each category. Table 9 performs the same function for crossing recommendations. Construction cost estimates are provided for each project. The project ID relates back to Table 3 and is also identified on the accompanying maps. Priority scoring was assessed based on the sites accessibility (proximity to schools, parks, commercial areas, etc.), safety (measured by average daily traffic on the roadway), connectivity (completing connections to existing facilities), and Constructability/Cost.

The Pedestrian Plan also highlights five enhancement areas, where additional review for pedestrian improvements was performed. These enhancement areas were chosen by the pedestrian committee due to the concentration of destinations and the presence of pedestrians. Before and after renderings of the proposed recommendations for these five areas are included for visualization purposes. The five enhancement areas include:

1. Wendell Blvd (near Tropicana)
2. Wendell Blvd at Hanor Lane
3. Wendell Blvd at Wendell Elementary
4. Hollybrook Rd at Lake Drive/Second Street
5. Wendell Blvd at Old Wilson Rd/Selma Road

At the August 21, 2017 meeting, the Planning Board is being asked to review the Draft Pedestrian Plan and make a recommendation to the Town Board. Staff has compiled a list of grammatical and formatting errors which require correction. Staff will gladly accept any such items from the Planning Board to add to its list. However, the primarily objective of having the Planning Board review this document is to note if there are any substantive changes recommended by this board.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of the Draft Pedestrian Plan, which will help the town prioritize pedestrian projects and assist the Town to receive future grants related to plan implementation.

Statement of Plan Consistency and Reasonableness

- *Any recommended change, if deemed necessary, should be accompanied by a statement explaining how the change is consistent with the comprehensive plan, and is reasonable in nature.*
- *Such statements could refer to the general principles of the Comprehensive Plan, including but not limited to:*
 - *Principle Number 8: “Ensure local and regional transportation interconnectivity and options while also maintaining and enhancing Wendell as a walkable community.”*

Attachments:

- A. *Draft Wendell Pedestrian Plan (Physical copies available at Town Hall. A link was emailed on 8-7-17 to allow members to download an electronic copy of the plan)*

Errol Briggerman said he thought the Pedestrian Plan was well done overall, but he questioned how the Wendell Boulevard and Old Battle Bridge road intersection scored the highest of all crossing improvements needed. David Bergmark said the proximity of the school likely had something to do with it, but he would check with the consultant. Errol Briggerman said he didn't think it served the Middle School.

Lloyd Lancaster asked where the money would be coming from to implement this plan. Mr. Bergmark said funds could come from such things as fee in lieu of sidewalk installation elsewhere, or from grants. Mr. Lancaster said he was not in favor of installing more sidewalks if it required raising taxes.

Mr. Swaim said on page 82 it recommending creating a policy which would have developers install countdown pedestrian signals even when no sidewalks were present. He said curb ramps were needed much more than pedestrian signals. Mr. Swaim said on page 95 the plan included recommendations for wider sidewalks in commercial areas. He said he had concerns over how this could impact existing development. Mr. Swaim said he had the same concern for how a street tree ordinance, which is recommended on page 38 might impact existing development.

Mr. Clark said a lot of standards and recommendations made in the draft plan are industry standards. He said the Planning Board should look at this plan as a guidance document versus a regulatory document. He said this plan was intended for long range planning purposes, and that it was important for the Town to plan ahead rather than be reactionary.

Lloyd Lancaster said other than in Wendell falls, he does not see people using the sidewalks we already have. Kathe Schaecher said she sees lots of people walking and jogging on the Town's sidewalks.

Mr. Swaim said he thinks the document is overambitious given where the town is right now. He said Wendell was designed 100 years ago and is a pretty Town, but he does not like the idea of making the sidewalks wider. He said he thought Wendell needed a plan tailor made to our town, with a focus on fixing the existing sidewalks.

Mr. Bergmark said no one should look at the best practices and recommendations included in this plan and assume it would be applied everywhere regardless of the existing context. He said a lot of the policy recommendations are just that. He said these options are there to inform the Town Board and to give the Town Board options to pursue, but that doing so would require additional action beyond simply adopting this plan.

Mr. Clark asked if the UDO currently required sidewalks to be installed as a development requirement. Mr. Bergmark said yes.

Ashley Anderson said if sidewalks became a huge issue to the citizens, the Town could pass a bond to build and improve sidewalks.

Jonathan Olson said he agreed with Errol's comment regarding the Wendell Boulevard and Old Battle Bridge road crossing improvements. He said he thinks we need to improve the safety of crossing along our existing sidewalks closer to the core.

Mr. Olson asked what staff was looking to get from the Planning Board today. Mr. Bergmark said if the Planning Board was agreeable to it, he would like to get a favorable recommendation with any suggested changes or comments to take to the Town Board. He said he had already heard a desire to emphasize maintenance of existing sidewalks, and a question regarding the priority listing for crossing improvements.

Mr. Clark made a motion to recommend approval of the Wendell Pedestrian Plan with the following conditions/direction:

1. That prioritization of pedestrian improvements emphasize filling in existing gaps and performing maintenance of existing sidewalks before installing new, non-infill, segments.
2. That the Town Board evaluate the recommended intersection crossing improvements to determine if the intersection of Old Battle Bridge Road and Wendell Boulevard should be the top priority as currently stated.
3. That on page 82, the last sentence for the countdown pedestrian signals policy recommendation be deleted. This sentence recommended requiring pedestrian signals be installed even when no sidewalk was in place.

Ashley Anderson asked if there was any discussion on the motion. Allen Swaim said he thought we needed to keep the original flavor of Wendell intact as much as possible. Kathe Schaecher said Wendell would change over time though.

Ashley Anderson asked for a vote. The motion to recommend approval passed unanimously 7-0.

8. Adjourn to Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting

Lloyd Lancaster made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jonathan Olson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:10 p.m.