

Radford Planning Commission
Monday, March 18, 2019
Municipal Building

Members Present: Mr. Collier, Mr. Gillespie, Mr. Gilmore, Mr. Gropman, Dr. Pearce and Mr. Watson

Absent – Mr. Howard

Others Present: Melissa Skelton, City Staff

Mr. Watson called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. A quorum was present. The agenda was approved, following a motion to approve by Mr. Gilmore and seconded by Mr. Gropman.

Approval of Minutes:

February 18, 2019

Minutes were recommended for approval by Mr. Gilmore, seconded by Mr. Gillespie, as approved.

Voting Yes: Mr. Collier, Mr. Gillespie, Mr. Gilmore, Mr. Gropman, Dr. Pearce and Mr. Watson

Voting No: None

Abstain:

Public Address: No public comments provided.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1. Public Hearing:** Special Use Permit Request – **SP-19-002** – (3080 Little River Dam Road)

SUMMARY: SP-19-002 – (3080 Little River Dam Road) Islands on the New, LLC submitted an application seeking approval of a Special Use Permit (SUP) for Tax Map #'s 24-1-8, 3080 Little River Dam Road, Radford VA. The request is to allow construction and operation of a recreational vehicle park.

Mr. Michael Gay presented several slides showing the approach to the property along with outlines of turn radii of typical vehicles that might want to access the site. The presentation also showed typical details for utility connections at each pad, the geometry of a typical pad, and heights with regard to the 100 year flood plain.

Ms. Skelton pointed out that any type of development occurring within the flood plain would need to be certified by an engineer to meet all flood plain requirements. Mr. Watson asked regarding protection of utility connections from floating debris during flooding. Mr. Gay noted that any dump stations would be surrounded by protective walls to prevent damage. As stated in previous meetings, the operating plan would be to remove all trailers or vehicles when flooding was likely to occur.

Mr. Gropman asked what the highest flooding had been in recent history. Neighboring owner Mr. Jeffries stated that 24'-26' of flooding had occurred. The owner illustrated on the site map what areas had been known to flood. The lowest areas indicated as part of the developed site are about five feet below the 100 year flood plain. Electrical boxes would have to be located above the 100 year flood plain.

Mr. Watson asked regarding construction of structures and whether these would need to be approved as part of the ordinance. Ms. Skelton noted that all structures would have to be indicated as part of the master plan and be approved by the planning commission. Mr. Watson also asked regarding length of stay. City ordinance states a maximum of 180 days to stay. While it would be possible to circumvent this

rule by repositioning the RV, as long as the site is kept clean and tenants behave respectably, this is not likely to be a problem.

Mr. Gillespie asked about how trash will be handled on site. The owner stated that dumpster pads would be constructed with regular pickups, and an on-site manager would maintain sanitary conditions.

Mr. Gropman asked whether picnic tables would be located within the flood plain at each site. He noted that these could wash away in the event of flooding. The owner stated that there would be a plan to secure these or remove them during flooding. The main issue is ensuring that the company is responsible if anything ends up in the river, not the city.

The detailed plan will be developed after the special use permit is approved. Details of how things will be mitigated would be provided along with the site plan for future approval, after the special use permit is approved. The leasing provisions as well as evacuation procedures and other proposed policies will be included as part of the site plan.

Mr. Gilmore asked about the neighboring site where Mr. Chapman owns a current camp site, and the proposed fence to separate the site. Mr. Gilmore wondered what would be the extent of the fence. The owner stated that it would stretch from the river to the top of Mr. Chapman's property, to the edge of the trail easement.

Mr. Gillespie asked whether primitive camping was planned for the island areas. The owner replied that this is not necessarily part of the plan at this time. The island offers beautiful views, and it is intended to have nature trails and other similar uses. A site plan is not required for use of this sort, since no infrastructure is provided. If access were constructed, such as a bridge, then separate permits would have to be obtained from the US Army Corps of Engineers, among other requirements. Right now, the island is often covered with garbage and other detritus from unauthorized use. The hope would be to clean it up and better protect it.

The public hearing opened at 6:12 pm.

Mr. Chris Arnold spoke as the owner of a home at the end of West Main street across the road. He is concerned about noise after dark from loud music, parties, fireworks, etc. He has a small child. He would like to establish a noise curfew as well as a provision in the contract to require noise limits. He also expressed concerns about privacy, since his home is easily seen from the site and vice versa. He would like fencing or evergreen trees to provide privacy to his home, which is located quite a bit higher in elevation. The owner stated that noise limits are quite frequently part of rules at similar sites. A comparable site required lights out by 11 pm, and a cutoff time for use of vehicles like golf carts. Some levels of control can be established, but have not yet specifically been drafted for this site.

Mr. Gilmore noted that the same nuisance requirements applying to the city would be applicable to this site.

Mr. Arnold asked whether all dumpsters and trash containers would be animal-proof to prevent nuisance. Ms. Skelton stated that the city requires this as part of its regulations. The owner emphasized that the aim of this site was to function like a hotel and be a good neighbor to surrounding sites.

Mrs. Arnold also spoke regarding her concerns about fires on site. She imagined what the smoke impacts would be like if all sites were able to have small fires at the same time. She would like to encourage

standards for limiting hours and numbers of fires. She was also concerned about environmental damage due to vehicles leaking fluids into the soil near the pads so close to the water.

The public hearing ended at 6:20 pm.

Mr. Gillespie asked about a full time maintenance person and was reassured that someone would be available on site at all times.

Ms. Skelton has tentatively scheduled this item to be presented to City Council on April 8. She intends to have the ordinance drafted prior to the next Planning Commission meeting in April. The commission scheduled a site visit for 5:30 pm on Wednesday, April 3 to meet directly at the site.

Ms. Skelton also noted that messages had been received from Josh Carroll and Jen Carroll, as follows. Josh Carroll is concerned about the potential impact of the development to the river, as well as increased congestion and a potential need for rerouting the road. He noted that the area already has issues with flooding. Jen Carroll noted that traffic is already dangerous in this area, and there is significant potential issue with sewer releases when flooding occurs. She is concerned that the development may devalue surrounding property.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. SUMMARY: RR-19-001** – (1023 Grove Ave) Collegiate Investment Co. submitted an application seeking Rezoning Request for Tax Map #'s 6-(8)-84, 1023 Grove Ave, Radford VA. The request is to allow an apartment on the first floor by rezoning the site to mixed use from B3.

Mr. Gilmore noted that this area needs to be considered as a whole, rather than spot-zoning one particular site. He would like to see a work session to evaluate the area more systematically. Since we are about to review our zoning ordinance, it may make sense to think of this more holistically. Additional consideration as well as site visits on our own would help to inform this issue. We have up to 90 days to schedule a public hearing. The commission would like to discuss this in more detail and include Mr. Howard as part of the discussion.

The owner of this site has submitted a rezoning request to prompt the commission to consider this area in a timely fashion. Approximately 80% of the area is non-conforming at this point, with many parcels already containing housing units. The aim is to determine what is the best way to bring about positive transformation of this area.

Mr. Gilmore noted that we should consider trying to encourage business to locate on First Street rather than expanding further up into the neighborhood toward Grove. The zoning in this area was put together during the years of ISTEPA funding, and there was possible motivation to put additional transportation in that area. There is a handful of businesses in this neighborhood already, as well as housing. The current mixed use is prolific in this neighborhood. A special use permit is required for multifamily in a mixed use area.

The commission agreed to carry this discussion over to the next meeting. Ms. Skelton will collect information on current uses as well as streetscape. We are considering from Tyler to Second or Third Ave on both sides of Grove Ave. Ms. Skelton encouraged commissioners to visit the site independently on their own time.

Staff Report:

Regional Commission training is scheduled for April 11 from 6-8 pm. It is located at the Montgomery County Government Center.

The approved special use permit for Jeff Price's townhomes – he is looking for permission to subdivide to sell. This is likely to be pending.

An email was forwarded from Mr. Elijah Sharp from the NRVRC wanting to put in a proposal for our RFP for the zoning review/update.

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Collier – No comment

Mr. Gillespie – No comment

Mr. Gilmore – No comment

Mr. Gropman– What zoning would be required for a hotel? Ms. Skelton replied that B-3 would be required. This would require separate consideration as a business. Current zoning ordinance would allow this with no dwellings on the ground floor.

Dr. Pearce – Looks forward to reviewing proposals for reworking the zoning ordinance.

Mr. Watson – Asked about reviewing sections of the zoning ordinance on our own. Dr. Pearce requested that we put together specific GIS queries such as lots smaller than 600 square feet or narrower than 50 feet wide.

A motion was made by Mr. Gilmore to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 pm, seconded by Mr. Collier

Voting Yes: Mr. Collier, Mr. Gillespie, Mr. Gilmore, Mr. Gropman, Dr. Pearce and Mr. Watson

Voting No: None

Abstain: None

Submitted by: A. Pearce, Secretary

Date: March 18, 2019