

**Town of Smithfield  
Planning Board Minutes  
Thursday, December 7th, 2023  
Town Hall Council Chambers  
6:00 PM**

Members Present:

Chairman Mark Lane  
Vice-Chairman Debbie Howard  
Bryan Stanley  
Alisa Bizzell  
Doris Wallace  
Ashley Spain

Members Absent:

Wiley Narron

Staff Present:

Stephen Wensman, Planning Director  
Chloe Allen, Planner I  
Julie Edmonds, Administrative Support Specialist

Staff Absent:

**CALL TO ORDER**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA** Chairman Mark Lane changed the order of the agenda. He requested that CZ-23-01 be heard first since we had citizens present. Doris Wallace made a motion to approve the change, seconded by Debbie Howard. Unanimously approved.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES for November 2nd, 2023**

Doris Wallace made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Alisa Bizzell. Unanimously approved.

**APPROVAL OF THE 2024 PLANNING BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE**

Doris Wallace made a motion to approve the schedule, seconded by Alisa Bizzell. Unanimously approved.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**CZ-23-01 Buffalo Road:** The applicant is requesting to rezone a 138.63-acre tract of land from the R-20A, R-10 and R-8 Residential zoning districts to the R-8 Conditional Zoning district with a master plan consisting of 217 single-family residential lots. The property considered for rezoning is located on the east side of Buffalo Road, approximately 300 south of its intersection with Holland Drive and further identified as Johnston County Tax ID# 14A03005.

Stephen Wensman stated this case was before at the November 2<sup>nd</sup> Planning Board Meeting. It was tabled to allow the developer time to address the comments and changes. Adams and Hodge Engineering, PC, is requesting a conditional rezoning of 138.63-acres of land from R-8 and R-20A to R8-CZ with a master plan. They had 217 lots at the last meeting but after making the changes they have added 5 new lots to the development consisting of 222 single family lots. Mr. Wensman showed on a map the location of the property in question. The developer came up with a revised plan after reviewing staff and neighboring community comments. The biggest change is street A no longer connects to Bradford Park. There's now a 20ft wide trail that will be reenforced to handle emergency vehicles with breakable barriers on both ends. The fire marshal was notified of the change and ok with it. The long cu-de-sac that was a problem is now a future connection to the radio station property. There is a street stub to the landlocked parcel that will serve as a firetruck turnaround and meets fire code. They've stubbed the road all the way to the property line to the South to provide access to that landowner should he ever want to develop it. All public right-of-way are 60 ft wide. The biggest change is that the developer is offering up the land East of the greenway. It's 50 some acres and would be offered as park land. The developer will be looping the water mains between Bradford Park and the development. The fire marshal requested an 8-inch water line, the developer agreed to it if it works

with their engineering. The developer will put in a fire hydrant just beyond that fire connection behind the houses. The UDO doesn't support the street A cul-de-sac. The UDO wants conductivity and the developer isn't providing that.

The developer is providing the following standards that exceed UDO requirements.

- Greenway trail connection to Buffalo Road
- Landscaped berm along Buffalo Road with fence
- Sidewalks on both sides of the streets, only one side is required.
- Residential architectural guidelines (not yet articulated).

HOA amenities are provided, but these are typical of such developments, and these are private amenities. Staff does not believe the developer has provided enough to the Town to justify the small lots with limited lot frontage as part of this conditional zoning process. If the Planning Board wishes to recommend approval and would like to see additional developer concessions, options include:

- Larger lots or a combination of small and larger lots
- HOA maintenance of the trail connection from the Buffalo Creek Greenway to Buffalo Road.
- More enhanced landscaping at the entrances.
- Provide decorative lighting.
- Provide decorative street signage.
- Greater side yard setbacks on corner lots.
- Have the greenway connector trail be separated from the sidewalk.
- Provide traffic calming for Street A in the form of traffic circles at key intersections.

With the approval of the rezoning, the Town Council is required to adopt a statement describing whether the action is consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan and other applicable adopted plans and that the action is reasonable and, in the public, interest. Planning Staff considers the action to be consistent and reasonable:

- **Consistency with the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan** – the development is consistent with the comprehensive plan.
- **Consistency with the Unified Development Code** – the property will be developed in conformance with the UDO conditional zoning provisions that allows a good faith negotiation of development standards.
- **Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses** - The property considered for rezoning will be compatible with the surrounding land uses with the additional conditions of approval

Planning Staff recommend the Planning Board recommend approval of CZ-23-01 with the following conditions:

1. The driveway aprons to the parking lot and residential lots should conform to the town's standard details.
2. All public rights-of-way shall be a minimum of 60' wide.
3. Provide lateral street connections to the Johnson Broadcast Ventures LTD (Tax ID 14075035) and MAC 2008 LLC (Tax ID 14A03007) properties that includes the street and sidewalks.
4. Cul-de-sac bulbs shall have a minimum radius of 48 feet.
5. Provide written architectural standards should be provided to match the example elevations provided on the master plan.
6. Provide a continuous trail between Buffalo Creek Greenway and Buffalo Road.
7. Provide concrete curb and gutter along Buffalo Road (piping the ditch) with NCDOT approval.
8. Provide traffic calming for Street A in the form of traffic circles at key intersections.
9. Provide a greater variety of lot widths with larger lots adjacent to the Bradford Park neighborhood.
10. Modify the road connection to Parkway Drive so that it is not a direct connection to Street A.

Mark Lane asked if there were a disaster and the right side of the development needed to be evacuated, the only way out is a 20-foot-wide path?

Stephen Wensman said yes, once the firemen take the barriers out. He stated if the 5-acre radio station parcel developed, there could be another access way out in the future.

Donnie Adams of Adams & Hodge Engineering came forward. They are located at 314 E. Main Street in Clayton. Their firm is handling the planning and engineering on this project.

Mr. Adams addressed Mark Lanes question about the connection between the left and right of the development. He said it's a 20 ft asphalt path and it will be structurally sound. The majority of the NCDOT roads are 20 ft wide. It won't be encumbered access once it's free.

Mr. Adams said the intention of the land dedication is to be used as open space. It is adjacent to the property that the Town owns at Smithfield Recreation and Aquatics Center.

Mr. Adams addressed the density. He stated density is not about the size of the lot but the number of lots you have per acre. The entire parcel, 140 acres will have 222 lots. That's 1.6 units to the acre. By the Town's comprehensive growth plan this area is called out for medium density. In the comprehensive growth plan, it's stated as 3 units per acre and 8 units per acre.

Stephen Wensman stated the Town Manager Mike Scott would like to see ponds on the property aeriaded. This would help prevent mosquitoes.

Ashley Spain asked if the land to be dedicated could be used without a lot of site work needing to be done. He said he knew it was really wet back there.

Mr. Adams said about 36 acres of that parcel is developable and outside of the flood plain.

Eugene Bruton of 105 Cobblestone Ct. Smithfield came forward. He is deeply concerned about the development being built and trees being removed and his property being flooded out. He brought pictures of the flooding on his property and handed a set to each Planning Board members. Mr. Bruton explained what each picture was and how bad the flooding was. He wants this problem to be handled before the engineer begins the development.

Steve Hart of 1374 Buffalo Rd came forward to speak. He asked where all of the water would run off to once the new development was built. He stated the development would be built up like a dam. He's concerned where all of the rainwater will go.

Wendy Lupo of 108 Cobblestone St Smithfield came forward. She asked if bringing in so many materials would affect the wetlands.

Bryan Stanley stated there's something the Planning Board doesn't have in our packet and that's a storm drain plan. He told Mr. Bruton and Mr. Hart the board is aware of how wet it is back in that area. Until the Planning Board receives that plan, we don't know that there aren't storm drain boxes placed around the development. It might be that we can make a recommendation to add some storm drain boxes.

Stephen Wensman said this is just a rezoning. What comes after this is a preliminary plat and construction drawings. There will be adjustments to be made with drainage. The two big ponds will capture the run off from stormwater.

Stephen Wensman read the conditions of CZ-23-01:

1. The driveway aprons to the parking lot and residential lots should conform to the town's standard details.
2. Provide written architectural standards should be provided to match the example elevations provided on the master plan.
3. Provide a continuous trail between Buffalo Creek Greenway and Buffalo Road.
4. Provide concrete curb and gutter along Buffalo Road (piping the ditch) with NCDOT approval.

5. Provide traffic calming for Street A in the form of three way stop sign at all intersections.
6. Provide a greater variety of lot widths with larger lots adjacent to the Bradford Park neighborhood.
7. Modify the road connection to Parkway Drive so that it is not a direct connection to Street A
8. Provide decorative lighting and street signs
9. More enhanced landscaping at the entrances.
10. The water mains be looped with Bradford Park and hydrant be added by the emergency access.

Debbie Howard made a motion to approve CZ-23-01 with conditions 1, 5, 7 and adding three way stop signs at all intersections, provide decorative lighting and street signage, provide more enhanced landscaping at the entrance, land east of the greenway be proposed to Town Council for dedication, aeration of the ponds, water mains be moved to connect to Bradford Park and fire hydrant added to the parkway. finding the rezoning consistent with the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and other adopted plans, and that the amendment is reasonable and in the public interest, seconded by Doris Wallace. Unanimously approved.

**New Business:**

**ZA-23-09 Watershed Ordinance:** The Town of Smithfield is proposing an amendment to the Unified Development Code, Section 10.92, and associated definitions in Appendix A as an update to the Water Supply Watershed Protection Overlay District regulations in accordance with changes in the general statues, NCGS 143-214.5.

Stephen Wensman read off the changes.

The updated ordinance follows the same general format as the old with the following key changes:

- Added Section 10.92.4 Exceptions to Applicability.
- Added Section 10.92.5 Violations of Water Supply Watershed Protection Overlay District Ordinance which outlines civil penalties by the N.C. Environmental Management Commission if a violation occurs.
- Added Section 10.92.6 Effective Date, which will be the date of adoption.
- Updated Section 10.92.9 Development Regulations – WS-IV-CA with:
  - o Updated Allowed Uses language.
  - o Updated density and built-upon limits for low-and high-density projects.
  - o Updated stormwater control requirements.
  - o Updated method to calculate density.
- Updated Section 10.92.10. Development Regulations—WS-IV-PA District with:
  - o Updated Allowed Uses language.
  - o Updated density and built-upon limits for low-and high-density projects.
  - o Updated stormwater control requirements.
  - o Updated method to calculate density.
- Updated Section 10.92.8 Density Averaging, to replace Impervious Surface Transfer Credit.
- Updated Section 10.81.11 Buffer Areas Required.
- Updated Variance procedure (Section 10.92.12) that is unique to this ordinance.
- Updated associated definitions in the UDO, Appendix A.

Ashley Spain made a motion to recommend approval of zoning text amendment, ZA-23-09, amending Article 10, Section 10.92, Water Supply Watershed Protection Overlay District ordinance and associated definitions in the UDO Appendix A., finding the amendment consistent with the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and other adopted plans, and that the amendment is reasonable and in the public interest, seconded by Doris Wallace. Unanimously approved.

**Adjournment**

Alisa Bizzell made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ashley Spain. Unanimously approved.

Next Planning Board meeting is January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 6pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Edmonds". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julie Edmonds  
Administrative Support Specialist