

Camden County Planning Board
Minutes
October 15, 2008, 7:00pm
Historic Courtroom
Camden County Courthouse Complex

Members Present: Chairman Rodney Needham,
Vice Chairman Terri Griffin,
Calvin Leary, John Aydlett,
Fletcher Harris

Absent: Ray Albertson
Mike Etheridge

Call to Order & Welcome

Chairman Rodney Needham called to order the October 15, 2008 meeting at 7:00 PM.

Others Present at Meeting

Present were staff members Dan Porter, Director of Planning, Dave Parks, Permit and Flood Administrator, and Amy Barnett, Clerk to the Planning Board.

Consideration of Agenda

Chairman Rodney Needham called for the consideration of the agenda. Calvin Leary made a motion to approve the agenda. John Aydlett seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Chairman Rodney Needham, Vice Chairman Terri Griffin, Members Calvin Leary, John Aydlett, and Fletcher Harris voting aye; none voting no; 2 absent; none not voting.

Consideration of the Minutes- September 17, 2008

Chairman Rodney Needham called for the consideration of the minutes from the September 17, 2008 meeting. John Aydlett made a motion to approve the minutes from the aforementioned meeting as written. Vice Chairman Terri Griffin seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Chairman Rodney Needham, Vice Chairman Terri Griffin, Members Calvin Leary, John Aydlett, and Fletcher Harris voting aye; none voting no; 2 absent; none not voting.

Comments from the Public.

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Item #1, Design Standards

Dan Porter described the changes to the proposed Design Standards ordinance and asked that the Board take action on it. He also pointed out that at present time, Design Standards are not part of the UDO ordinances, as they were part of an earlier package sent to the Board of Commissioners that was ultimately voted down as a whole. Planning Board and Staff discussed sending the Design Standards section, with a few changes, of the package back to the Board of Commissioners for their consideration. The main item that changed was §151.261 sub section F (Drainage), Paragraphs 1 and 2, which was amended to read as follows:

- (1) For residential subdivisions, drainage requirements in accordance with Article 151.400 shall be required prior to subdivision approval for Minor Subdivision's and prior to Preliminary Plat approval for Major Subdivisions.*
- (2) For non-residential subdivisions, drainage requirements in accordance with Article 151.400 shall be required prior to Commercial Site Plan approval for the proposed use.*

Member Calvin Leary made a motion to accept the addition of §151.261, Subsection (F), Paragraphs 1 & 2. Vice Chairman Terri Griffin seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Chairman Rodney Needham, Vice Chairman Terri Griffin, Members Calvin Leary, John Aydlett, and Fletcher Harris voting aye; none voting no; 2 absent; none not voting.

Following the vote, a general discussion on Design Standards and Overlay Regulations took place. Dave Parks included a copy of the Elizabeth City, Halstead Blvd Overlay Regulations in the Board Packet for this months meeting to be used as an example. The following were issues that were brought up:

- Costly to adhere to certain standards.
- Some projects may have to be grandfathered in, with regards to any new standards/regulations.
- US Hwy 158 Corridor goes right through the county, and is the first impression of visitors.
- Variances could be given to allow non-compliance to Design Standards where/when those standards are determined to be impractical.

- Sign Standards may need to be improved upon. Portable signs and their adverse appearance were discussed.
- If Design Standards section is resubmitted to the Board of Commissioners, it needs to be with the understanding that there will be non-conforming designs where land uses are already in place.
- Chairman Rodney Needham suggested gathering public input for the creation of a design standards overlay district to be used in the area of the Camden Plantation project in Camden County. Vice Chairman Terri Griffin added that overlays should be created first, then add design standards to them. Also deciding where the overlay district will be should be first. This way the overlay is created and standards are applied to it.
- Dave Parks pointed out that commercial districts are already defined by the zoning ordinances. He went on to say that perhaps the Board should ask the Commissioners if it is alright to work on the standards within a commercial district.
- Dan Porter said that an overlay can not be created without standards applied to it, also that a well defined boundary line is needed for any overlay created.
- Calvin Leary asked if zoning districts would over-ride boundary lines on an overlay
- Dan Porter said that within the 158 Corridor, the following zoning exists: CC, HC, I-1, I-2, and GUD. Planning Board can recommend standards in areas using the boundaries as a dividing line for where standards should be applied.
- Vice Chairman Terri Griffin reiterated that boundaries need to be defined and then design standards applied to them. Standards items would include building design elements, parking lots, landscaping, etc. Ms. Griffin went on to say that the use of the property could help determine appropriate design standards, for example restaurants would have different standards than office buildings, etc. Design Standards should tie areas together so that they have similar looks.
- Dan Porter suggested that what Ms. Griffin described above might do well on Hwy 343 as well. He said that brick facades would probably look best in the Courthouse area.
- Vice Chairman Terri Griffin suggested asking the Board of Commissioners to set aside funds that could be used to help citizens comply with design standards so that communities can make positive changes.
- Dan Porter suggested creating smaller plans/overlays which would be more specific to the property whose design is to be standardized.
- Fletcher Harris voiced concern regarding the possibility of standards being so rigid that they would scare potential new citizens / businesses away from the area. He said that is something to be avoided.
- Dan Porter reiterated what Chairman Rodney Needham said regarding input from the public on design standards. He said he wants to get input from property owners on the types of standards that should be included. Mr. Porter went on to say that most people will not hire an architect, but will hire a contractor instead to build a building and then put a facade on it in order to comply with design standards.
- Vice Chairman Terri Griffin revisited the subject of cost, and said that one thing many people will be saying is that they can only afford so much. She indicated that design standards could be very costly to anyone putting up any kind of building.

- Dan Porter said that the design standards should establish what would be aesthetically best for Camden County. Also, he made mention that revitalization funds are available for Camden, although we missed the application cycle for 2008, but can apply for it for next year.
- Fletcher Harris said that design standards, once implemented, would have the effect of a face lift on areas and that neighboring areas would want to revitalize their area to match adjoining areas. He said this could produce a domino effect, with everyone wanting their area to look good.
- Vice Chairman Terri Griffin stated that she doesn't want the design standards to come across as strict rules. She also said that community input is needed in the preparation of design standards. She would like to get input from the public on what they do and do not like in terms of design standards and what they would like the county to look like (courthouse, schools, etc).
- Dan Porter said he would put together a questionnaire that could be given out at the Golden Leaf Community Meeting, on November 12, 2008 @ 6:30 PM, at the Camden Middle School auditorium. Also, he said that for the next Planning Board meeting, maps, pictures, and ideas of what have been discussed here will be brought back.

Information from Board and Staff

November 12, 2008, @ 6:30 PM - Golden Leaf Community Meeting, at the Camden County Middle School auditorium. This is a meeting to gather public input on what types of facilities the public would like to see come to Camden County. The possibility of a million dollar grant to obtain facilities and services will be discussed.

Consider Date of Next Meeting – November 19, 2008

Adjournment

At approximately 8:15 PM, Calvin Leary made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Fletcher Harris seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Chairman Rodney Needham, Vice Chairman Terri Griffin, Members Calvin Leary, John Aydlett, and Fletcher Harris voting aye; none voting no; 2 absent; none not voting.

Date: _____

Approved: _____
Chairman Rodney Needham

Attested: _____
Amy Barnett, Planning Clerk