BLACKSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION — February 7, 2023
Municipal Building Council Chambers — 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Andy Kassoff called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: T. Colley; J. Herbein; J. Ford Jr.; A. Kassoff; S. Rinehart; L. Walker; L. Watson
K. Casper-Assistant Planning Director
K. Thomsen-Planning Technician

Absent: M. Jones.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Planning Commission Minutes-November 1, 2022, December 6, 2022 & January 3, 2023.
ACTION: Approved.

B. SUB 23-0001-Major Subdivision Preliminary Plat Review for 51 lots on 36.00 acres at 2150 Progress Street NW for Northside Park-Revised Section XII by Balzer and Associates (applicant) for CC & B Development, LLC (owner).
ACTION: Schedule public hearing for March 7, 2023.

C. RZN 23-0001/ORD #2014-Request to rezone 0.816 acres of land from DC Downtown Commercial to PR Planned Residential at 208 Turner Street NW (Tax Map No. 226-A 151) by Steve Semones of Balzer and Associates (applicant) for 208 Turner LLC (owner).
ACTION: Schedule public hearing for March 7, 2023.

D. CUP 23-0001-Conditional Use Permit request for Medium Industrial use in the Industrial zoning district at 3210 Commerce Street (Tax Map No. 348-A 15) by Larry Bullock of Boxley Ready Mix (applicant) for Henry and Susan Henderson (owners).
ACTION: Schedule public hearing for March 7, 2023.

E. RZN 22-000/Ord #2007-Request to rezone 44.85 acres of vacant land from RR-1 Rural Residential 1 to PR Planned Residential at 1006 Glade Road by Meredith Jones of Eden and Associates, PC (applicant) for Cary Hopper of Glade Spring Crossing, LLC (owner).
ACTION: Cancel February 7, 2023 public hearing and reschedule for March 7, 2023.

Joel Herbein moved to approve the Consent Agenda.
Jerry Ford Jr. seconded the motion.

There was no discussion from the Planning Commission.

Motion passed 7-0. All commissioners present voted yes. None voted no.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING

A. CUP 22-0007-Conditional Use Permit request for Personal Improvement Services in the Office Zoning District at 2200 South Main Street (Tax Map No. 317-A-16) by Stahl Fitness, LLC (applicant) for AWA 2200 Holdings LLC (owner).

a. Staff presentation.
Kali Casper gave a presentation outlining the request. The proposed personal improvement services use is for Fit Body Boot Camp and will share the space with TRC Companies, an engineering firm, in a newly renovated building at 2200 South Main Street. There are no exterior changes proposed and the Future Land Use designation is Commercial. All of the office zoning district standards have been met and no traffic or infrastructure impacts are expected. Existing parking will be adequate for all uses in the building. Noise was a concern at the neighborhood meeting and the applicant will work with an acoustic engineer to mitigate sound. No classes at Fit Body Boot Camp will be held outside the building. Staff recommended condition that the use be developed and operated in substantial conformance with the January 2023 application.

b. Applicant presentation
Steve Semones of Balzer and Associates gave a presentation as the applicant. Semones noted changes have been made based on comments at the Planning Commission Work Session. The signage has been changed, an additional bike parking space has been added and an acoustic engineer has been contacted to measure decibel levels and mitigate noise and activity at the location.

c. Public Comment.
Jim Henegar of TRC Engineers. Henegar noted that noise is a major concern and is not conducive to work in an engineering office. Due to a drop ceiling and open office space, office workers, front desk and conference room/clients would be affected by the noise. The two uses do not seem to be compatible with one another.

d. Applicant rebuttal.
None

e. Motion and Discussion.
Joel Herbein moved to approve CUP 22-0007 with the staff recommended condition.
Jerry Ford Jr. seconded the motion.
Susanna Rinehart asked if the Planning Commission could respond to the noise concerns, as it seems more of a landlord/tenant issue than a land use issue.
Andy Kassoff agreed that the Planning Commission could not respond on what happens inside the building.
Jerry Ford Jr. stated that the conditions could be added to the request for noise consideration.
Andy Kassoff stated that the Planning Commission could only respond if they have a

problem with the land use as whole.
Tim Colley stated he would not be in favor of additional conditions regarding noise.

Motion to approve passed 6-0 with Walker abstaining.

B. RZN 22-0003/ORD #2003-Request for an amendment to previous rezoning Ordinance #746 to modify a Planned Commercial PC zoning district including permitted uses at 1055 Plantation Road (Tax Map No. 254-A-18) by Broadstreet Partners, LLC (applicant) for Blacksburgs Green BLD LLC (owner).

C. CUP 22-0006-Conditional Use Permit for Mini-Warehouse Use in the Planned Commercial PC zoning district at 1055 Plantation Road (Tax Map No. 254-A-18) by Broadstreet Partners, LLC (applicant) for Blacksburgs Greens BLD LLC (owner).

a. Combined staff presentation.
Kali Casper gave a presentation covering the rezoning request and conditional use request to revise Ordinance # 746 and request mini-warehouse use as an approved conditional use at the location. Casper began with a presentation regarding the rezoning request. The entire parcel is 9,000 square feet and a total of 4,579 square feet is for the proposed mini-warehouse use. The additional square footage is planned for a commercial use to be defined later. The request to alter previous Ordinance #746 is to amend allowable uses and changes to the approved proffers (buffer yard, lot coverage, landscaping, sidewalks, and removal of architectural review board approval).
The applicant has requested a variance to Section 5-321 requiring bike lanes on collector and arterial streets citing physical infrastructure challenges and the provision of other bike/pedestrian infrastructure. Town staff recommends Prices Fork be reconfigured to extend the bike land to intersect with Plantation Road.
The applicant has requested a variance to allow for private sanitary sewer pumped system, force main line and private manhole. Staff is in support of this decision.
A cross access easement is required between the mini-warehouse use and future commercial development area. The applicant has proffered to dedicate the easement at this time and location and construction will be decided at a later time.
Casper moved her presentation to discuss the conditional use permit request for mini-warehouse use. The proposal is for a 2-story building with basement, 100,000 square feet of storage space with 820 storage units of various sizes. This request is contingent on RZN 22-0003 being approved. On-site staffed management is available M-F from 9am to 6pm with after-hours access seven days a week from 6am to 9pm. Prices Fork and Plantation Road intersections will be impacted with increased traffic but the level of impact is acceptable to Town Code and does not warrant any traffic improvements. Additional exceptions and variances include changes to the Use and Design standards for Unit Doors and changes to Development Standards for Parking above maximum limit and changes to allowable signage.
Staff recommendation conditions include conformance with the applications

submitted in October 2022 and revised in January 2023 and installation of five (5) bicycle parking spaces with inverted-U bicycle racks that meet Town standards.

Planning Commission had questions about the bike lane variance, allowable and conditional use permit uses, signage clarity and procedural questions regarding approval or denial of the requested variances/exceptions and the two project as a whole.

b. Combined applicant presentation.
Craig Stipes of Broadstreet Partners gave a presentation regarding both requests. Stipes added that a traffic impact analysis would be conducted before the vacant commercial space in front would be development. Stipes stated that a retaining wall is proposed between the proposed development and the existing Dowdy hotel property. Property will be gated and fenced. Stipes also gave more information on the bike lane variance request at the intersection of Prices Fork and Plantation Road.

Planning Commission had questions and discussion on the bike lane variance request and the existing bike lane access and route.

c. Public Comment.
Josh Rigsby-General Manager of Hotel adjacent to proposed use. Rigsby read a letter drafted by the owner of the hotel, Dennis Dowdy that states that the hotel is in opposition to these proposed changes. Dowdy is concerned about the visual integrity of the area, the traffic impacts at the intersection, the altered view shed and the impact to his guests at the hotel.

d. Applicant rebuttal.
Craig Stipes stated that the applicant has always tried to work with Mr. Dowdy and take all of his opinions and concerns into account.

e. Motion and Discussion for RZN 22-0003/ORD #2003.
Joel Herbein moved to approve RZN 22-0003/ORD #2003 with the sewer related variances and exception but without approval of the bike lane variance.
Susanna Rinehart seconded the motion.

Rinehart said she struggled with not granting the bike lane variance and wondered if Town Staff agreed with the applicant about the complexity of working in the intersection.
Kassoff asked if it would be acceptable to slope the corner, take the curb out and make it a shared sidewalk and bike lane.
Herbein stated that the Town needs to prepare for future needs and gave the example of making The Retreat accommodate general connectivity between the site and future development in the surrounding area.

Kassoff asked if the Prices Ford Corridor Study has a proposal to put a bike lane across the bridge (to 460).

Motion to approve with the sewer related variances and exceptions but not including the bike lane variance was approved 7-0. All voted yes. None voted no.

f. Motion and Discussion for CUP 22-0006
Joel Herbein moved to approve CUP 22-0006 with all requested variances and exceptions and all staff recommended conditions but without approval of the bike lane variance.
Susanna Rinehart seconded the motion.

There was no discussion from the Planning Commission.

Motion to approve CUP 22-0006 with all requested variances, exceptions and staff recommended conditions excluding the bike lane variance passed 6-1. Colley; Ford; Herbein; Jones; Kassoff; Rinehart and Watson voted yes. Walker voted no.

D. RZN 22-0004/ORD #2007-Request to rezone 44.85 acres of vacant land from RR-1 Rural Residential 1 to PR Planned Residential at 1006 Glade Road by Meredith Jones of Eden and Associates, PC (applicant) for Cary Hopper of Glade Spring Crossing, LLC (owner).
ACTION: Cancel February 7, 2023 public hearing and reschedule for March 7, 2023.

V. CITIZEN COMMENT

Tombo Jones- 1224 Village Way South (VWS) on behalf of Toms Creek Sustainability Coalition shared the Coalition's comments and concerns regarding the proposed Glade Spring Crossing (GSC) rezoning at 1006 Glade Road. Jones noted the Coalition gathered 223 signatures in opposition to the proposal focused on the density of the project and safety concerns due to the proposed connectivity between Glade Spring Crossing and the Village of Toms Creek (VTC). Jones further noted that the Coalition is in support of affordable housing but is concerned there are too many issues with this project.

Guy Acciai-1221 VWS- stated that affordable housing is a commendable goal but the GSC proposal is not the way to achieve this goal. Acciai also expressed concerns that the project is too dense for the area to support, and has safety and environmental issues. The variance requests from Town standards are problematic. Further, there are concerns about impacts on the adjacent VTC neighborhood. Acciai recommended that the Town request a 3-D rendering of the proposed development to see how it will fit with the existing topography and impacts on surrounding areas.

Lisa Acciai-1221 VWS expressed concerns about the project density, the number of variances requested and the overall impacts of the proposal. Acciai specifically addressed the issue in the small lot area with a lack of garages, the amount of asphalt on each lot and significant safety concerns. Also noted were concerns about drainage and environmental issues. Acciai commented on stormwater concerns and a rise in the temperature of Toms Creek. Acciai

suggested a reduction in density, more sidewalks, more canopy coverage and a reduction in the number of parking spaces. Acciai is concerned that variance requests could have long-term impact to the town referencing the sidewalk variances on Street A and E; request to reduce the setback from the drive aisle to the property line.

Rebecca Hightower-1207 VWS- expressed concerns that the proposal represented a choice between affordable housing and environmental concerns. Hightower noted the proposed development is too dense and could negatively impact the watershed. Lastly, Hightower said that a plan should be requested for this development.

Steven Scholenholtz-1201 Glen Cove Lane-Scholenholtz lives two properties down from the proposed Glade Springs property. Scholenholtz studies hydrology and land use and this development of high density housing on a steep slope will have a devastating impact on flooding and water quality which will impact property, stream health and erosion factors. The applicant has not addressed what will happen with the storm water during the years the property is under construction and what will happen to Glade Spring itself when the property is being excavated for sewer pipes and housing foundations. Using storm data, it is very unlikely that the applicant will be able to control, contain, treat and maintain the amount of stormwater coming from the development. The Toms Creek basin will be altered permanently and there will be little that can be done about it.

A citizen at 1222 VWS stated that they are not anti-growth or anti-development. There are traffic concerns that arise with this development starting with the fact that approved but not yet built developments were not considered when considering trip generation. Toms Creek Road is a sloping one-way road with a confusing intersection and minimal housing setbacks from the road which would create unsafe roads for residents. The proposed connector road from GSC to VWS will be a 2 lane road with a steep slope and sharp turns that will create more safety concerns. Lastly there is not pedestrian or bike connectivity in the plan so there are no safeguards for residents. The citizen asks the Town to consider keeping the connectivity road for emergency and pedestrian/bikeway access only.

Chris Bundren-1219 VWS-Bundren is concerned about the requested driveway variances on the south side of the development and that the elimination of the driveway spacing between properties from 3 feet to 0 feet will greatly increase blind spots and accidents. Also of concern is the sidewalk design between the driveway and the street, as well as the variance to the distance between a driveway and an intersection. Lastly, there were concerns about roll-top curb, guest parking, and other impediments to the use of the street from on-street parking, recycling and trash bins, and delivery vehicles. All of these items are safety concerns.

Lucy Touchton-1213 VWS- indicated Touchton's house backs up to the proposed development and they are not opposed to development of the space but the density proposed is much too high. Touchton also expressed concerns about traffic impacts and specifically cut-through traffic. Noted were that neither VWS nor GSC have, or are not proposed to have, sidewalks so pedestrian, bikers and cars will all be in the road. Touchton commented on the topography of the site and the steepness of the proposed connection road to VTC. They request that the connection to VTC be used for pedestrian and emergency use only.

Heidi Sallee-1209 VWS-stated that the original road connection from VTC was proposed for 44 houses on the GSC site and not the 170 houses now proposed. Sallee commented that the neighborhood is a community that likes to congregate together on the dead end street and that gathering option will be lost with this proposed development. Salle noted that traffic now is minimal and the area is very safe. Sallee supported keeping any connection for pedestrians and emergency use only.

Vicky Fix-1301 VWS-shared concerns that the development as proposed lacks sufficient trees, contains too much pavement and solar heating on the wet pond will impair Toms Creek downstream. Adequate and appropriate tree canopy over the ponds and the streams is necessary and Fix does not find that is included in the proposed development plan. Finally, Fix expressed concern that invasive species will thrive in the compacted areas during construction creating a problem that may take years to remove.

Mike Stein-1225 VWS- is concerned that the road connection to VTC will compromise safety and does not meet Town standards. Stein supported making the road connection from the development to VWS for pedestrian and emergency access only. Stein also expressed significant safety concerns about traffic, on-street parking, dangerous intersections, the grade and width of the roadway connection to VTC and the need for retaining walls.

Dean Spader-1301 VWS- is concerned about the impact of the development on the cohesiveness of existing neighborhoods. Spader noted the proposal is not smart growth. Spader supported making the road connection for pedestrian and emergency use only.

Tracy Sterling-1211 VWS- commented on the need for affordable housing. Sterling expressed concerns about the number and affordability of the homes proposed as affordable in the development. Sterling had questions about how the process for provision of the affordable units would work in terms of timing and payment to the developer. Sterling also asked if the affordable housing units be an equitable comparison to the fair market value homes. Sterling asked the Planning Commission to deny the rezoning request.

Dave Sallee-1209 VWS- requested more information on how the ARPA funds would be spent, the process involved and the timeline for actual provision of the affordable units. Sallee agreed there is a definite need for affordable housing in Town but that the plan proposed lacked sufficient details.

Gloria Scholenholtz-1301 Glen Cove Road indicated that Glade Spring is a pristine waterway and the Town should strive to keep it that way and protect natural wetlands. Scholenholtz also noted that these streams nurture many areas of trees, plants and wildlife that could be lost if this project is approved.

Kacie Hodges-1223 VWS- acknowledged that development sites can have issues but that the proposal for GSC is too dense and is requesting too many variances. Hodges noted that many of these variances raise serious concerns over safety, environmental protection and quality of life. Also of concern is that the GSC proposal will set a precedent for small lot developments before proper time can be taken to develop appropriate town standards for this type of use. Hodges is concerned this is not the right site for this development.

A citizen at 1222 VWS indicated that the developer has submitted 13 variances for the development proposal, which are 13 ways the project does not meet Town standards. Blacksburg has 13 reasons to not approve the development. The citizen indicated that the proposal does not reflect use of the VTC as a model for their development if that was the intent.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Zoning Ordinance Review Committee
Andy Kassoff stated that the committee plans to meet in March 2023.

B. Historic or Design Review Board
Tim Colley reported that the Board has not met but will meet in March 2023.

C. Montgomery County Planning Commission.
Joel Herbein reported that the Commission has not met.

D. Additional items from the Planning Commission.
None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Chair's Report.
None.

B. Planning Director's Report.
None.

C. Town Council Report.
Jerry Ford Jr. reported that the Town Council is discussing a small lot development study.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR MEETING

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 pm.

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Timothy Colley, Secretary

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K. Thomsen, Planning Technician