

## **GEORGETOWN PLANNING COMMISSION**

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 9, 2006

### CALL TO ORDER

The Georgetown Planning Commission held its regular meeting on Wednesday, August 9, 2006 in the Georgetown Community Center, 613 6th Street. Chairman Sarah Kaminski called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

### ROLL CALL

Answering the roll were Chairman Sarah Kaminski, Vice Chairman Cynthia Skeen, Commissioners Paul Nisler, Malcolm Schaefer, and Greg Sterett and Alternate Member Jerry Fabyanic. Also in attendance was Recording Secretary/Town Clerk Merinel Williams.

### AGENDA APPROVAL

Mr. Nisler moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Sterett seconded and the motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

AUDIENCE BUSINESS - None.

### NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Continued Public Hearing to consider the following applications from the Walter V. and Idun Y. Berry Foundation, Georgetown Lake LLC, and Meritage Development Group LLC: Conceptual Subdivision Plan and Gateway Mixed Use District Overall Development Plan for the Georgetown Lake Lifestyle Center, a mixed use development on an approximate 18.5 acre site just west of the Georgetown lagoon, south of 22nd Street, east of Argentine Street, and north of the Creek House Condominiums, commonly known as the Berry Trust Land

Ms. Kaminski announced the public hearing and reviewed the hearing procedures and the three step subdivision and Gateway Mixed Use zoning process.

The applicant was represented by Scott Russell, Jake Vickery, Steve Seiffer and John Patrick. They summarized the applications for the benefit of those who did not attend the previous hearing.

Kate Collier commented that the proposed conference facilities are not large enough to attract significant events. Mr. Russell explained that all of the size numbers are now preliminary, and the market will drive the entire project.

Mr. Seiffer presented a document detailing their research on anticipated job creation. Clear Creek Economic Development Corporation Executive Director Peggy Stokstad responded to this information that all of her research indicated that the wages actually paid in the County are below the figures presented. The state-wide average wage is \$15 per hour, while the average wage in the county is \$13 per hour. She questioned whether the development could include construction of a monorail station, and the applicants indicated that they would be happy to host a station.

Mr. Seiffer also presented a document listing data from the Census Bureau comparing income and housing data for Georgetown and Clear Creek County. Ms. Stokstad indicated that she will compare this information with her data.

In response to an audience question, Town Administrator Chuck Stearns explained that if the application is approved, the installation of landscaping will be guaranteed by a bond that secures a subdivision improvements agreement.

The applicant presented two revised site plans for the Commission's review. The first showed the buildings in the same location, but reduced parking to add more landscaping by increasing the depth of the front buffer. Bus parking was moved across Argentine St. There was no change to the greenway along the lagoon. The second revised site plan showed Building B moved 27 feet to the west thus increasing the width for that portion of the greenway adjacent to the building, parking essentially the same as the first revision, and an increase in the width of the buffer between the multi-family building and the Creek House Condominiums.

In response to a question from Coralie Anderson, Mr. Russell explained that on-going maintenance of the property would be guaranteed by the establishment of several property owners' associations which the landowners will be required to fund. She also commented that this development feels threatening because other communities' downtown areas have suffered financially when a large new development is placed by their interstate access. She is most concerned regarding the first few years of impacts as the community and general public adapt to the change. Ruth Rosenfeld commented that much of the increased sales tax from the development will be consumed to fund the increased services that will be needed, such as law enforcement and road maintenance. She encouraged the Town to seek a financial guarantee from the developer for a shuttle bus service.

Parking was discussed, and Mr. Nisler suggested that an option would be to move the hotel south to create some parking on the north side of the building. Mr. Vickery explained that on the new site plans 30 spaces were lost from moving Building B to the west, 30 spaces were lost by increasing the landscaped buffer on the west, and 20 spaces were lost to increased landscaping. Mr. Russell noted that the plan does not currently provide for any handicapped parking, and Mr. Vickery pointed out that additional parking will be lost in the winter to snow storage. Bill Wilson encouraged a parking lot design that is not geometric. He referenced the Loop parking lot as an example of good design.

Ms. Skeen commented that her greatest concern is maximizing the width of the greenway by the lagoon. Mr. Stearns expressed concern that pushing the development further into the lagoon could push water up on the properties that border the east side of the lagoon. Various issues regarding the potential of dredging the lagoon were discussed.

Mr. Vickery proposed the possibility of increasing the height of the hotel to four stories or 45 feet. Mr. Stearns commented that increasing the height might raise engineering concerns. Pat Helsom confirmed for comparison that the Creek House Condominiums are 35 feet high. Mr. Stearns commented further that this proposal would increase the likelihood that a PUD application would be needed since the Town Code currently prohibits variances for use and height. The Town Attorney is researching this issue. Mr. Schaefer stated that he would be willing to consider opening any proposal to debate of the pros and cons.

Ms. Kaminski opened the hearing to public comment.

Ruth Rosenfeld commented that using the land under the lagoon to meet the open space requirements is not consistent with the intent of the zoning. She proposed that the Town vacate the streets only in exchange for ownership of the land under the lagoon. She prefers the site plan drafted for the pre-application community meetings to those presently under consideration. Mr. Russell responded that the open space requirement is met even without the land under the lagoon, and that the previous site plan worked only because there was a parking garage on the plan, which was opposed by both downtown merchants and the residents on the east side of the lagoon. Town Administrator Chuck Stearns read the code's definition of "open space" which included water.

Peggy Stokstad commented that she had some involvement in marketing this property, and the owner selected the current applicant from among several interested parties because he believes Mr. Russell will provide the best development. She feels that the development has the potential to benefit everyone. She recommended considering some type of landscaping other than trees because of the severe climate, and she suggested that public art would be an amenity to the project.

Lynn Middleton expressed support if the project is aesthetically pleasing. Mr. Russell stated that he is considering a mining theme for the development.

Tom Wilson stated he believes this proposal fits the Town. This will be a significant development, and he complimented the applicants for their perseverance. Marie-Claude Wilson commented that the applicant should be helped, not nit-picked.

Ms. Kaminski closed the hearing to public comment. The Commission discussed calling a special meeting to work on a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Kaminski clarified that no further public testimony will be taken. The Commissioners indicated that they prefer the second version of the re-drafted site plan on which to focus at the special meeting.

Mr. Nisler moved to call a special meeting of the Commission for August 18, 2006 at 7:00 at the Community Center, and to continue this hearing to that date. Mr. Sterett seconded and the motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Kaminski adjourned the meeting at 9:58 p.m.

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Sarah Kaminski, Chairman

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Merinel Williams, Town Clerk