

Planning Commission Meeting

Theodore D. Washington Municipal Building, Henry “Emmett” McCracken Jr. Council Chambers, 20
Bridge Street, Bluffton, SC

July 24, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Denmark called the meeting to order at 6pm.

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Chairwoman Amanda Jackson Denmark

Vice Chairman Charlie Wetmore

Commissioner Michael Brock

Commissioner Jim Flynn

Commissioner Daniel Grove

ABSENT

Commissioner Rich Delcore

Commissioner Lydia DePauw

III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. June 26, 2024 Minutes

Vice Chairman Wetmore made the motion to adopt the minutes as written.

Seconded by Commissioner Flynn.

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Brock,
Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and the motion passed.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

V. OLD BUSINESS

- 1. Compass Self Storage - 315 Gibbet Road (Certificate of Appropriateness - Highway Corridor Overlay):** A request by Amsdell Construction, LLC, on behalf of the owners, Amsdell Storage Ventures 81, LLC, for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness-Highway Corridor Overlay application. The project consists of two, two-story buildings totaling approximately 109,398 SF of climate-controlled self-storage space, the associated landscaping, lighting and other infrastructure. The properties are zoned Jones Estate PUD, consist of 3.21 acres identified by tax map numbers R610 036 000 0459 0000 and R610 036 000 0458 0000, and are located at the northeast corner of the Caine Drive and Estate Drive intersection, west of Gibbet Road, and fronts on SC Hwy 170. (COFA-03-24-019062)(Staff - Katie Peterson)

Commissioner Brock recused himself. Staff presented. The applicant was present. The commissioners commented on the importance of ensuring that the size of the air conditioning units on the roof should not change in height.

Commissioner Flynn made the motion to approve with the following conditions:

1. It was determined that the LED lighting, as a substitute for those listed in Section 5.15.11. of the BZDSO were appropriate.
2. All comments provided by the DRC and Planning Commission for the Development Plan must be addressed to be compliant with this COA-HCOD approval and should this plan be changed based on the requirements of the Development Plan Review, a new Certificate of Appropriateness may be required.
3. Per the Applications Manual, a Town of Bluffton Sign Permit must be submitted for review and approval separate of this approval.

Seconded by Commissioner Grove.

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and the motion passed.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Public Hearing and recommendation to Town Council for that certain property owned by Bryant Holding, LLC, consisting of 2.14 Acres, more or less, located at 30 Davis Road located to the east of the intersection of Davis Road and Okatie Highway (SC Highway 170) and identified by Beaufort County Tax Map No. R600-029-000-0028-0000 for the following applications:
 - A. Consideration of an amendment to the Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan "Blueprint Bluffton" to amend the said property's future land use designation from Suburban Living to Lifestyle Housing;
 - B. Consideration of 100% annexation request to annex the subject property into the Town of Bluffton Corporate Limits; and
 - C. Consideration of a Zoning Map Amendment to rezone the subject property to the Residential General (RG) District. First Reading – Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management
- Commissioner Brock returned to the dais.

Chairwoman Denmark opened the public hearing. She asked for the first, second and third call for public comment. There were no public comments. The public hearing was closed.

Staff presented. The applicant was present. The commissioners discussed the history of the property.

A. Vice Chairman Wetmore made a motion to forward Town Council a recommendation of approval of the proposed amendment to the Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan "Blueprint Bluffton" to change Beaufort County Tax Map No. R600-029-000-0028-0000 future land use designation From Suburban Living to Lifestyle Housing.

Seconded by Commissioner Grove.

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Brock, Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and the motion passed.

B. Vice Chairman Wetmore made a motion to forward Town Council a recommendation of approval of the proposed annexation of the Bryant Holdings, LLC Consisting of 2.14 Acres, more or less, located at 30 Davis Road located to the east of the intersection of Davis Road and Okatie Highway (SC Highway 170) and identified by Beaufort County Tax Map No. R600-029-000-0028-0000, into the Town of Bluffton Corporate Limits.

Seconded by Commissioner Flynn.

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Brock, Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and the motion passed.

C. Vice Chairman Wetmore made a motion to forward Town Council a recommendation of approval of the proposed Zoning Map Amendment for approximately 2.14 Acres, more or less, located at 30 Davis Road located to the east of the intersection of Davis Road and Okatie Highway (SC Highway 170) and identified by Beaufort County Tax Map No. R600-029-000-0028-0000, to rezone said property to the Residential General (RG) District Pursuant to the Unified Development Ordinance.

Seconded by Commissioner Grove.

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Brock, Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and the motion passed.

2. **Bluffton Community Hospital (Development Plan):** A request by South of Broad Healthcare for approval of a preliminary development plan. The project consists of a 91,000 SF hospital and associated infrastructure. The property is zoned Buckwalter PUD and consists of approximately 12.52 acres identified by tax map numbers R610 030 000 1705 0000, R610 030 000 1845 0000 and R610 030 000 1846 0000 located within the South of Broad Master Plan at the northwest corner of the Bluffton Parkway and Buckwalter Parkway Intersection, east of Innovation Drive. (DP-05-24-019117) (Staff – Dan Frazier)

Staff presented. The applicant was present. The commission discussed whether the fire department connection had been corrected, as it was not shown on the plans but mentioned in the narrative. The commission had questions regarding why the building had gone from 2-story to 3-story.

Commissioner Brock made the motion to approve with the following conditions:

1. The traffic signal installation will be included with the final development plan submittal.
2. The FDC will be relocated, the landscaping obstructing access removed, or a remote FDC provided.

Seconded by Commissioner Flynn.

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Brock, Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and the motion passed.

3. **Amendments to the Town of Bluffton's Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 23, Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), Article 4 - Zoning Districts and Article 5 – Design Standards to Establish a Planned Unit Development District for Bluffton Village and its Related Standards and to Add Appendix A to Include the Bluffton Village Master Plan, Building and Sign Standards (Staff - Charlotte Moore)**

Staff presented. Staff recommended adding a use condition for restaurants to not allow drive-thru and drive-in service. The commissioners questioned what would happen if Town Council did not move forward with approving the amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance. Richardson LaBruce, attorney to the Planning Commission, responded how the lack of zoning would leave no basis for future development and how it could be beneficial to ensure future buildings are conforming to what exists.

Commissioner Brock made the motion to recommend approval of the amendments to the Town of Bluffton Code of Ordinances Chapter 23 – Unified Development Ordinance, as submitted by Town Staff.

Seconded by Vice Chairman Wetmore.

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Brock, Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and the motion passed.

4. Public Hearings and recommendation related to property commonly referred to University Investments, LLC Consisting of 65.592 Acres, more or less, located at southwest corner of the Buckwalter Parkway and Lake Point Drive intersection and to the west of the Retreat at Grande Oaks, and bearing Beaufort County Tax Map Nos. R600-029-000-0014-0000 (Portion) and R600-029-000-2410-0000 for the following applications:

A. Consideration of an amendment to the Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan "Blueprint Bluffton" to amend the said property's future land use designation from Suburban Living to Neighborhood Center;

B. Consideration of 100% annexation request to annex the subject properties into the Town of Bluffton Corporate Limits;

C. Consideration of a text amendment to the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development to create a new land use tract to be known as the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract;

D. Consideration of a Zoning Map Amendment to rezone the subject properties to the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development District and designate as the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract;

E. Consideration of an amendment to the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development Concept Plan for the subject properties to add provisions including but not limited to their

incorporation into the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development District, designation as the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract, and add 32 Acres of General Commercial Development Rights; and

F. Consideration of an amendment to the Buckwalter Development Agreement for the subject properties to add provisions including but not limited to their incorporation into the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development District, designation as the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract, and add 32 Acres of General Commercial Development Rights. First Reading – Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

Chairwoman Denmark opened the public hearing.

She asked for the first call for public comment.

Frank Barbieri, 71 Fording Ct, Bluffton. Mr. Barbieri shared his concerns with changing the land use if the property is annexed into the Town and how an apartment complex could impact the Town.

She asked for the second and third call for public comment. There were no more public comments. The public hearing was closed.

Staff presented. The applicant was present. The commissioners discussed where access points would be to Grande Oaks and how this could affect the private neighborhoods in the surrounding area. There was discussion emphasizing the importance of having connectivity from Lake Point Dr to Old Miller Rd. The commissioners clarified that the subject of this meeting item is annexation and that land use is not being determined at this time. LaBruce expanded on the purpose of each application that is being presented to the commission. Vice Chairman Wetmore discussed the history of Grande Oaks development agreements and how the density would be reduced if the property is annexed in to the Town. Commissioners discussed including in the recommendation to Town Council a requirement to include Affordable Housing Units.

A. Commissioner Flynn made the motion to forward Town Council a recommendation of approval of the proposed Amendment to the Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan “Blueprint Bluffton” to change Beaufort County Tax Map Nos. R600-029-000-0014-0000 (Portion) and R600-029-000-2410-0000 future land use designation From Civic/Institutional to Medium Density Commercial.

Seconded by Commissioner Brock.

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Brock, Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and motion passed.

B. Commissioner Flynn made the motion to forward Town Council a recommendation of approval of the proposed Amendment to the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development Text to incorporate provisions for a new land use tract to be known as the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract.

Seconded by Commissioner Grove.

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Brock, Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and the motion passed.

C. Commissioner Flynn made the motion to forward Town Council a recommendation of approval of the proposed annexation of the Grande Oaks property consisting of 65.592 Acres, more or less, Located at Southwest corner of the Buckwalter Parkway and Lake Point Drive Intersection and to the West of the Retreat at Grande Oaks, and bearing Beaufort County Tax Map Nos. R600-029-000-0014-0000 (Portion) and R600-029-000-2410-0000, into the Town of Bluffton Corporate Limits.

Seconded by Vice Chairman Wetmore.

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Brock, Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and the motion passed.

D. Commissioner Flynn made the motion to forward Town Council a recommendation of approval of the proposed Zoning Map Amendment for approximately 65.592 Acres, more or less, located at Southwest corner of the Buckwalter Parkway and Lake Point Drive Intersection and to the West of the Retreat at Grande Oaks, and bearing Beaufort County Tax Map Nos. R600-029-000-0014-0000 (Portion) and R600-029-000-2410-0000, as Buckwalter Planned Unit Development

Seconded by Commissioner Brock.

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Brock, Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and the motion passed.

E. Commissioner Flynn made the motion to forward Town Council a recommendation of approval with conditions of the proposed an amendment to the Buckwalter Development Agreement to add the following provisions:

1. Add approximately Consisting of 65.592 Acres, more or less, Located at Southwest corner of the Buckwalter Parkway and Lake Point Drive Intersection and to the West of the Retreat at Grande Oaks, and bearing Beaufort County Tax Map Nos. R600-029-000-0014-0000 (Portion) and R600-029-000-2410-0000;
2. Increase the total allowed Development Rights by 32 Acres of General Commercial;
3. Incorporation of language into Section 3.iii of the 13th Amendment document regarding the 32 acres of general commercial needs to be expanded to identify these acres as an increase of 32 acres of general commercial development rights to the overall permitted for the Buckwalter Development Agreement and Concept Plan, that these development rights are non-transferrable and may not be utilized outside of the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract, and that these development rights are vested on the Properties at time of approval of this Thirteenth (13th) Amendment to the Development Agreement and Concept Plan.

4. Incorporation of language detailing the frontage road and interconnectivity commitments and obligations such as land reservation, interconnectivity with the property immediately to the west identified as Beaufort County Tax Map No. R614 029 000 0595 0000 at the time of this amendment, widths, placement of the frontage road in front of buildings along Bluffton Parkway, construction responsibility, trigger for phased construction at time of development of applicable parcels, and dedication.
5. Incorporation of language detailing the roadway connection to Lake Point Drive commitments and obligations such as land reservation, locations, widths, construction, trigger for construction, and dedication.
6. Incorporation of language committing to the applicable Bluffton Parkway Access Management Plan and Buckwalter Parkway Access Management Plan, as amended.
7. Incorporation of language committing to the extension of rights of way for the three access points from Buckwalter Parkway through the Applicant's properties to the new northern boundary of Grande Oaks after annexation.
8. Incorporation of language confirming and committing to the location of the realignment as shown on the draft plat titled " A Boundary Survey of the Future Bluffton Parkway Right-of-Way through the Lands of University Investments, LLC, Formerly a Portion of Parcels 5, 11, 12-A, and 12-B of the , Buckwalter Tract" prepared by Surveying Consultants, January 15, 2015, which shall be incorporated as an exhibit and reaffirm the requirement for donation of the Bluffton Parkway Phase 5B right-of-way through the properties owned by University Investments, LLC and third-party owned properties in which John Reed holds an interest upon request.
9. Revising the prohibited land use list as follows:
 - i. Remove "Tree farm, timber area or forest management area";
 - ii. Add "outdoor" to "go-cart racing facilities";
 - iii. Remove "wastewater/sewage facilities".
10. Incorporation of language stating that previously approved Variances are null and void.
11. Incorporation of the Land Use Comparison Chart as an Exhibit.
12. Incorporation of language committing to the 20% affordable housing requirement for any residential development rights utilized within the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract.

Seconded by Commissioner Brock.

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Brock, Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and the motion passed.

F. Commissioner Flynn made the motion to forward Town Council a recommendation of approval with conditions of the proposed amendment to the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development Concept Plan to add the following provisions:

1. Add approximately consisting of 65.592 Acres, more or less, located at Southwest corner of the Buckwalter Parkway and Lake Point Drive Intersection and to the West of the Retreat at Grande Oaks, and bearing Beaufort County Tax Map Nos. R600-029-000-0014-0000 (Portion) and R600-029-000-2410-0000;
2. Increase the total allowed Development Rights by 32 Acres of General Commercial;
3. Incorporation of language into Section 3.iii of the 13th Amendment document regarding the 32 acres of general commercial needs to be expanded to identify these acres as an increase of 32 acres of general commercial development rights to the overall permitted for the Buckwalter Development Agreement and Concept Plan, that these development rights are non-transferrable and may not be utilized outside of the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract, and that these development rights are vested on the Properties at time of approval of this Thirteenth (13th) Amendment to the Development Agreement and Concept Plan.
4. Incorporation of language detailing the frontage road and interconnectivity commitments and obligations such as land reservation, interconnectivity with the property immediately to the west identified as Beaufort County Tax Map No. R614 029 000 0595 0000 at the time of this amendment, widths, placement of the frontage road in front of buildings along Bluffton Parkway, construction responsibility, trigger for phased construction at time of development of applicable parcels, and dedication.
5. Incorporation of language detailing the roadway connection to Lake Point Drive commitments and obligations such as land reservation, locations, widths, construction, trigger for construction, and dedication.
6. Incorporation of language committing to the applicable Bluffton Parkway Access Management Plan and Buckwalter Parkway Access Management Plan, as amended.
7. Incorporation of language committing to the extension of rights of way for the three access points from Buckwalter Parkway through the Applicant's properties to the new northern boundary of Grande Oaks after annexation.
8. Incorporation of language confirming and committing to the location of the realignment as shown on the draft plat titled " A Boundary Survey of the Future Bluffton Parkway Right-of-Way through the Lands of University Investments, LLC, Formerly a Portion of Parcels 5, 11, 12-A, and 12-B of the , Buckwalter Tract" prepared by Surveying Consultants, January 15, 2015, which shall be incorporated as an exhibit and reaffirm the requirement for donation of the Bluffton Parkway Phase 5B right-of-way through the properties owned by University Investments, LLC and third-party owned properties in which John Reed holds an interest upon request.
9. Revising the prohibited land use list as follows:
 - i. Remove "Tree farm, timber area or forest management area";
 - ii. Add "outdoor" to "go-cart racing facilities";
 - iii. Remove "wastewater/sewage facilities".

10. Incorporation of language stating that previously approved Variances are null and void.

11. Incorporation of the Land Use Comparison Chart as an Exhibit.

12. Incorporation of language committing to the 20% affordable housing requirement for any residential development rights utilized within the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract.

Seconded by Vice Chairman Wetmore

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Brock, Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and the motion passed.

5. **Buck Island Road – Rezoning Request (PLANNING WORKSHOP – NO ACTION):** A request by the Town of Bluffton on behalf of the property owners Rose Kitty and Ferrellgas Inc, for approval of an Amendment to the Town of Bluffton Official Zoning Map to rezone two (2) parcels from Residential General (RG) to Light Industrial (LI). The subject parcels consist of approximately 1.38 acres and are identified by Beaufort County Tax Map Numbers R610 03 000 0016 0000 (328 and 330 Buck Island Road) and R610 039 000 018C 0000 (332 Buck Island Road). (ZONE-06-24-019188) (Staff – Dan Frazier)

Staff presented.

Lisa Sulka, 37 Stock Farm Rd, Bluffton SC Ms. Sulka discussed when the property was first annexed into the Town and how this rezoning could benefit these properties.

The commission discussed the history of the annexation of the properties and supported the idea of rezoning.

This was a workshop, and no action was taken.

VII. DISCUSSION

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chairman Wetmore made the motion to adjourn.

Seconded by Commissioner Grove.

Voting Yea: Chairwoman Jackson Denmark, Vice Chairman Wetmore, Commissioner Brock, Commissioner Flynn, Commissioner Grove

All were in favor and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:50pm.