



CITY OF FOREST PARK
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday, July 20, 2023 at 6:00 PM
Environmental Courtroom- Planning & Community Development Building

Website: www.forestparkga.gov
Phone Number: (404) 366.4720

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
785 Forest Parkway
Forest Park, GA 30297

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS: Andy Porter, Azfar Haque, Michael Clinkscales, Roderick Jackson, Donald Williams

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME: Andy Porter called the meeting to order at 6:07pm.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Andy Porter, Michael Clinkscales, Roderick Jackson, Donald Williams

Absent: Azfar Haque

Others Present: SaVaughn Irons, City Planner; Latonya Turner, Planning & Community Development Administrative Supervisor

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Approval of June 15, 2023 Meeting Minutes
Michael Clinkscales made a motion to approve the June 15, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Donald Williams seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

2. Case# VAR-2023-09-Variance for 540 Perkins Dr., Parcel# 13078B A019 Forest Park, Georgia.
SaVaughn Irons stated the subject property is currently a vacant lot within the Single-Family Residential District (RS) with 0.17 +/- acres and a total land area square footage of 7,487. The applicant is requesting a variance to decrease the minimum lot width from 80 feet to 75 feet and reduce the side yard setback from 10 feet to 5 feet. Per section 8-8-29 Single Family Residential District (RS) Standards, the required minimum lot width is 80 feet. The reason for this request is due to the land parcel's peculiar shape and surrounding homes within the community being consistent with the similar lot dimensions, based on the subject property plot map. The applicant has advised that the peculiar shape of the lot was pre-existing prior to the update of the Unified development code standards for new construction single-family homes. Currently the Unified development code standards provides a hardship to meet the minimum lot area based on the lots peculiar shape and the city of Forest Park Zoning Ordinance. This

variance will allow the applicant to construct a new development single-family home within the RS district on a smaller lot width and provide added value to the existing community for future esthetics and home ownership. The Planning Commission may grant a variance from the development standards of this chapter where permitted under this chapter, if, after a public hearing, it makes findings of facts in writing, that: 1. The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community, per Sec. 8-8-193. (a) (1) of the Code of Ordinances. 2. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner per Sec. 8-8-193. (a) (2) of the Code of Ordinances; and 3. The strict application of the terms of this ordinance will result in practical difficulty in the use of the property. This situation shall not be self-imposed, nor be based on a perceived reduction of, or restriction on, economic gain, per Sec. 8-8-193. (a) (3) of the Code of Ordinances. Staff recommends approval of a variance to allow a minimum lot width of seventy-five (75) feet instead of the required eighty (80) feet and a minimum side yard setback of five (5) feet instead of the required minimum side yard setback of ten (10) feet. This approval allows the applicant to construct a newly developed home on the peculiarly shaped lot. The requested variance will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community, and the use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.

Andy Porter opened the floor to public comments.

Donald Willis, resident of 5118 Middlebrooks Dr., asked if, according to the Zoning Ordinance, the 35 ft maximum height and 1,400 sq ft minimum requirements would apply.

Ms. Irons answered yes and stated the applicant would be required to comply with all Zoning Ordinance requirements.

Mr. Porter closed the floor to public comments after no one else came forward.

Ms. Irons stated there is a park adjacent to the property that would provide added value.

Michael Clinkscales made a motion to approve the Variance for 540 Perkins Dr. Donald Williams seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

3. Case# VAR-2023-10-Variance for 532 Perkins Dr., Parcel# 13078B A017 Forest Park, Georgia. Ms. Irons stated that the subject property is currently a vacant lot within the Single-Family Residential District (RS) with 0.17 +/- acres and a total land area square footage of 7,487. The applicant is requesting a variance to decrease the minimum lot width from 80 feet to 75 feet and reduce the side yard setback from 10 feet to 5 feet. Per section 8-8-29 Single Family Residential District (RS) Standards, the required minimum lot width is 80 feet. The reason for this request is due to the land parcel's peculiar shape and surrounding homes within the community being consistent with the similar lot dimensions, based on the subject property plot map. The applicant has advised that the peculiar shape of the lot was pre-existing prior to the update of the Unified development code standards for new construction single-family homes. Currently the Unified development code standards provides a hardship to meet the minimum lot area based on the lots peculiar shape and the city of Forest Park Zoning Ordinance. This variance will allow the applicant to construct a new development single-family home within the RS district on a smaller lot width and provide added value to the existing community for future esthetics and home ownership. The Planning Commission may grant a variance from the development standards of this chapter where permitted under this chapter, if, after a public hearing, it makes findings of facts in writing, that: 1. The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community, per Sec. 8-8-193. (a) (1) of the Code of Ordinances. 2. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner per Sec. 8-8-193. (a) (2) of the Code of Ordinances; and 3. The strict application of

the terms of this ordinance will result in practical difficulty in the use of the property. This situation shall not be self-imposed, nor be based on a perceived reduction of, or restriction on, economic gain, per Sec. 8-8-193. (a) (3) of the Code of Ordinances. Staff recommends approval of variance to allow a minimum lot width of seventy-five (75) feet instead of the required eighty (80) feet and a minimum side yard setback of five (5) feet instead of the required minimum side yard setback of ten (10) feet. This approval allows the applicant to construct a newly developed home on the peculiarly shaped lot. The requested variance will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community, and the use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.

Mr. Porter opened the floor to public comments and closed it after no one came forward.

Michael Clinkscales made a motion to approve the Variance for 532 Perkins Dr. Donald Williams seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

4. Text Amendment to Title 8, Chapter 3, Signs. Sec. 8-3-3 Definitions; 8-3-14 Prohibited Signs; and Sec. 8-3-23 Restrictions Based on Location of the City of Forest Park Code of Ordinances to allow certain signs in designated zoning districts.

Ms. Irons stated The Planning & Community Development Department is proposing three text amendments to the Sign Ordinance. Case #TA-2023-02 includes an amendment providing an addition to Sec. 8-3-3 Definitions, an amendment eliminating language from Sec. 8-3-14 Prohibited Signs and Devices, and an amendment adding standards to Sec. 8-3-23 Restrictions Based on Location. The Planning & Community Development Department has discovered an area of the Sign Ordinance that needs to be amended. The requested text amendments will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community. The use will not be affected in a substantial, adverse manner. The following text amendments have been proposed: An amendment to Section 8-3-3 Definitions, adding Changeable Copy, Message Board, and Reader Board. An amendment to Section 8-3-14 Prohibited Signs, eliminating the word changeable copy signs. An amendment to Section 8-3-23 Restrictions Based on Location. The update creates a standard for the type of signs allowed in said zoning districts. The current sign ordinance limits the ability of establishments such as theaters, auditoriums, and cultural arts venues to advertise and promote performances. This update will clarify the requirements. ARTICLE A. GENERAL PROVISIONS Sec. 8-3-3. Definitions-The addition of New Definitions Changeable Copy Sign-- A sign which allows characters, letters, or illustrations to be changed without altering the sign. Message Board Sign-- a board or sign on which messages or notices are displayed. Reader Board Sign-- Reader board means a sign that is designed so that characters, letters, or illustrations can be changed or rearranged without altering the face or the surface of the sign. There also is a list of prohibited signs that have been added and eliminated. If not otherwise stated, any sign not specifically allowed in a zoning district as provided under this section shall be prohibited in that district, except as otherwise provided for under this chapter. The following standards govern signs within specific zoning districts. 1) RS—Single family residential district. Entry feature sign/freestanding sign. One (1) maximum thirty-two (32) square foot, freestanding monument sign per lot occupied with institutional use shall be permitted for each street on which the lot has frontage. Staff's recommendation is approval of the proposed text amendment to the identified code sections of the sign ordinance.

Mr. Porter asked if each of the items read aloud from section 8-3-23 would be added to the ordinance, if the only change to section 8-3-14 would be the removal of changeable copy signs, and if in section 8-3-3 the definition of changeable reader boards would be added .

Ms. Irons stated that is correct.

Mr. Porter opened the floor to public comments and closed it after no one came forward.

Michael Clinkscales made a motion to approve the Text Amendment. Donald Williams seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

5. Text Amendment to Article F. Boards and Commissions. Sec. 8-8-158 Urban Design Review Board; and Sec. 8-8-161 Design Approval Procedures (b) Application Review.

Ms. Irons stated The Planning & Community Development Department has discovered some areas of the Code of Ordinances that need to be amended for clarity and formal processes. The requested text amendments will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community, and the use will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner. The following text amendments have been proposed: Article F. Boards and Commissions. Section. 8-8-161 Design approval procedures b) Application review process, adding an application deadline schedule and scheduled calendar date for scheduled meeting to occur based on application submittal deadline. This update creates a standard monthly due date for applications to be submitted by the second Wednesday of each month as well as proposing the meeting date to occur on the third Friday of each month. The previous ordinance did not provide an organized process for when applications can be received, and did not provide an explicit timeline, leaving too much room for an unorganized process for both applicants and staff. This update will clarify application submittal deadlines, meeting dates and create a more fluid process for the urban design review board members, city staff and the applicant. ARTICLE F. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS Sec. 8-8-161. Design approval procedures b) Application Review. b) Application Review. A design plan application shall be submitted in triplicate to the planning and community development director for review to ensure compliance with provisions of this section and for transmission of two (2) copies to the urban design review board for review and final action. The architectural design plan application is to be submitted in completion by the second (2nd) Wednesday of each month by close of business to be reviewed on the following month calendar. The chairman of the board shall call a formal meeting once each month on the third Friday of each month of the application's acceptance. Within seventy-two (72) hours after the date of the formal review meeting, the board shall take final action on the design plan application. If the board shall fail to take final action upon the application, the application shall be deemed to be approved. The board may extend this deadline by a majority vote of those members present. When circumstances necessitate, the board may defer action on an application until its next meeting. Staff recommends approval.

Mr. Porter opened the floor to public comments and closed it after no one came forward.

Michael Clinkscales made a motion to approve the Text Amendment. Donald Williams seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

6. Text Amendment to Article B. Zoning Districts, Overlay Districts, and Design Guidelines Established, to include a new Section 8-8-55. Arts and Entertainment Overlay District.

Ms. Irons stated that in order to further the downtown vision and to implement and accomplish these goals it is necessary to amend the Zoning Ordinance to include a new Arts and Entertainment Overlay District. This district will create a sense of place, incorporate public art that celebrates the history of downtown Main Street and the city as a whole, and encourage a walkable, live, work and play community with diverse development, connectivity and activities that encourage inclusivity while supporting health and wellness. The requested text amendments will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community, and the use will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner. The following text amendments are proposed: An amendment to Section Article A, Section 8-8-4 Definitions, adding, Arts, Art/Artisan Gallery, Art Center, Art Use, Artist Studio,

Artist, Drive-through, Entertainment (Live), Food Truck, Food Truck Court, Food Truck Vendor, Makerspace, Microbrewery, Outdoor arts market, and Small Power Tools. An amendment to establish a new Section 8-8-55. Arts and Entertainment Overlay District. This update will provide definitions for retail and business uses that are currently permitted in several zoning districts, and further enhance the current Article I. Forest Park Entertainment District. There is hereby established an Arts and Entertainment Overlay District. The purpose of the Arts & Entertainment Overlay District is to facilitate the creation of an arts destination, sustain established arts and cultural uses and promote new arts and cultural uses. The Arts & Entertainment District Overlay seeks integration of the arts into the fabric of the community and is conceived as the location of art galleries and art studios forming the core of an arts district. A complementary mix of shops, restaurants and entertainment venues will support these uses. These elements are expected to generate interest in downtown Forest Park and attract arts and cultural events. The Arts & Entertainment District Overlay features an expanded range of permitted uses focused on the arts while retaining all property rights established by the underlying zoning. The Arts & Entertainment District Overlay encourages adaptive reuse of historic buildings and new construction technologies, affording owners expanded development options. These measures will enhance the market attractiveness of the arts district. Arts venues, community festivals, expanded arts uses and pedestrian character are expected to promote an arts district. Planned investment in public art, lighting, sidewalks, and off-street parking will leverage private investment and enhance public safety. This combination of public and private investment is expected to advance Forest Park's position in regional leadership in the arts and stimulate broad economic revitalization. Importantly, the Arts District Overlay features walkable distances from nearby neighborhoods to small-scale establishments and live entertainment venues accommodated by the Arts District Overlay and compatible with the neighborhood character. Signs with lights and movable elements that contribute to the unique character of the district shall be permitted. However, signage located in the underlying DM (Downtown Main Street) District should adhere to the design standards established for the Downtown Main Street District. All signs in the Arts & Entertainment District shall be subject to approval by the Planning Director or his/her designee upon the submission of a sign application, and any applicable documents and fees. The purpose of this amendment is to create an Arts & Entertainment District to facilitate creation of an arts destination, sustain established arts and cultural uses and promote new arts and cultural uses. Incorporating the arts into the current entertainment district and expanding this overlay district into Starr Park and adjacent properties connects the fabric of the community to provide for a walkable place to live, work, play and have a good quality of life while generating an interest in downtown Forest Park. Staff recommends approval of this text amendment.

Mr. Porter opened the floor to public comments and closed it after no one came forward.

Roderick Jackson asked about scheduling conflicts with events such as food trucks and trade shows.

Ms. Irons answered that dates would be reserved during the application process and events would not be scheduled on the same dates.

Mr. Porter asked about the parking requirements for food trucks.

Ms. Irons answered that we would still have to abide by all parking standards for each district.

Michael Clinkscales made a motion to approve the Text Amendment. Donald Williams seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT: Michael Clinkscales made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Roderick Jackson seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:52pm.