



PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION

FELICIA REEVES HOME (P24-24-CZD)

MEETING DATE: JUNE 13TH, 2024

PETITION REQUEST: Rezoning: Felicia Reeves Home- Conditional Zoning District (R-10 CZD)

APPLICANT/PETITIONER: Alyce Knafllich (Founding Director and Board Chair) Aura Home Women Vets
[Applicant & Owner]

PLANNING BOARD ACTION SUMMARY:

The Planning Board voted 5-3 to recommend **approval** of this petition and adopted the following motion:

PLANNING BOARD MOTION:

Ms. Peacock moved Planning Board recommend City Council approve an ordinance amending the official zoning map of the City of Hendersonville changing the zoning designation of the subject (PIN: 9569-44-7296) from R-10, Medium Density Residential to R-10-CZD, Medium Density Residential Conditional Zoning District based on the following:

1. The petition supports the City's 2030 Comprehensive Plan goals by adhering to the Preservation/Enhancement Area designation for the subject property. The proposal enhances and renovates a long-vacant and decaying structure without expanding it, promoting compatibility with the surrounding area.
2. We find this petition to be reasonable and in the public interest based on the information from the staff analysis, public hearing and because:
 - a. The petition addresses a critical need for housing and services for local female veterans.
 - b. The petition proposes to renovate and repurpose an existing structure that has contributed to urban blight for the past decade.
 - c. The petition proposes to reduce the residential intensity of the previous use on the site (rest home).
 - d. Given the building's size and scale in the R-10 zoning district, there is no reasonable likelihood that the property will revert to a use permitted in the R-10 zoning district.

The Planning Board recommended the following condition be placed on the rezoning:

"A fenced and landscaped buffer shall be provided on the western and southern property boundaries. Fencing shall be a minimum of 6' in height. The buffer provided shall be similar to the buffer requirements for a "Day Center". All fencing shall be built in such a way to meet any applicable floodplain requirements."

OVERVIEW OF BOARD DISCUSSION FROM MEETING MINUTES:

The Planning Board convened on this project for **2 hours and 22 minutes**.

Ms. Cromar asked if this was transitional housing and if people would be there permanently. Ms. Knafllich stated no, it will be temporary housing. She gets most of the women that come to them out in six to nine months and in their own space. Ms. Cromar asked about the live-in house manager and asked if their facility is to be open 24/7? Ms. Knafllich stated the normal hours are 8:00 am until 5:00 pm. If they are working second or third shift they will have to be able to come and go. Ms. Cromar asked if each resident will have a key to the door. Ms. Knafllich stated they will have combination locks. They will also have a nighttime security guard that will monitor those doors. They do have a camera system now. They will hire an agency for night staff to come in every evening.

Ms. Cromar stated part of the NCM was discussion on the color of the building. She did not mean to offend but personally she did not think it was attractive and neither do some people that she had spoken with. They wanted to know if they could add some earth colors to mute the color a little because most of the houses there are white or have wood. Ms. Knafllich stated the reason they painted it is so people can find it. She got a little carried away with the yellow. Ms. Cromar stated they will find it when they need it and it would fit better into the neighborhood with more earth colors. Ms. Knafllich stated a few neighbors really like it because they can tell people where to find them.

Ms. Cromar asked will you be taking residents from all over North Carolina or all over 14 states? Ms. Knafllich stated their priority is Henderson County, second priority if they cannot fill all of the beds is Western North Carolina. They do cover nine counties in WNC. Their third priority would be the state of North Carolina. Ms. Cromar asked, the residents they will have how will they get to you and will you do background checks. Ms. Knafllich stated they go by the housing rule first. That is the only way they would ever get funding. They bring them in and vet them and if they need any kind of treatment like drug or alcohol treatment then they get clean and then help support them. They are not a detox center. They have rules and they are a drug and alcohol free facility. That is why they will have a live-in house manager and nighttime security. They want to keep the neighborhood safe.

Chair stated there is a Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance in the City of Hendersonville and if you renovate and spend more than half the value of the building you must meet that ordinance requirement and raise the building. How do they plan to do this or are they planning not to put more than 50% of the value into the renovations in any given year? In his opinion that is trying to get around the requirements and there is an ordinance in place for a reason. Mr. Britton stated they discussed that but it is prohibitively expensive to raise the building 3 ½ feet so the reason for the phased approach is to do a modest renovation and to not cross that substantial improvement threshold. With the appraisal that Alyce has and the numbers she has received from contractors the thinking was that would work out and they would be under that threshold. Chair stated it has been depreciated by 83%. The current value is 137,000 on the books. Mr. Morrow stated that the 50% and what triggers and what doesn't is outside the scope of zoning and that is a separate ordinance all together. If this use was approved as part of the zoning, they would have to work with Mike Huffman the City's Floodplain Administrator to make sure they are in compliance with the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance as far as floodplain is concerned.

OVERVIEW OF BOARD DISCUSSION FROM MINUTES:

Chair stated on the site plan it says there will be twelve people living there, anything on the site plan under conditional zoning is binding but it doesn't say on the site plan there will be an on-site director 24/7 and night security. What will bind them to that? Mr. Morrow stated some of it gets covered in the condition that calls out the twelve occupants and the on-site director. He stated there is note on the site plan that states the hours of operation and it states it will be 24 hours. You could ask that the condition be amended to include the on-site director and nighttime security.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ken Fitch, 1046 Patton Street stated they are being asked to reestablish a nonconforming use that has many issues and does not meet the current standards. It is also located within a 100-year Floodplain. There are many issues but there is also an important need. The applicant has presented a clear plan for the project. He discussed the rapid increase of homelessness in the city. Another concern was the difficulty of funding for this project. He discussed this project setting a precedent. He talked about the floodplain and restricting development in it. He discussed the impacts on surrounding areas due to flooding. To place a care facility with a vulnerable population in the floodplain when there may be a need for rapid evacuation is a huge concern.

Joan Brooks, 1734 Clairmont Drive stated she is a female veteran and clinical social worker and she retired last year after working 40 years in the military. She has great compassion for this. They purchased the house in 2022 and she was excited about the opportunity to volunteer with something she is very passionate about however after two years she walks out on her porch and looks at a property in dereliction and dilapidated and is an eyesore. She is not surprised there is a lot of criminal activity at the house because it has been boarded up. She has spent 17,000 in the last six months on putting in a fence and a security system and landscaping in the hopes that in three or five years she will create a blockade. She discussed the value of property and having homeless shelters in neighborhoods. She stated the property is much worse off now than it was eight years ago when they purchased the property. She does not have faith in the organization to properly maintain this property nor properly manage it. She asked the Board if they as part of their decision making process ask for information in regards to the organizations ability to complete the project? Will you require they meet the floodplain ordinance before any more money is taken for this project? She was very concerned that there is not enough money to fund this project. Chair stated they do not ask if the applicant has the funds to carry out their project. She stated her primary concern as a neighbor is the impact of her property taxes, the impact on the safety and security and as a veteran and a woman that works with female veterans and having an organization that is receiving a lot of money, it sounds like a pipe dream and a lot of the grants and monies will be given to this property when other organizations could use it and this one will never get completed. She thinks people should be giving to a viable concern.

Wanda Schwerer, 300 Winding Meadows Drive, Flat Rock stated she is a veteran and is also on the Board for Aura Home. She stated a comment was concerning the windows being boarded up and they worked with the city on this and that was a requirement. They have gotten permission to put in new windows and received a grant for most of the cost. They do have support from the community and support from other organizations. They do have plans to make the building more presentable and more secure.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Sandra Cameron, 1741 Meadowbrook Terrace stated they are directly across from the project. She stated there are six homes on their block and 15 residents. Rezoning this property will double the residents living on this small quiet block and completely change the living environment for all families residing here. She has three young children that have enjoyed growing up on the block. She stated the number of vehicles on their block will increase from approximately seven to over 20 daily. Over the last decade the block has returned to a nice environment, this proposal will move them backwards to an overcrowded eyesore with safety hazards. She discussed the residential area and how the area had become quiet and serene since the closing of the rest home that was previously run on the property. Increased traffic was a concern due to her small children. She was concerned that her property value will decrease from this project. She discussed the safety of her children if this were to be approved. She also was concerned about the floodplain and flooding issues. She stated the water does come up to the building. This will completely destroy the neighborhood and the improvements that has been made over the year. The property is not fit to house these women in it. She has been in knee deep water in the street from the flooding. This will make this block in Druid Hills the worst one in the area. She is the sole caretaker for her family since her husband was severely injured from the doctors wrong choices in chemotherapy treatment for his stage 4 cancer. There are other locations along Spartanburg Highway where this could go and not in a residential district. She thinks this is a nice idea trying to help the women vets but it is the wrong location. Why do they need night security if issues will not arise? Her final question was would anyone of you want this in front of your home or your children's home?

Joseph Cameron, 1741 Meadowbrook Terrace stated when cars are parked over there it looks like a car park. He stated Ms. Knafllich stated she wanted to make this work and this was her dream and she was determined but this sounds like another domineering attitude. He doesn't know what will happen when this pipe dream falls through the floor. He asked why they don't sale the building for the amount it was appraised for and find an appropriate location. He discussed cleaning up the neighborhood. He discussed his medical condition and leaving his children if he passes with this to deal with. The building is dilapidated.

BOARD ACTION:

Motion:

- Tamara Peacock (Vice Chair)

Second:

- Peter Hanley

Yeas:

- Tamara Peacock (Vice Chair), Chauncey Whiting, Peter Hanley, Donna Waters, Barbara Cromar.

Nays:

- Jim Robertson (Chair), Laura Flores, Beth Robertson

Absent: None

Recused: None