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## Staff Report

### Amendment to the Official Zoning Map

**DATES:** Planning Commission: April 26, 2022  
Town Council:  
First Reading: May 17, 2022  
Second Reading & Public Hearing: June 21, 2022

**TO:** Moncks Corner Planning Commission/Town Council

**FROM:** Douglas Polen, Community Development Director

**SUBJECT:** Rezoning Request

**SUBJECT PROPERTY:** 27.21 acres along W. Main Street, TMS 142-00-01-005 & -037

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Consider an Ordinance to rezone real property within the corporate limits of the Town of Moncks Corner from R-1, Single Family Residential, to a R-2, Single Family Residential with Conditions, and to amend the official zoning map of the Town to so reflect.

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### Background:

The applicant wishes to rezone 27.21 acres of land along West Main Street from R-1, single family residential to R-2 single family residential with conditions, effectively creating a small planned development. The R-1 district allows for 12,000 s.f. lots, while the applicant is requesting lots as small as 6,135 s.f.

### Current Zoning - Definition and Uses:

*R-1 & R-2, Single Family Residential, Sec. 6-3*

*These districts are intended as single-family residential areas with detached units with low to medium population densities. Use regulations for the single family districts are identical, but contain two (2) classes of lot width and lot area, and these dimensional differences are intended to be preserved. Certain structures and uses required to serve governmental, educational, religious, recreational, and other needs of such areas are permitted subject to restrictions*

*and requirements intended to assure compatibility of uses within the district and adjacent thereto.*

*Permitted Uses: A building or premises in the R-1 or R-2 district may be used for the following purposes:*

- 1. One-family detached dwellings*
- 2. Guest cottages, garage apartments*

### **Proposed Zoning - Definition and Uses:**

*R-2, Single Family Residential with Conditions*

R-2 Has the same uses as R-1, but normally allows a minimum lot size of 8,500 s.f. Under the proposed conditions, this development would feature the following. Full details of the development can be found in the descriptive statement:

- Minimum Lot Area 6,000 s.f.
- Minimum Lot Width 50'
- Minimum Front Yard Setback 5'
- Minimum Side Yard Setback 5' (15' typical between buildings)
- Minimum Rear Yard Setback 15'
- Minimum Building Separation 10'
- Maximum Impervious Coverage 80% per lot
- Detached Garage Side Setback 5'\*
- Detached Garage Rear Setback 5'
- Street Trees would be placed according to the descriptive statement
- Amenities will be as described in the statement
- \$1,000 per lot will be donated to the Corner Renaissance neighborhood revitalization fund
- The Development will meet the Rule of Five, as described in the Moncks Corner Zoning Ordinance
- All houses will be entirely covered in Hardiplank
- Two 2½" trees and five 24" shrubs will be planted in the front yard of each house
- Each house will feature permanently lit street addresses near the front door

## Summary of Adjacent Zoning & Uses

Zone		Present Use
North	C-2	Church & Single Family Residential
East	R-1	Single Family Residential
South	R-1 & R-3	Single Family Residential & Apartments
West	R-1 & R-3	Single Family Residential & Apartments

## Moncks Corner Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan shows this property as Low Density Residential, 1 - 4 units per acre. This development features less than 4 units per acre.

## Staff Findings & Recommendation:

Staff has many concerns about this project, as follows:

- Lot sizes range from 6,135 to 12,850 s.f. While many of these lots would be large in the newer parts of Town south of the Core, they are very small in comparison to nearby single-family lots. Single family lots in the immediate area start at around 14,500 s.f., with sizes ranging up to 45,000 sq. ft. One adjacent lot is over six acres in size. Staff finds that these lot sizes do not fit the area.
  - It must be noted that there are numerous apartments adjacent to the property along Haynesville Rd and Haynesville Extension. However, these lots are inaccessible from the built area of the proposed development, across 600' of wetlands, two other single family lots, and an unbuilt right of way.
- The proposed houses do not fit the nearby neighborhood or anywhere else in Town for that matter. While a typical diagram of a lot in this subdivision has not been submitted, Staff's understanding is that narrow homes with rear detached garages are proposed. With a 50' wide lot and 5' setbacks, each lot would feature at most a 30' wide house and 10' driveway driving past the house to a garage in the rear. This is an interesting house design and may be appropriate in Town, but Staff does not feel that 30' products make sense in this neighborhood in Moncks Corner.
- Bonus Incentives – during the time that the developer was preparing this application, the Town has updated it's requirements for negotiated districts. As of April 19, 2022 the following are now required in negotiated districts and are not eligible for density bonuses"

- Minimal repetition of floor plan
- Hardiplank
- Two trees and 5 shrubs in each front yard

Moreover, façade offsets have not been eligible for bonuses for years.

Since these bonuses changed during the planning process of this development, I leave it to the Planning Commission and Council to decide whether these items may earn a density bonus. Without these items, total bonus density earned is 34%, allowing a minimum lot size of 7,920.

- Amenities: The developer is requesting 5% bonus for amenities, but it is unclear what these amenities would be or where they would be located. 5% is the maximum bonus, normally reserved for swimming pools, tennis/basketball courts, clubhouses, and the like. The descriptive statement speaks of amenity centers, benches, bike racks, trails, parks, and playgrounds “not confined to one area but [blending] throughout the development. As the entire development consists of one road and 29 lots in close proximity to one another, the only place for all of these amenities is at the retention pond or in the wetlands. Clarification is required as to what amenities are contemplated where, allowing Staff to appropriately gauge how many density bonus points may be earned.
- Front setbacks: 5' front setbacks are permitted where there is no parking in front of the house, which appears to be the case here. However, the two trees located at each house are to be in the front yard. Canopy trees cannot be placed that close to a structure, so the setback must be increased to accommodate these trees.
- The Tree Regulation section states that “if trees cannot be feasibly planted on a residential lot or within the right of way” they can be planted in open space. The developer wishes to get bonus density credit for planting street trees and front yard trees, but one can substitute for the other. This is incompatible. If a bonus is to be granted for both street trees and yard trees, there will need to be street trees and front yard trees. Moreover, there is no open space apart from the unbuildable wetlands. No credit would be granted for planting trees there as opposed to the front yards and/or streets.
- Corner Lots will need a required setback. 5' off the street is fine in the front yard (notwithstanding the tree situation), but a 5' side setback on a corner lot along the road would be unacceptable. The side setback will need to be 12 ½’.

Staff does not feel that this proposal meshes with the adjacent neighborhood and there are numerous unanswered questions and details. Staff recommends **DENIAL** of the application.