

## **Bessemer City Planning Board**

The Bessemer City Planning Board met in regular session on Tuesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 at 6:00 PM in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

### **Members Present:**

Chairperson, Bruce Absher, Board Members: Pamela Gladney, Charlene Hill, Bryan Hoffman, Wendy Burgess, and Linda Willis. City Staff Present: City Manager, Joshua Ross, and Lead for NC Fellow, Hannah Dove.

### **Call to Order and Determination of a Quorum**

Chairperson Absher called the Planning Board meeting to order and confirmed that a quorum was present (6/7).

### **Adoption of the Agenda**

By motion of Bryan Hoffman and unanimous vote, the agenda was adopted with no revisions.

### **Planning Board Action Item**

By motion of Pamela Gladney and unanimous vote, minutes from the August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Planning Board meeting were adopted with the following revision:

- **Conditional District Rezoning 02-2024 Neighborhood Residential CD Application**

### **Conditional District Rezoning 02-2024 Sunset Ridge CD Application Revision**

City Manager Josh Ross addressed the Board regarding an additional request for relief by Development Solutions Group. Josh explained that the new request would provide relief from Chapter 3 Design Standards, Section 3.3.F. Garage and Carports, which requires the following:

- o *Attached garages or garage buildings shall be located in the side or rear yard only. Attached garage buildings that front a public street shall be recessed a minimum of six feet from the front façade.*

This request promoted City Council's direction, by consensus, to send this project back to the Planning Board for review prior to the Council holding a Public Hearing and voting on the rezoning request from Rural/Neighborhood Residential (R & NR) to Neighborhood Residential-Conditional District (NR-CC).

Development Solutions Group has worked with the current property owners of Gaston County Tax Identification Numbers: 151640, 151644, and 151645 to purchase the properties and develop a single-family residential project upon the site. Parcel number 151645 is currently zoned Neighborhood Residential and is located within the city limits of Bessemer City. Parcel numbers 151644 and 151640 are currently zoned Rural (R) and are not located within the city limits of Bessemer City but are within the city's extra territorial jurisdiction. All three parcels of land are currently vacant. The applicant has applied to rezone all three parcels to Neighborhood Residential Conditional District with the intent to voluntarily annex tax parcels 151640 and 151644 into the Bessemer City limits.

The project parcels are surrounded by two public right of ways, N. 14th St. and Sherwood Drive. Both public right of ways are owned and maintained by the NCDOT. The applicant is proposing to develop the project site into a single-family residential community that will consist of 93 single family units, five public right of ways, sidewalks along one side of the right of way in certain areas, and along both sides in other areas. The community will also consist of ditch sections along both sides of the right of way to assist in the collection of stormwater runoff and a center median with street tree plantings along the main interior roadways.

Current regulations within section 4.4.N. – Curb and Gutter of the Bessemer City Land Development Code state that state that curb and guttering shall be installed along all newly constructed roadways within the city limits.

Section 4.5.A. – Sidewalks, Required Locations of the Bessemer City Land Development Code state that sidewalks shall be constructed along both sides of newly created roadways within the city limits of Bessemer City.

Section 4.6. & 3.5.D. – Street Trees of the Bessemer City Land Development Code states that street trees shall be installed along all newly created roadways. Applicant has proposed fifty-three tree plantings along the interior street network and common open space to include the plantings within the median along certain internal roadways.

Section 3.2.A. – Dimensional Standards for Principal Structures states that the minimum lot size for Neighborhood Residential zoning districts shall be 12,000 saft for single family residential lots.

The purpose of the conditional zoning application is to request relief from the curb and gutter requirements to allow for ditch sections along the internal roadway network to collect stormwater. Request relief from the dimensional standards and to allow minimum lots square footage of 8,000 square feet. Request relief from the sidewalk requirements of sidewalk along both sides of the entire internal street network and to allow for sidewalks along both sides within the development where feasible.

Proposal: The Applicants have submitted a Neighborhood Residential Conditional District application proposing to develop a single-family residential community on three parcels of land within the Neighborhood and Rural zoning districts. A summary of the proposal is as follows:

<i>Parcels</i>	<i>Site Area</i>	<i>Water shed</i>	<i>Existin g Use</i>	<i>Proposed Use</i>	<i>Number of Units</i>	<i>Maxim um Density per Acre</i>	<i>Propo sed Density per Acre</i>	<i>Requir ed Open Space</i>	<i>Propos ed Open Space</i>
151644, 151645, 151640	35.7 7	N/A	Vacant	Residential Single Family	93	8	4.5	2.6 Acres	6 Acres

The lot sites are proposed to be generally 70' x 115' for 8,050 sq ft. In some cases, depending on roadway construction, the lots could be slightly narrower or shorter but all lots will meet 8,000 sq ft minimum. The required setbacks and proposed setbacks are depicted in the following table:

	Front	Side	Rear	Corner
Required	20'	12'	30'	20'
Proposed	20'	12'	30'	20'

**Roads:** The proposal for the site involves the construction of five internal roadways within the project site. There will be sidewalk along one side of all internal streets and on both sides were feasible. The developer has applied to install ditch sections along the entire internal street network to collect stormwater. A median planting strip will be constructed on three of the five internal streets. Planned roadways will be constructed to accommodate all public safety apparatuses and solid waste pickup equipment.

Traffic: Per City of Bessemer City Land Development Code, no Traffic Impact Analysis study is required to be conducted due to the projected number of daily trips during peak hour travel times.

- Proposed Trips Per Day from Development: 930
- Proposed New Trips During Peak AM: 65
- Proposed Trips During Peak PM: 87

**Parking:** Bessemer City Land Development Code requires two parking spaces per unit minimum. The project consists of three hundred and seventy-six total parking spaces to include a two-car garage, and two outside parking spaces per unit.

**Utilities – Water and Sewer:** The applicant is proposing the development to be served by City of Bessemer City Water, Sewer, and Natural Gas services.

- The Public Works Director has indicated that there is City utility availability for the sites.
- A wastewater pump station will be required to be installed due to the topography of the site.
- Applicant has committed to providing Natural Gas to the project.
- Applicants will pay the water, sewer tap fees, system development fees, and will be financially responsible for the engineering and construction of utility systems within the development site.

**Stormwater Drainage:** Stormwater runoff will be managed by ditch roll sections installed along all right of ways within the project site. Stormwater runoff will also be managed by two stormwater retention ponds. The property is subject to adopted stormwater management guidelines and will have to be approved by the Gaston County Department of Natural Resources, as well as the city’s third-party engineering firm.

**Open Space:** The open space requirement for the project is 2.6 acres. The applicant has proposed 2.6 acres of open space to include a walking trail along the stream within the middle of the development. The trail will stub out at the project property lines for future greenway connection. This walking trail will assist the city in providing future greenways throughout the city as proposed with the Pedestrian Plan adopted by City Council in 2022. The applicant has proposed installing benches along the trail and implementing a dog park or fire pit/small grilling area internal to the community.

**Land Use Buffer:** According to the City of Bessemer City Land Development Code section 3.5.C. no landscaping buffer is required for single family residential land uses adjacent to properties that are existing or zoned for future single family residential land uses. The applicant is proposing to buffer the development with common open space vegetation plantings.

Last month, by motion of Bryan Hoffman and unanimous vote, the rezoning request was recommended to be presented to City Council for consideration at their next Regular Meeting.

Light discussion ensued amongst Board members, City Staff, and the developer concerning the request for relief from the garage setback requirement, as well as the requests for relief from the curb and gutter drainage and sidewalk requirements. Board Members inquired about the reasoning behind evading these requirements. The Sunset Ridge developer spoke to the “slow-down period” with builders and explained that these requests were a matter of expense. Board members considered the aesthetic effects of each of the requests and discussed which required elements they would be most willing to forego. They re-opened discussion about natural gas. Josh consolidated the preferences of the Board members into the following recommendation:

#### ***Exhibit A***

#### ***Areas of Relief and Conditions of Approval Sunset Ridge Major Subdivision (CD-02-2024)***

1. *The proposed development shall follow the requirements of the City of Bessemer City Land Development Code with the added relief of:*
  1. *Sidewalks- relief from installing sidewalks on both sides of new streets within the subdivision as indicated on the site plan. The Bessemer City Land Development Code (LDC) requires sidewalks on both sides of streets in Major Subdivisions (Chapter 4, Section 4.5).*
  2. *Garage Setback- relief from the six-foot garage setback requirement from front facing garages on 50% of units (Chapter 3, Section 3.3).*
2. *The following conditions will be applied to the development and agreed to by the developer with the vote of the City of Bessemer City Council to approve the rezoning:*
  - a. *Design Standards- the development is required to abide by standards as follows:*
    1. *Design standards as required by the property owner, including 50% brick or stone facades, pitched roofs, architectural shingles, and all other standards as required by the property owner (additional attachment)*
    2. *Upgraded door designs on units without 6-foot setback*
3. *The developer is responsible for all system development fees.*
4. *The developer shall extend the City of Bessemer City utilities and within the site, at their expense. The development will be served by City utilities: water and sewer.*
5. *All off-site utility easements, if necessary to provide utilities to the site, must be obtained by the developer, at their expense, prior to approval of construction plans, issuance of permits, or commencement of construction.*
6. *Conditional Zoning approval is valid for a period of twenty-four (24) months from the date of approval.*

By motion of Wendy Burgess and unanimous vote, Exhibit A was recommended to be presented to City Council for consideration at their next Regular Meeting September 2024.

**Old/New Business**

City Manager, Josh Ross, updated the group on Nathan's departure and informed Board Members that he will be filling in for Nathan until his position is filled. There was also light discussion about Osage Mill, including a tour and a potential ribbon-cutting in the spring.

**Adjourn**

By motion of Linda Willis and unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 7:14 PM.

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Bruce Absher, Chairperson

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Hannah Dove, Acting Clerk to the Board