



NEW PORT RICHEY

5919 MAIN STREET • NEW PORT RICHEY, FL 34652 • (727) 853.1016

Land Development Review Board (LDRB) - Minutes

Date: April 20, 2017
Time: 2:00 pm
Location: City Council Chambers
First Floor, City Hall, 5919 Main Street, New Port Richey, FL 34652

Any person desiring to appeal any decision made by the LDRB, with respect to any matter considered at any meeting or hearing, will need a record of the proceedings and may need to insure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made which includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. The law does not require that the Secretary transcribe verbatim minutes, therefore, the applicant must make the necessary arrangements with a private reporter or private reporting firm and bear the resulting expense (FS 286.0105).

I. Roll Call & Pledge of Allegiance:

Members Present:

Dr. Cadle, Jr., Vice Chairperson
Greg Smith
Dan Maysilles
Judy Michel (departed 3:15 p.m.)
Mary Moran
Louis Parrillo
Bob Smallwood, Alternate Member (voting in absence of Mr. Grey)
Nancy MacDonald, Alternate Member

Members Absent:

John Grey, Chairperson

Others Present:

Lisa L. Fierce, Development Director
Chris Mettler, Senior Planner
Gus Karpas, Senior Planner
Chris Vincent, Help Desk Technician
Melanie Tyler, Permit Technician

II. Approval of Minutes:

Dr. Cadle chaired the meeting. Mr. Maysilles made the motion to approve the January 19, 2017 minutes as presented which was seconded by Ms. Moran. The motion carried and the Board approved the minutes (7-0).

III. Rezoning Application REZ2017-01 & Preliminary Site Plan Application PSP2017-03

Case: Rezoning Application REZ2017-01 & Preliminary Site Plan Application PSP2017-03 – 6571 Circle Boulevard – Residences at Orange Lake
Applicant: City of New Port Richey, Debbie L. Manns, City Manager, 5919 Main Street, New Port Richey, FL 34652
Request: Rezoning from R-2, Residential District, Downtown District, MF-14, Residential District, and Right-of-Way, to PDD, Planned Development District (RPD, Residential Planned District Subcategory) (Ordinance #2017-2109)

Staff Contact: Chris Mettler, Senior Planner, 727-853-1044, mettlerc@cityofnewportrichy.org

Ms. Fierce discussed the quasi-judicial proceedings including the requirement to announce any ex-parte communication or conflict. Mr. Mettler distributed an email from Mary Brodbeck, 6549 Circle Boulevard, requesting the developer provide a fence adjacent to her neighboring property.

Mr. Mettler provided a power point presentation. He indicated the location of the subject property, said the property is owned by the City, which purchased the land in 2005 and has been marketing it since for redevelopment purposes. He said Frank Starkey of People Places requires the rezoning in order to redevelop the site with a multifamily project. He said the 2.82-acre property is currently designated with the R-2, Downtown and MF-14 zoning districts and the request is for a rezoning to PDD, Planned Development District (RPD, Residential Planned Development District Subcategory). He said the PDD zoning district is alternative method of land development to facilitate and further the goals, objectives and policies of the adopted comprehensive plan, is design-driven with an associated site plan and allows design flexibility. He said the Development Review Committee approved the site plan on March 23rd.

Mr. Mettler said the development proposed is an 85-unit multifamily residential development. The units would be rental apartments. The building type proposed is mansion-style; the buildings were designed to look like large houses rather than apartment buildings, in order to blend in with the surrounding development. The developer proposes a mix of one and two bedroom apartments. The buildings were primarily three stories in height, with 55-foot towers at the corners of the intersection of Circle Boulevard and Central Avenue.

He noted that the developer proposes a parking standard of one space per apartment, as he plans to market to Millennials and empty-nesters, who have been shown to own less cars per household and to drive less often. He said the developer proposes to provide 97 spaces on-site and 32 spaces of on-street parking (which would be available to anyone on a first-come, first-serve basis).

Mr. Mettler said the proposed rezoning request met the concurrency requirements and is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, which encourages using the PDD zoning district in redevelopment efforts, has been amended to increase the density standards of the Downtown and Downtown Core categories, encourages a mix of housing types, encourages traffic calming techniques (such as the landscaped median, narrowing of traffic lanes and provision of on-street parking proposed on Central Avenue) and encourages reduced setbacks Downtown.

Mr. Smallwood asked if designating the property with the Downtown zoning district would suffice. Mr. Mettler said there would be a conflict with the Low Medium Density Residential category. Ms. Fierce noted that the PDD zoning district allowed the City more control with the associated approved site plan and would not provide the density the applicant is seeking.

Mr. Smith expressed concerns about the three-story height of the buildings and the reduced building setbacks. Mr. Mettler noted the stepping down of building height from 55-feet to 35-feet. Ms. Fierce noted the one-story garage on the north side of the north lot provided a buffer as well.

Mr. Maysilles asked if a privacy wall would be provided. Mr. Mettler said no, but five-foot landscaped buffers would be provided on the north lot line of the north parcel adjacent to a single-family house and along the southwest lot line on the southwest parcel adjacent to a single-story building.

Frank Starkey, developer, described his desire to revitalize Downtown and the marketing study that identified the demand for residential rental apartments. He noted that the additional residents would support Downtown businesses. He described the economic and financial issues with developing owner-occupied condominium multifamily residential projects at this time. He described the lack of interest in the City's marketing of the property for redevelopment. He addressed the concern about the provision of parking at a reduced rate, saying that studies indicate that the market he is targeting has a car ownership rate that is declining.

Mr. Smallwood asked why he switched from a Mediterranean style to the mansion style. Mr. Starkey discussed the cost factors that led him to this change in his design concept.

Mr. Starkey addressed the concerns about the building height, saying that two-story buildings were not economically viable and noted he proposed massing the buildings in a manner in keeping with the style of the neighborhood. He also noted the comparative height of the church that previously existed on the property. He noted that the buildings were not as long as the buildings on the Main Street Landing site. He noted it is a step up in intensity but that cities grow in place.

Mr. Smallwood asked why the buildings were proposed to be white. Mr. Starkey said the color and massing were intended to look traditional.

Mr. Smith asked about the number of residents. Mr. Starkey said based on the proposed 85 apartments, he would estimate 135 residents. Mr. Starkey noted that he proposed developing a smaller site in the first phase, to gauge market feedback.

Rod Wortham, 6345 Grand Boulevard, a Downtown business, said this was the kind of project Millennials would be interested in and in his observation, they do drive less.

Jeff Wright, owner of Wright's Natural Market in the City, said he wanted to see this project and Main Street Landing go forward, and he would like to see the increase in density proposed.

Linda Blake, 5743 Illinois Avenue, said she had lived in the City for 34 years and was concerned about the mistakes the City makes, about rentals, low-income families, declining schools, and poverty in general. She said she wanted a guarantee the rentals would not become low-income, crime-infested development. Ms. Fierce said the City is concerned about maintenance of the project and was addressing that in a development agreement with the applicant.

John Kane, 6041 Florida Avenue, said he was not opposed to the project and it seemed like a good opportunity. He thinks three-story buildings is imposing at this location, but he is not against the project.

Rich Melton, 5848 Central Avenue, said he thought the reduced parking rate is inadequate and he does not want a landscaped median to block his view of the fountain in Orange Lake. He asked if the Fire Department could accommodate the three-story buildings. Ms. Fierce said the Fire Chief had reviewed the site plan and he had no issues with this proposal or Main Street Landing.

Lori Woortman, 5828 Delaware Avenue, said she moved to Winter Park in 1960 and was concerned to see how that area had declined, as big apartment buildings and big parking garages were developed near Lake Baldwin.

Rex Phelps, 5914 Central Avenue, said he thought the project is not bad but the parking issue had not been thought through. He is concerned about the proposed median, adequate parking for events and speeding cars on Central Avenue.

Kacey Atkinson, 5912 Illinois Avenue, and Lia Gallegos, 6030 Tennessee Avenue, said that they owned homes in the City but were previously renters. They noted that Millennials want to rent, the residents would not be low-income and would make the City more vibrant. They said the proposal would slow traffic in Central Avenue.

Sue Grassin, 7108 Grand Boulevard, said the proposal is a beautiful concept but is concerned about rentals. She is concerned about people moving from Tampa and commuting to their Tampa jobs. She is concerned about event parking, parking on Central Avenue, Section 8 housing, the crime rate prostitution and drug use.

Kevin Brennan, 6126 Central Avenue, was confused about how Main Street Landing effects the proposed project's market demand. He said he was neither opposed nor in support of the proposal.

Ruth Ferguson, 5941 Rio Drive, was concerned about ingress and egress into the project and impacts on Adams Street. Ms. Fierce said access to Phase 1 would be from Adams Street, Phase 2 from Adams Street and Florida Avenue, and Phase 3 from the alley.

Joe Delguidice, 5524 Indiana Avenue, expressed concern that within ten years the site will be blighted, the project will go bankrupt there would be no maintenance and there would be traffic impacts. He is concerned about provision of event parking. Dr. Cadle said the City is studying the parking issue.

Ms. Fierce said the City never intended for the property to be used for long-term event parking. The City is planning to develop a Downtown parking garage to address this issue in the future. She noted that the developer is anticipating that residents will relocate from Tampa and not commute to Tampa. She reiterated the 2015 market study's finding that the City's Downtown could support 500 residential units, 315 of which would be rentals.

Mr. Starkey said he was not proposing affordable, low-income housing. He said the reduced parking phenomenon is a national issue. As for event parking, he said Downtown is not intended to be a fairground.

Ms. Moran said she is concerned about impacts to the small-town atmosphere of the City. Mr. Starkey said the City cannot stay a small town forever and it is a challenge for the City to grow appropriately. He said his proposal would improve the character of the streets and the building heights would not provide a canyon effect.

Mr. Maysilles said he applauds these kinds of plans and we cannot have small town projects and move forward. He said he is also concerned about the parking issues and he is not sure how to address them, except maybe a parking garage in Phase 1.

Dr. Cadle said this is the kind of development we need. He noted the commercial vacancies Downtown and noted the Millennials home ownership patterns were different. He thinks this project will improve the character of the town.

Mr. Smallwood remembered the impact the recession had on Downtown and there were not enough residents to support Downtown businesses. He said he liked New Urbanist ideas and the development in Baldwin Park. He noted that parking and traffic are challenges for the City.

Ms. Fierce noted that the first City Council hearing was scheduled for May 2, 2017.

Mr. Maysilles made the motion to recommend approval of the rezoning request with the condition that the unity of title application is completed, which was seconded by Mr. Parrillo. Roll call vote: Dr. Cadle, yes; Ms. Moran, yes; Mr. Parrillo, yes; Mr. Smith, no; Ms. Michel, no; Mr. Smallwood, yes; and Mr. Maysilles, yes. The motion carried (5-2).

IV. Variance Application VAR2017-1560

Case: Variance Application VAR2017-1560 - 5323 Main Street
Applicant: Vivian Robinson, 5323 Main Street, New Port Richey, FL 34652
Request: 1) A two-foot variance to increase the height of fencing in the Downtown District from four feet to six feet; and
2) A variance to increase the opacity of a fence in the downtown from 50% to 100%
Staff Contact: Gus Karpas, Senior Planner, 727-853-1042, karpasg@cityofnewportriches.org

Mr. Karpas presented a powerpoint in which he identified the subject property, showed the photos of the activity on the neighboring property that spills over to the subject property and showed the location of the proposed fence. He explained that the Downtown fence regulations allow a maximum four-foot fence of maximum 50 percent opacity. He said the applicant is seeking a variance to allow her a six-foot opaque fence to shield her property and her clients from the activity on the neighboring property.