

Minutes
Special Called Meeting
Aberdeen Town Board

November 16, 2009
Monday, 5:30 p.m.

Aberdeen Town Hall
Aberdeen, North Carolina

The Aberdeen Board of Commissioners met Monday, November 16, 2009 at 5:30 p.m. for a Special Called Meeting. Members present were Mayor Elizabeth B. Mofield, Mayor Pro-tem Robbie Farrell and Commissioners Pat Ann McMurray, Jim Thomas and Walter Wright. Commissioner Donna Shannon was not in attendance for the meeting. Staff members in attendance were Town Manager Bill Zell, Planning Director Kathy Liles, and Town Clerk Regina Rosy. Hannah Sharpe, Reporter for the Pilot and Alan Parker were also present for the meeting. There were approximately 35 citizens in attendance.

1. Call to Order

Mayor Mofield called the meeting to order.

2. Consideration of Approval of Application for Rezoning RZ#09-03 submitted by Habitat for Humanity.

Planning Director Kathy Liles gave an overview of past information shared regarding the project. Alan Staggard, architect for Habitat for Humanity, explained the impact on the site if zoning remained at R-20. He stated there would be 22 lots if the zoning remained at 20,000 square foot lots versus R-15 zoning which would allow for 25 lots. Mayor Mofield pointed out that there would only be 3 less habitat homes if the rezoning was not approved. Alan Staggard stated the development would possibly lose the park and buffer area if zoning was not changed to R-15 due to lack of space. Commissioner McMurray came in at 5:45 p.m. and Mr. Staggard repeated the information again for Commissioner McMurray's benefit. Commissioner McMurray asked if the green space would be lost if the property was not rezoned to R-15. Mr. Staggard stated yes, it would be lost because there would not be as much space to work with to make the park worthwhile. Commissioner Wright asked if Habitat would consider building the development if the zoning remained at R-20. Mr. Staggard stated Habitat prefers R-15 because it offers a good transitional zoning. Mr. Staggard stated if the Board does not consider the rezoning then Habitat will look at the current zoning of R-20 as a possibility. Commissioner Thomas asked about the buffer zone – he wanted to know who would be responsible for maintaining the buffer area. Mr. Staggard stated it is his assumption

that a homeowner's association would maintain the parks, buffers, etc. Mayor Mofield stated a concern that came up from the public hearing was the size of the houses in the R-20 zoning district. Mayor Mofield stated the average size house in the R-20 district is 1714 square feet and the minimum is 1400. Mayor Mofield asked if the zoning was changed to R-15, which would be a minimum house square feet of 1200, would that be the size of all the houses? Mr. Staggard stated there would be a variety of sized houses in the development. Robert Brunke, with Habitat, stated if the zoning stays at R-20 the homes would be larger than 2 and 3 bedroom homes. He stated Habitat homes do not have great rooms and large living spaces - they try to build the most affordable housing for their homeowners. Mayor Mofield wanted to know if Habitat homes are based on affordability, then why could there not be a three bedroom home that was 1400 square feet – it would be cheaper to not have the extra walls and materials. Mr. Staggard explained that Habitat has guidelines they must work within to build homes due to affordability. Mr. Staggard stated these plans were well thought out efficient plans for the families.

Commissioner Thomas stated the concerns from the surrounding residents were loss of privacy, traffic, fence, and property valuation. Commissioner Thomas stated we are creatures of habit and do not like change. Commissioner Thomas stated he does not believe the loss of three houses would really affect privacy, traffic or property valuations. Commissioner Thomas stated he has never seen a pretty five-year old fence. Commissioner Thomas stated regarding property valuation – he has not been able to find any information to show that Habitat homes are detrimental to surrounding property values. Commissioner Thomas stated he is in favor of the R-15 rezoning for this area. Commissioner Thomas made a motion to approve the R-15 zoning for this piece of property. Motion failed for lack of a second. Mayor Pro-tem Farrell stated Mr. Staggard had previously said R-20 would work for them. Mr. Staggard stated what he said was plans had been drawn for R-20 zoning, but R-15 zoning would be preferred. Mayor Mofield recapped the situation for the Board – 25 homes with a green area, home size 1200 square feet or larger on 15,000 square feet lots with a buffer if zoning were changed to R-15. Mayor Mofield stated the alternative would be to leave the zoning at R-20 which would allow for 3 less homes, home size of 1400 square feet or larger on 20,000 square feet lots which would eliminate the park and buffer area. Alan Quirion, Habitat Board Member, mentioned that Alan Staggard presented information on if R-20 stayed in place what would take place. Mr. Quirion stated, if the property is not rezoned, then he seriously doubts that Habitat would develop this property because they would not be able to afford it. He stated they deal with 60% of the median income – they can't have large rooms and pass on the additional cost to the homeowners. Mr. Quirion

stated there is an excellent chance that the board would not approve building on this property if the zoning were not changed. Commissioner McMurray stated the Board had received an excellent presentation of the R-15 plan, but no excellent plan for the R-20 zoning. Planning Director Kathy Liles stated prejudging a subdivision is not something that is supposed to take place when considering a rezoning.

Commissioner McMurray made a motion to deny the request for rezoning. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Wright. Commissioner Wright stated his reason for denial was a large number of surrounding homeowners came to the public hearing – and he would surely hate to have that many citizens antagonized about changing the zoning. Mayor Pro-tem Farrell stated his vote will strictly be for the rezoning issue only – and is nothing personal towards Habitat. Motion carried 3-1. Commissioners McMurray, Farrell and Wright all voted to deny the request, and Commissioner Thomas voted against the denial of the rezoning.

3. Review of the Unified Development Ordinance.

After much discussion, the Board made several changes to the proposed Unified Development Ordinance. The attached spreadsheet displays all of the proposed changes the Board agreed on during the meeting.

The Board discussed the R-20 zoning would be 20,000 square feet lots and the Board decided to rezone the Club Corp. property on Hwy. 5 to R-30. Mayor Mofield suggested notifying the property owner of the potential rezoning before doing so. Commissioner McMurray questioned how this would affect the Legacy. Planning Director Liles stated they would be grandfathered in.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Farrell, to go into Closed Session to discuss personnel. Motion unanimously carried.

The Board returned from Closed Session with no action taken. A motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Farrell, to adjourn the meeting. Motion unanimously carried.

Regina M. Rosy, Town Clerk

Minutes were completed in
Draft form on November 17, 2009

Elizabeth B. Mofield, Mayor

Minutes were adopted
December 14, 2009