

CITY OF BERKELEY LAKE
4040 SOUTH BERKELEY LAKE ROAD, BERKELEY LAKE, 30096
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
FULL MINUTES
January 12, 2010
7:30 PM

Those in attendance at the meeting were as follows:

Commission Members: Rodney Hammond, Chair
 Sally Rich-Kolb, Vice-Chair
 Jeff Cooper
 Dan Huntington
 Tom Merkel

Deputy City Administrator: Leigh Threadgill

Citizens Present: 4

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Hammond called the meeting to order at 7:35 P.M. at 4040 South Berkeley Lake Road.

II. MINUTES of October 13, 2009

Merkel moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Kolb seconded the motion. Kolb, Merkel and Huntington were in favor. Cooper abstained due to being absent at the October 13th meeting. The motion passed.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Threadgill suggested adding appointment of secretary as new business item (c) and 2009 Activity Report as new business item (d).

Cooper moved to approve the agenda with suggested changes. Huntington seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

a.) Election of Chair

Cooper nominated Hammond as Planning & Zoning Commission Chair. Kolb seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

b.) Election of Vice-Chair

Kolb nominated Merkel as Planning & Zoning Commission Vice-Chair. Huntington seconded the motion. Cooper, Huntington and Kolb voted in favor. Merkel abstained. The motion passed.

c.) Appointment of Secretary

Cooper moved to appoint Threadgill as Planning & Zoning Commission secretary. Merkel seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

d.) 2009 Activity Report

Hammond noted the activity report included at the back of the agenda packets. He further noted that we had very few variance actions last year. Most frequently when we are asked for variances, it is for lots around the lake and in the older parts of the City due to odd shapes and older non-conforming homes that residents wish to update. In granting variances, the Commission has to think about the city as a whole and not just the individual.

In general, if there are a lot of variance requests, it is a sign that you need to look at your zoning regulations.

Last year, the Commission looked inward at procedures and updated how the city operates. We enacted by-laws, updated the fees for variance requests and standardized our meeting dates to occur the second Tuesday of each month.

In-house training, conducted by a consultant from Virginia, was offered to Planning & Zoning Commissioners, staff and interested Council members.

The Commission reviewed several zoning ordinance amendments and made recommendations to City Council. The Council does not always concur with those recommendations, but at least the Commission has the opportunity to offer a recommendation based on their technical review. Hammond referenced some of the zoning ordinance amendments reviewed – special use provisions for accessory apartments, impervious surface limitations, cellular facilities, and substandard lots of record.

Hammond noted that the Commission also reviewed and recommended a modification to the River District Final Plat.

Finally, at the end of the year the P&Z evaluated a proposal by neighboring areas to create a Peachtree Corners Planning District. The P&Z recommended that the Council look at the surrounding commercial areas to Berkeley Lake and do everything it could to annex those areas. This is a complicated issue, but it is the Commission's responsibility to advise the City to take seriously the annexation of commercial areas for the economic health of the City. There was further discussion about the significance of the City's ability to annex bordering properties for future economic development as well as watershed protection.

There was brief discussion about the accessory apartment ordinance amendment. It was noted that the Commission spent a great deal of time on that ordinance.

There was brief discussion about cellular facilities.

V. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Brook Nebel, resident in Peachtree Corners, is running for state representative and spoke briefly about the Peachtree Corners Planning District proposal. She noted that she is familiar with the bill introduced by

Tom Rice to create the Planning District. She stated that she is concerned about the impact of that and the constraint it will place on the City for future expansion through annexation. The bill will have to go through eight committees, and if passed will come to the Gwinnett County Commissioners. She is staying apprised of the bill and can help answer any questions.

Scott Lee, 66 Lakeshore Drive, asked if GMA had released an official position about the bill. Nebel stated that she didn't think that GMA had issued a position because it is still early in the process. If it passes through the state legislature, it will go to Gwinnett County. There will be five members appointed by the County Commissioners, four of whom must live in the Peachtree Corners area and one who does not. She understands that the planning district would prevent the City's ability to annex adjacent commercial areas.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Cooper moved to adjourn. Kolb seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

Hammond adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Threadgill
Deputy City Administrator