

Minutes
Morganton Planning & Zoning
November 14th, 2013

Members Present:

Hank Dickens, Chairman
Bill Lennon
Charlie Sasser
Claude Huffman
Waits Gordon
Judy Francis
Pete Wallace
Rick Lingerfelt

Members Absent:

David Ferber
Don Smith
Charlie Sasser

Also present from the City staff were Lee Anderson, Director Development Design Services; Louis Vinay, City Attorney and Jackie Cain, Administrative Assistant.

I. OLD BUSINESS:

Item 1: Introduction of New Members

Mr. Dickens stated City Council appointed new member to fulfill partial term for planning & Zoning commission term. He stated that Kim Woolard was appointed to fill the vacancy of Otto Woerner's term.

Item 2: Review and approval of the June 13th, 2013 minutes.

Mr. Dickens stated a copy of the minutes had been provided. Mr. Dickens stated seeing no corrections or comments from commission the minutes would be approved as submitted (8-0).

Item 3: Review of City Council action since last meeting.

Mr. Anderson stated City Council met in August and approved request to rezone 1.299 acres of property located at 127 West Parker Road from Office and Institutional (OI) to General Business (GB) submitted by Telco Community Credit Union. Mr. Anderson stated application had not been received for new signage for the location.

II. APPEARANCES:

Mr. Dickens stated this time is set-aside for individuals to come before the planning board to express any planning related concerns to the planning board.

None.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

Item 1: Consideration to rezone approximately 13.4 acres of property located at 109 East Fleming Drive and 611 S. Sterling Street from Heavy Industrial (HI) to General Business (GB) submitted by Alpine Mill, LLC.

Mr. Dickens asked Mr. Anderson to review the rezoning request for commission members.

This property has been used for industrial purposes since it was first constructed upon in 1888 and used as a textile mill. When the city began zoning properties in the 1960's, the property was classified as General Industrial. The property was later reclassified as Heavy Industrial (HI) in 1985. HI zoning allows a wide variety of intense manufacturing, fabrication, assembly and warehousing uses as well as wholesale trade. Large setbacks are imposed in this district due to the wide range of uses permitted. Many of these uses can adversely affect surrounding areas due to noise, emissions, hours of operation, vehicular movements, lighting, unsightly material storage, etc. These districts are generally found away from heavily populated areas.

The owner has worked to have the mill placed on the National Historic Register implement plans to renovate the mill for an adaptive reuse project. The reuse will include a combination of residential, commercial and office spaces. A General Business (GB) classification is now being requested to allow the adaptive reuse. GB districts permit a wide variety of commercial, service and light warehousing uses. The district also permits single family and multifamily uses. GB districts are normally found along major roadway corridors where adverse impacts can be minimized.

This property is accessed primarily from East Fleming Drive, which is a five lane Major Thoroughfare maintained by NCDOT. The roadway carries 11,000 vehicles per day based on 2012 counts. The current capacity of this roadway is 28,000 ADT which is well above current usage. East Fleming has experienced a slight drop in ADT over the past 20 years. There are currently no plans by NCDOT to alter this roadway however the Mission 2030 Plan does propose traffic calming, pedestrian and bikeway improvements to the roadway. The property also has frontage onto S. Sterling Street, however topography and safety would likely limit the access to right-in entrance only conditions. This section of Sterling is operating near capacity due to the narrowing at the railroad underpass.

Mr. Anderson stated a 12 inch City water line is located along East Fleming Drive. An 8 inch line is located within S. Sterling and also into the eastern side of this site. Each of these lines are adequate to serve multiple GB uses at this location for fire and domestic use.

He added that an 8 inch City sewer line traverses this site which is actually located under the building. This 8 inch vitrified clay line is currently in good condition however, replacement and relocation is recommended to allow proper access in the future. The current line does have the capacity to support a GB use at this location.

Mr. Anderson stated the Mission 2030 Plan proposes this area of town to transition to Planned Destination Commercial activities that would include a combination of commercial, office and residential use. The Plan did not anticipate this area to remain under industrial classifications therefore the request would follow Planned Land Use.

Mr. Anderson stated the portion of the Fleming Drive corridor is in a period of transition. The Fleming Drive/S. Sterling intersection lies on the doorstep to Morganton's

downtown. It is also along the primary entrance and hospitality corridor of Morganton. Traffic counts continue to remain high and adaptive reuse and new investment is occurring such as upgrades at the Roses Shopping Center, and Burger King. Rezoning are encouraged to achieve the Mission 2030 Planning Goals.

Mr. Anderson stated this rezoning request would not constitute spot zoning since it is adjacent to an existing GB districts and is in compliance with Land Development Planning Goals.

Mr. Anderson added that rezoning this property to commercial activities encourages adaptive reuse and new investment to take place. The staff does not anticipate negative impacts to occur as a result of this rezoning.

Mr. Anderson stated staff would recommend this rezoning be approved for the following reasons:

- 1) The request follows Mission 2030 Goals.
- 2) The request does not impact surrounding properties negatively.
- 3) Public services are adequate and available to accommodate GB uses at the location.

Questions for Mr. Anderson from commission.

Mr. Gordon questioned the sewer lines located under the structure and asked if they were clay lines.

Mr. Anderson stated the lines were clay from 1930. He stated the line was in good condition and does support General Business use.

Mr. Dickens opened for public hearing for those speaking for the request.

Mr. Clark Erwin, Alpine Mill LLC, 742 Bost Road Morganton NC, stated the process of developing this property had started sometime ago. He stated City of Morganton staff had guided him through steps for Historic Designation. He stated their initial application to the Department of Interior was denied. He stated the interior building which was historic was shielded by an addition. Thus, the original old mill site was exposed after tearing down the addition. Mr. Erwin stated application was resubmitted to the Department of Interior and approved. Mr. Erwin stated there would be around 50,000 square feet of residential area and 50,000 square feet of commercial. He said the idea of creating enough energy with the businesses like that at Morganton Station.

Mr. Dickens asked if there were plans for access from this site to the Morganton Station site.

Mr. Erwin stated plans to work with Norfolk Southern to cross the railroad were on their agenda.

Mr. Lennon stated it could be done...he had seen it done in other towns.

Mr. Erwin stated plans for electric car coral would be located west of the location. He stated that this project would be done as green as possible.

Mr. Dickens asked if the units would be for sale or strictly rental units.

Mr. Erwin stated ownership of the property must remain as Alpine Mill LLC for a five year period due to tax credits. He stated after that time, then the property could be sold.

Mrs. Woolard asked for clarification of Historic Designation.

Mr. Erwin stated they had received approval from Jenny Kathy, Department of Interior.

Mr. Dickens asked if there was opposition to the request.

None.

Mr. Dickens closed public hearing.

Mr. Huffman made a motion to approve the rezoning request from Heavy Industrial (HI) to General Business (GB) seconded by Mr. Wallace and passed unanimously (8-0).

Mr. Anderson stated City Council would meet on December 2nd, 2013 at 6 p.m. to review the recommendation from Planning Commission.

IV. OTHER ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

None

V. ADJOURN

5:51 p.m.

Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, December 12th, 2013 at 5:15 PM