

Minutes
Building Codes (BDS) Committee
September 7, 2021
1st committee meeting

Committee Members: Diane Kuzniar attended via Zoom, Dale Black and Taft Matney were present in the Council Chambers.

Others present: Business and Development Services Director David Dyrhaug, and City Administrator Brandon Madden.

1. Call to Order- Councilman Matney

2. Public Comment

- a. Monroe Free: I live at 602 Rosebud Lane in Greer. I am the President/CEO for Habitat for Humanity in Greenville County. I am here to talk about the business license issue that was before the Planning Commission two weeks ago, where they saw things our way, and hope you will too. Habitat is one of the leaders for affordable housing. We will soon have 400 houses we have built in Greenville County. We will do 13 more mortgages this year, and we do 40-45 repair projects. We just finished one here in Mauldin for a veteran's wife who needed a new roof.

It is always a question to non-profits of does it work? Our mortgages are paid on time over 90% of the time. The foreclosure rate is less than 1%. The program works for families, to change their cash flow, and allows them to change the financial trajectory of the family. Children's grades improve, and health improves. It is not just the family, but neighborhoods are better with Habitat homes, because we help people to be good neighbors and participate in programs. They raise property values in their homes. It is good for people and neighborhoods. When I look at Greenville County, we have a housing crisis. There are well over 12,000 homes short. The City just put in \$2million in affordable housing, and the County will invest \$5 million. Private corporations and businesses are adding money because people see this as a huge problem because of its economic impact. For people to have jobs in your community, they have to have a place to call home.

Habitat raises a third of its revenue through its Restores. When you say you can't have a business license to operate in Mauldin, what you are saying is you are going to limit the ability in this county to have affordable housing. There could not be a worse time to do this. I understand the issues with thrift stores, but we do not operate that way. We don't have drop boxes, if you look at the two stores we have now, they are in tip top shape. They look good from the outside. Our signage is good. We are not going to be a bad partner. If we are a bad partner with you in Mauldin, it affects everything we do. It will affect people's willingness to help us and affect our ability to get volunteers. We have to do everything really well because we are dependent upon the public.

We would like you to be like the planning commission and say we see it your way, and would like to work with you.

- b. Mark Steenback: I am the Chief Resource Officer for Habitat, and my address is 24 Trailstream Drive in Mauldin. My goal is to tell you how all thrift stores are not equal. I oversee the stores and have over twelve years of experience. Our goal is we run a neat, clean place. Our goal is to operate in a clean, organized, and neat way. We want community support. We pride ourselves on being complimented. We hear all the time that this doesn't look like a thrift store. We communicate internally to our staff that we are a retail store, not a junk store. We just happen to sell donated items. We are donor and shopper friendly. We run safe stores. We are constantly improving our processes and making sure our customers are treated well.

We do separate entrances for donor drop-offs and shopping entrances. We don't have any issues with things piling up outside. We see about 900 people a day between Wade Hampton and the store on Woodruff Road. I expect this one to double the foot traffic. We expect 700-800 on average. We don't use drop boxes because they are dirty and an eyesore, and are poor stewards of the donor's trust. It doesn't take care of the donations. When items are donated, we recognize that the donor is trusting us. We will earn their trust. We expect in the first full year of opening that we will be able to fund up to two new constructions. Conservatively, we believe in three years, we will be able to fund five new homes.

It provides convenient access to appliances, furniture, flooring, tools, construction materials and household items. It diverts waste and will save the City money. There is some furniture on the side of the road in my neighborhood that I am sure could be dropped off at the store if it was open and it would save the City pounds of material from the landfills between our stores. Initially, this location will probably create 12 jobs, and could mean up to 25 jobs. We want to raise the bar with this store. We have done that at every location and will do that here as well.

If I may, just stepping outside the hat of a leader in Habitat, and just talking as a resident of Mauldin, I am concerned about the look and the communication this sends that certain types of people or businesses are not welcome in our community. That bothers me as a citizen, and I hope you will take what the planning commission saw as reasonable and pass that along. Thank you for your time.

- c. Kevin Conway: Good evening. I am Kevin Conway and work for Wheeler Real Estate, the current owner of the Bi-Lo shopping center. My address is 3209 Hartford Way in Charlotte. I would like to give everyone a little background on our company. We are a publicly traded group. We have people from Washington, DC to Tampa, Florida. We have relationships with almost every grocery store in the southeast. We have 16 Food Lions, we met with them, and it is not going there. Too much competition and hard to find employees. Bilo's lease doesn't end for two more years. It can sit dark and vacant, but I don't think that helps the community or the other owners in the shopping center.

I have been working with Habitat for 6 months. We have a good relationship with them and know what they want to do. We like working with them. We have asked Hobby Lobby, furniture stores, Harris Teeter, Lowe's Foods, Piggly Wiggly, Lidl, Aldi, Publix to relocate, and we are not getting anyone. We need to look at alternative uses like Habitat. Some companies are turning box stores into medical offices. Someone in Charleston is turning boxes into public storage. We would like to partner with Habitat and not have it vacant for the next two years.

3. Reading and Approval of Minutes

a. Building Codes Committee Meeting: August 2, 2021

Motion: Councilman Black made a motion to approve the minutes with Councilwoman Kuzniar seconding.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (3-0).

4. Reports or Communications from City Officers

a. BDS Director David Dyrhaug

Mr. Dyrhaug reported the budget should be at least 83% and his department's actual budget is 88%.

5. Unfinished Business- None

6. New Business

- a. An ordinance to provide for the annexation of property owned by Bo Lac Properties, LLC, and located at 2001 Fork Shoals Road (Tax Map Parcel: 0583.02-01-007.05) by one hundred percent petition method; and to establish a zoning classification of R-10, residential, for said property

Items a and b on the agenda go together and the properties are side by side.

The City of Mauldin has received signed petitions requesting the annexation of two tracts of land consisting of two parcels pursuant to South Carolina Code of Laws Section 5-3-150. These petitions include approximately 16 acres owned by Bo Lac Properties, LLC, located at 2001 Fork Shoals Road, and approximately 16 acres owned by Cojac Whitehorse, LLC, located at the corner of Fork Shoals Road and Union Church Road. The applicant has requested that these tracts be zoned R-10 Residential, with a C-2 Commercial 2.8-acre outparcel upon annexation into the City of Mauldin.

The applicant plans to expand the Chestnut Ridge subdivision, which is currently under development, onto both of these tracts totaling approximately 32 acres.

Motion: Councilwoman Kuzniar made a motion to move items a and b to the Council meeting for approval. Councilman Black seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (3-0).

- b. An ordinance to provide for the annexation of property owned by Cojac Whitehorse, LLC, and located at Fork Shoals Road and Union Church Road (Tax Map Parcel: 0583.02-01-007.02) by one hundred percent petition method; and to establish a zoning classification of R-10, Residential, and C-2, Commercial, for said property
- c. An amendment to the Mauldin Zoning Ordinance establishing definitions and conditional use standards for thrift stores, consignment stores and like businesses and to establish the zoning districts for which they can locate

On July 19, 2021, the Mauldin City Council approved a resolution requesting the Planning Commission to consider amending the zoning ordinance to limit the number of thrift stores allowed in the City' commercial districts and to conduct a public hearing.

One of the findings in the resolution passed by City Council is that “additional thrift stores in the City of Mauldin may be inconsistent with the objectives of the zoning ordinance to protect the quality and appearance of the properties in commercial zoning districts.”

After the public hearing and considerable discussion, the Planning Commission voted 6-0 to recommend approval of the draft ordinance while striking conditional standards 1 and 2 under Section 10:37. Namely, the two standards stricken by the Planning Commission include the requirement that a thrift store be separated from residential properties by at least 200 feet and the requirement that a thrift store must be located within a multi-tenant shopping center. These two standards appear as ~~stricken through~~ in the draft ordinance presented to the Committee and would not be included in the final ordinance unless specifically reinserted by the Committee or the Council. The Committee or the Council may also consider inserting other standards it deems appropriate.

Motion: Councilman Black made a motion to send this to Council with Councilwoman Kuzniar seconding.

Councilwoman Kuzniar said she would like to hear from full Council before she makes comment. Councilmen Matney and Black agreed.

Councilman Black asked if Florence was the only municipality in SC that has rules for thrift stores. Mr. Dyrhaug said it was the only one he could find in South Carolina.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (3-0).

7. Public Comment- None

8. Committee Concerns- None

9. Adjourn- Councilman Matney adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Miller

Municipal Clerk