

A special joint workshop of the Beaufort City Council and the Town of Port Royal/City of Beaufort Municipal Planning Commission was held on November 21, 2006 at 5:30 p.m. in the Beaufort Elementary School cafeteria, 1800 Prince Street. In attendance were Mayor Bill Rauch, Mayor Pro Tem Frank Glover, Council members Donnie Ann Beer, Gary B. Fordham, George H. O'Kelley, Jr., City Manager Scott Dadson, Councilman-elect Mike Sutton, Planning Commission members Joe Devito, Dave Radford, and James Crower. In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d), as amended, all local media were duly notified of the time, date, place and agenda of this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Mayor.

McLEOD & CLARENDON

David Tedder, attorney and the land owner's representative, presented an over view of the changes that have occurred with the McLeod and Clarendon documents since the last meeting. He stated even though these are two separate projects, there are many similarities and many of the common elements have been combined for discussion. He said the comments received from the public, the Planning Commission and the Council have been addressed.

According to Mr. Tedder, the density for Clarendon (4,100+ acres) has been reduced to 4500 units from a possible 12,000 and the commercial area has been reduced to approximately one million square feet. McLeod Farms of 1,000 acres has reduced its density to 1,835 units from a possible 3,000; the commercial area was reduced to 600,000 sq. ft. The cluster development was upgraded to a smart growth, smart code transect zoning. Recognizing the concerns of the military, a distance barrier has been created by moving the density as far away from the AICUZ and Noise zones as possible. A mix of uses have been emphasized to promote less traffic and additional natural vegetated buffers have been created. A \$1,000 fee per unit has been established for various uses such as site acquisition, infrastructure costs, or road improvements to accommodate the increased needs for buses and circulation in the areas of the school.

Mr. Tedder outlined the PUD changes, the Clarendon and McLeod Master Plans, zoning and additional changes and agreement highlights.

CLARENDON MASTER PLAN:

The specifics of the development of Clarendon and the islands were outlined by Mr. Tedder. The islands will have docks with small scale community retail areas to provide items needed by the residents. The boat yard area on the mainland is being considered for dry stack storage and expanded access to the water. The transect zones will be T-4, a mixed use village, a boat yard, and a marina; T-2 for the island and mainland; and a recreation/conservation T-1 District and an agricultural district. Also, there will be an AICUZ zone. Pointing out the agreement highlights;

Clarendon is not planning to develop for at least ten years; the homeowners will be responsible for the roads and the drainage; sidewalks, bike paths, and trail ways will be provided by the developers; acreage will be provided for a fire and police station when needed, and fifty acres will be provided for a school site and ten acres per 1,000 units will be donated for a park.

McLEOD MASTER PLAN:

The McLeod property does not have as much waterfront as Clarendon and has more infrastructures, Mr. Tedder pointed out. The density will be in the old Seabrook Village area with the railroad crossing, homestead buildings and barns. The commercial uses will be scaled to serve the community in those areas. Seventy-three acres will be allocated for the high school. The zoning districts will be T-4, traditional neighborhood village, the mixed use village, and a marina area; T-3, mixed use; T-2, Mainland and island areas; and T-1, recreation/conservation, agricultural and AICUZ. The homeowners will be responsible for the roads and the drainage and sidewalks will be provided. Three acres will be available for public service and the same donation for park sites as in Clarendon.

The City Manager explained the fiscal impact as required by state law is on the City's web site. The impact fees are viewed in three different ways as well as the variables.

Roger Dyer, Traffic Engineer with SCDOT, presented a traffic impact study of the area and an assessment of the predicted traffic conditions that result from these developments. A safe design is considered first and then design and traffic flow. He discussed the concept of the level of service (LOS) and the subjective criteria used to assess the conditions used for the McLeod and Clarendon studies. The existing 2006 conditions were used to develop a base line. Then 2011, 2016, and 2026 were considered because it coincides with the long term planning of the Beaufort Transportation Committee. Trip generation estimates were based on the plans presented, he said. For the year 2016, they estimated McLeod traffic will increase to 11,600 and in 2026 to 16,400. Potential areas of concern, according to Mr. Dyer and the impact study, are that turn lanes will be needed in 2016 at Grays Hill and access management will be needed to preserve the capacity of US 21. For 2026, the section of US 21 between 116 and 280 will only become more of a problem. There may be a need to have an additional through lane as one approaches the signal at the air station.

COUNCIL QUESTIONS:

Councilman O'Kelley asked Mr. Tedder about the Letter of Intent regarding the acreage for both developments. Mr. Tedder clarified that the military acreage for Clarendon is 1,200 and 100 for McLeod. He also stated Clarendon's Development Agreement is for 35 years with 3 successive 5 year extensions and McLeod's is 20 years.

Dave Radford, Planning Commission member, said the Commission recommended clustering and a decrease in density as the community extended. He asked if any verbiage was included to ensure that. Mr. Tedder replied a table addresses the sizes of lots and the lower the transect code, the less dense the development. Mr. Radford asked the density of the village and the rural area of any particular zone. Looking at a T-4, Traditional Neighborhood, which applies to both developments, Mr. Tedder referred specifically to Clarendon and said the maximum density per gross acre of that zone is 5 and the higher district, marina area, is 12. Additionally, in the T-1 area, the maximum density is on the islands and the equestrian areas, the mini farms and mini estates, are 3 to 5 acre

lots. Other questions were posed by Mr. Radford with Mr. Tedder responding.

Councilman Fordham asked Mr. Radford his thoughts on the Planning Commission reviewing the new document. Mr. Radford responded they would like to review it again if their comments will be considered.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Darrell Ferguson who lives next to Clarendon stated the annexation cannot be addressed until it is decided what the plan is for Beaufort.

Bill Sammons, Seabrook resident, said Beaufort is one of the most desirable places to live and concessions should not be made for developers. He suggested taking time to consider all the facts.

Mike Zara, Sheldon resident, served on the Planning Commission for 8 years and the Quality Growth Committee. He is concerned that these projects are premature and the City should take time to allow the Northern Beaufort County Regional Plan to be completed before going forward. He also commented about the Traffic Impact Study which he thinks is being developed in isolation. Another development is planned for Dale and with these two projects there is no accounting for the impact.

Reid Armstrong, Coastal Conservation League, pointed out two issues that he said indicate a more thorough examination is needed on these proposals. The Traffic Impact Analysis by Roger Dyer shows that in ten years these projects will cause degradation of all of U.S. Highway 21 from Grays Hill Road to SC Highway 280 and in twenty years, a total failure of almost all of the 3 mile section of Highway 21. He referred to a study by Wilburn & Associates that indicates that it will cost \$126 million to alleviate the road deficiencies and to draft the hurricane evaluation from the additional traffic load. The proposed traffic impact fee will raise about \$5 million leaving about \$21 million unaccounted for. The second item he mentioned was the impact charges proposed, amounts to about \$2,800.00 per residential unit. He asked how the difference will be addressed to cover these costs.

Milbrey Gnann said over 2,000 signatures have been collected from people who do not agree with the annexation of Clarendon and McLeod.

Dewitt Helms, 406 New Street, expressed his opposition to the annexation as density impact, increased taxes, and hurricane evacuation disaster. He said the revised agreements should not be adopted. He asked Council to explain their stand on these issues.

David Lott, 1207 Laudonniere St., suggested Council decide whether this annexation is appropriate or not after reviewing the facts. He said people assume that if this property is not annexed, it will not be developed. The owners are free to do whatever they want with their property subject to regulations. They could develop under the County's standards and he is afraid they would not be as concerned about the good of Beaufort and the military base. He also said the annexation should not be denied simply because people don't like the idea of growth.

Dottie McDaniel asked Council to talk to the McLeods about developing the property as agricultural.

Laura Von Harten said there are agricultural businesses developing on the outskirts of cities because people want fresh, local food. She asked Mr. Tedder about T-6 zoning. Stating she likes the project; however, she said she would like to see Beaufort develop as an urban area first. Mr. Tedder stated T-6 is the most intense zone allowed under Smart Code zoning. Because of the intensity of the building heights, the concentration of the population, and the types of uses allowed, Beaufort is more of a combination of a T-5 and T-3 zone because the building heights are not as high as those allowed in the T-5 zone.

Stacey Hydrake, Lady's Island, said the people are interested in the way of life here that is unique and disappearing. The residents live by the Whale Branch River because they want large lots. The City has taken the waterfront property on Lady's Island and allowed 4-story condominiums with no walkways and allowed high density in many areas. She added that the people are opposed to the City's annexation.

Dot Gnann commented that listening to Mr. Tedder's presentation causes her to hesitate because annexations never turn out the way they are planned. Her concern is the developments will triple the population in northern Beaufort County. She commented on the fees; suggesting they be reconsidered. Ms. Gnann stated that with the size of the commercial area, a city is being built.

BREAK

A 15 minute break was taken at 8:05 p.m.

Christopher Jackson, 801 Duke Street, said he was part of the crowd that gathered earlier this year outside City Hall on this subject. He admitted he was wrong because he had not thought the matter through. This annexation gives the City a chance to control what happens to Clarendon Plantation and McLeod Farm. He suggested meetings with Council continue to learn what they think individually. He would not like to deny the annexation and yield control to another municipality.

John Stewart, Lady's Island resident, stated there should be more extensive studies and a better understanding at the County level. A presentation on Smart Growth does not make it that; it involves a contiguous development plan. Studies are needed that give the people comfort; these studies displayed tonight are inadequate and incomplete. Another concern he expressed is the 1.6 million square feet of commercial space which equates to sixteen Walmart Superstores.

Don Starkey, Otto Circle, reviewed the details from an engineering point of view. Growth is inevitable and best controlled by the City instead of someone else. He said the annexation documents are flawed and should be rejected. He asked why these decisions should be rushed and suggested the presentations be put on the web site. He asked questions regarding Clarendon, the environment, economics, police protection, and schools. Controlled growth is better than no growth, he said.

Nina McClain, Lady's Island, said growth should not be encouraged and the Northern Regional Plan should be completed first. She read a quote from the Mayor, who was also a member of the Regional Plan Steering Committee, printed in the Beaufort Gazette this morning regarding density of the two annexations. She said it is a betrayal of the people. The Mayor clarifying the comments in

the article said the Committee decided and voted unanimously that there would be an urban growth boundary at the Whale Branch River. Also, estimating for traffic and infrastructure costs, they determined that for development occurring on the City side of that boundary, the base density would be two units per acre. Currently, the base unit for the County is one unit per three acres. He explained that it is likely that within the next couple of years, the County will rezone these rural areas to two units per acre because of the Northern Regional Plan. So, the County is not in line with the Northern Regional Plan inside the Urban Service Boundary.

Harlie Lang, Cottage Farm resident, said he reviewed the documents and he has experience in working with intergovernmental relations in the growth area. Growth is not a simple project and requires public input and consensus. These documents, prepared by the property owner's attorney, allow too much growth and they lock it in for years into the future. In his opinion, a decision should not be made until better information is obtained. At the request of the Mayor to clear up any misconception of the document preparation, the City Manager explained the documents were prepared through negotiations with staff since April. The Plan was negotiated with smart growth principles but it is not 100% smart growth which would allow 16,000 units.

Tara McGrath, Director of the South Coast Office for the Coastal Conservation League, said the conclusion that the McLeod and Clarendon properties will be annexed disregards 3 essential components that the Northern Regional Plan Steering Committee will recommend: 1) the result of the consultants study; 2) Council member's thoughts; and 3) public participation. She asked when will second reading be held so that the public can attend. The Mayor reviewed Council's process stating a decision will be made after this meeting. Also, a decision as to whether the Planning Commission will be asked to review the revised documents will be considered.

Paul Sommerville, 1509 Pigeon Point Road, commented on whether the City or the County would be better stewards of the property. Pointing out the houses allowed in the AICUZ by the County, he stated their history is not perfect; however, he believes the recent election mandated the County to be better stewards of the environment and open land. He believes a better example will be set and everyone can work together to make the County better.

Wendy Zara, Sheldon resident, commented on the section of the agreement that addresses the MCAS. She asked if the Air Station has not agreed or presented a Letter of Intent, why is the City in such a hurry. All the studies indicate the development can be built to the size of Sun City. She asked that more time be allowed before a decision is made on the annexations.

PLANNING BOARD/COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Joe DeVito, Planning Board member, asked Mr. Tedder to explain the road impact fee and giving credits back to the development. Mr. Tedder addressed the hierarchy of roads; the regional transportation system which is Highway 21; the secondary road system is Grays Hill, Seabrook Road, etc. which will need improvements, the third type of roads are those that are inside the property boundaries that are not roads at this time. The Development Agreement Ordinance states that improvements to a regional transportation system in a capital improvement program are eligible for credits from the Development Impact Fee, from the County, he said. There is an additional traffic impact fee paid to the City for those areas that might not qualify in that area. He also listed the fees which are approximately \$11,000 per unit before it can be permitted.

Mr. DeVito asked about a statement regarding restricted access to communities within the Clarendon property since the City and the Planning Commission has frowned upon gated communities in walkable neighbors. Mr. Tedder responded that there are areas that the present owners would like to retain and keep private.

The City Manager clarified how the Development Agreement and the PUD treat the AICUZ area. The Development Agreement allows time for a conservation easement on the properties. The issues raised in the letter from the MCAS have been reviewed with them and their response will be submitted in the near future. Their concerns are about moving densities further away and how traffic will be managed, he said.

David Radford, Planning Commission member, expressed concerns about housing for the service positions and believes the impact of that needs to be acknowledged. Due to the terms and scopes of these agreements, any problems not solved now will not be discovered for 12 to 15 years. As long as he can be assured that there will be corrective actions available, he will feel more comfortable. The City Manager addressing the affordable housing issue, said this document does not exempt itself if the City adopts an affordable housing policy. He pointed out too that this is a zoning document in that it is an approved PUD, density, basic concept, and design guideline wise. It also contains a review process which is the master planning and subdivision processes. Another protection for the City is that if a developer wants to vary from the plan, they would have to go back through the process.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

BILL RAUCH, MAYOR

COUNCILWOMAN DONNIE ANN BEER

COUNCILMAN FRANK GLOVER

COUNCILMAN GARY B. FORDHAM

COUNCILMAN GEORGE H. O'KELLEY, JR.

ATTEST:

BEVERLY W. GAY, CITY CLERK