



## ***Lee County - Leesburg - Smithville Planning Commission***

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CHAIRMAN JASON SHEFFIELD, VICE-CHAIRMAN JIM QUINN  
JOHNNY GOLDEN, KYLE LUCKIE, MIKE MCVEY, SHIRLEY STILES, CHARLIE BARNER

### **MEETING MINUTES**

**April 4, 2024 at 6:00 P.M.**

**Opal Cannon Auditorium**

**T. Page Tharp Governmental Building**

**102 Starkville Avenue North**

**Leesburg, GA 31763**

**Members Present:** Vice-Chairman Jim Quinn, Commissioners Johnny Golden, Kyle Luckie, Mike McVey, Shirley Stiles, and Charlie Barner

**Members Absent:** Chairman Jason Sheffield

**Staff Present:** Interim Director Joey Davenport, Assistant Director Amanda Nava, and Office Manager/ Planning Assistant Kara Hanson

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Vice-Chairman Jim Quinn called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner Kyle Luckie arrived to the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

#### **II. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GEORGIA LAW REGARDING CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS**

Commissioner Shirley Stiles read the Georgia Law regarding campaign contributions.

#### **III. NEW BUSINESS**

(A) None

#### **IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

(A) **Approval of the minutes from the March 7, 2024 Planning Commission meeting.**

Commissioner Mike McVey made the **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Johnny Golden. The **MOTION** was unanimous with remaining Commissioners voting yea.

#### **V. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

##### **General Development Plan**

(A) **Lexwig, LLC and Lanier Engineering (GD24-001)** has submitted a General Development Plan for the proposed development of Sawtooth Farms subdivision. The proposed development consists of five proposed phases, a community center, and a greenspace and storm water management area for each of the five phases. This property is currently undeveloped. The subject property is zoned R-1 and consists of all that certain tract or parcel of land lying in and being part of Land Lots 209 and 210 of the Second Land District, Lee County, Georgia. Said tract or parcel consists of 256.583 acres. The parcel number is 039D 120, off Lovers Lane Road, Leesburg, GA. 31763.



## **Public Hearing Discussion**

### **Staff Presentation**

Interim Planning Director Joey Davenport briefed the commissioners about the General Development Plan. He explained that this GDP has previously come before the planning commission, however, it was determined at that time that this project must first undergo a Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) review as required by the Regional Development Commission (RDC). The DRI process has now been completed and has received approval from the RDC. Mr. Davenport also pointed out a recommendation (found in the two separate traffic study reports provided by the applicant's engineer), that the intersection at Lovers Lane and Forrester Parkway, which is currently a north south stop condition, be converted to an all stop condition. There is also a recommendation for Lee County to consider a roundabout at that location at some point in the future.

He further explained that there were two GDP plans in the agenda packet for this development (Sawtooth Farms), one of which was included in the DRI submittal to the RDC and that the general development plan before the Planning Commission tonight did not include one of the entry access roads along Lovers Lane road that was shown originally.

Staff needed clarity from the RDC on this proposed change, who then needed direction from the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), in regards to what the appropriate action would be referencing this proposed change. Ultimately, DCA confirmed that the RDC should make that determination and RDC staff deemed these revisions were not substantial enough to require resubmittal.

Interim Planning Director Joey Davenport informed the Commission that Bobby Donley with Lanier Engineering was here tonight to help give the board insight and answer any specific questions or concerns that they may have.

Public hearing was opened by Vice-Chairman Jim Quinn at 6:03 P.M.

### **Applicant Presentation**

Mr. Bobby Donley with Lanier Engineering relayed to the Planning Commissioners that one of the biggest differences from the original plan and the revised plan submitted was that the first submitted GDP had two roadway connections to Lovers Lane Road. When looking at it from a cost perspective, there would only be lots on one side of the road. Other than that, there is no other significant difference. He then proceeded to address any questions or comments from the commissioners.

### **Commission Discussion**

Commissioner Johnny Golden asked Interim Planning Director Joey Davenport why the traffic study is approved from the RDC and is it relevant to the discussion. Mr. Davenport explained that the traffic study is an integral part of the DRI study and the DRI study is what is reviewed and approved by the RDC. Georgia Planning law requires that certain projects go through this process of regional impact as significant developments can have effects in other adjacent jurisdictions. Mr. Golden then asked why the traffic study was sent to other parties with no comments received. He wanted more information on who decided the effected parties and the requirement of the DRI process. Mr. Davenport explained the RDC decides who to send these to and that typically it is any



surrounding county that touches Lee County. Bobby Donley stated that at one-time Lee County was lumped into the Albany Metro area, however, several years ago that and the threshold was changed by DCA for these DRI requirements. Now it is strictly based county by county and by population.

The DRI study threshold for a rural county residential subdivision is either 125 lots or 150 lots, whereas a metro county is over 400 lots. This particular development is 188 total lots and required the DRI study. Chairman Golden added that it baffled him that a negative comment from another county could keep Lee County from doing something. Mr. Donley responded that the purpose of the RDC is to consult and provide information to help the Planning Commission make an informed decision and Lee County is the deciding factor.

Vice-Chairman Jim Quinn asked Mr. Donley about the size of the lots and wanted confirmation that all the lots would be  $\frac{3}{4}$  acres. Mr. Donley stated that they are all indeed a minimum  $\frac{3}{4}$  acres. Mr. Quinn proceeded to inquire which phase of development the stop signs on Lovers Lane would be placed. Mr. Donley explained the traffic study suggests Lover's Lane North South, has more traffic than Forrester. The traffic study makes recommendations but Lee County would make those decisions. Commissioner Kyle Luckie stated that it looked like during the first phase the majority of lots would connect to Lovers lane road, and it would not be until Phase 3 that traffic would enter out onto Forrester Parkway. Mr. Donley responded that he was correct and went on to say that (Vice-Chairman of the Board of Commissioners), Chris Guarnieri, who was previously on the Planning Commission, requested a traffic study to be completed for confirmation that a traffic signal was not warranted. This is based on the number of left turns and the traffic engineer stated in the report that there is no warrant for a traffic signal. Commissioner Golden questioned the septic systems and asked if each lot would have the capacity to hold a septic tank. Mr. Donley confirmed. Mr. Golden went on to ask if the storm water management would be the ownership of the developer. Mr. Donley confirmed it would be deeded over to the Home Owner's Association to maintain.

Interim Director Joey Davenport asked if Mr. Donley would like to provide some clarity about the intersection of the Lovers Lane and Forrester Parkway as far as responsibility for making any changes to the intersection, to make sure that the Planning Commission is clear that any changes or decisions to make those changes will be on the county. Mr. Davenport explained that this is just basic approval of an overall concept. Each phase will still have to go through the entire process before they can build anything. If the Board of Commissioner's deems that there is an issue, they will have the opportunity to discuss that with the developer.

The intersection of Forrester and Lover's lane (while the size of this development does potentially have an impact on the intersection) is outside of the scope of this project. The General Development Plan is presented to and approved by the Planning Commission only and does not go before the Board of Commissioner's.

Mr. Donley stepped in to explain the grade provided within the traffic study. Currently, the intersection between Lovers Lane and Forrester Parkway it is at a level of service C and with full growth would be a level of service E. It is not a grade on safety but more about inconvenience giving the example of how long traffic would have to wait to go through the intersection. Commissioner Kyle Luckie asked about the visibility to the road from the proposed community



center and the access being between multiple lots. Mr. Donley responded that the developer wanted to do something unique for the area by adding a community/amenity there and didn't want it lumped into the greenspace. Interim Director Joey Davenport explained the planning consultant did note that this community center location, (being behind these specific lots), could potentially cause some issues any time there was a community function and adding that those lots adjacent to it would be subject to those functions due simply to the proximity of the location. There was also a note that there needed to be more access to the center's development and not just those surrounding the area. Mr. Donley responded that currently there is a 30 ft. access, but at this point he was not sure that there was any specific plan for the center. Mr. Davenport reminded the Planning Commission that the center would be a conditional use and that would have to go before the Planning Commission, then before the Board of Commission for final approval. Commissioner Kyle Luckie asked Mr. Donley if they will make any changes to the community center after receiving the comments. Mr. Donley replied it would be taken to the development team to reconfigure. Mr. Davenport added that the idea behind the consultant's comment was to recommend the community center be more accessible to the overall development. If taking the road out with no plans to develop there, perhaps that would be a more appropriate location. Mr. Donley added again that the overall idea was just to reserve some area that was outside of the greenspace in case the developer wanted to have a community center. He also added some feedback in regards to the consultant's comment that the developer needed to be responsible for the turn lanes and new drive ways required in the traffic study. He agreed with the comment stating it would be part of the roadway construction and the responsibility of the developer.

Commissioner Shirley Stiles referred to the subdivision application and asked if the required documents listed have been submitted. Mr. Donley explained those documents are submitted at the final subdivision application phase.

#### Public Opposition

With no further comments or questions from the audience, the Public Hearing was closed at 6:39 p.m.

#### Recommendation

Commissioner Kyle Luckie made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the General Development Plan submitted by Lexwig, LLC and Lanier Engineering GD24-001 with the comments, seconded by Commissioner Charlie Barner. The **MOTION** was unanimous with remaining Commissioners voting yea.

### VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(A) **Jeffry Peters (Z24-002)** Mr. Peters has formally submitted a withdrawal for the conditional use case presented at the March 7, 2024, Planning Commission meeting.

#### Recommendation

Commissioner Kyle Luckie made a **MOTION** to **CLOSE** the case Z24-002 and accept the formal submitted withdrawal, seconded by Commissioner Charlie Barner. The **MOTION** was unanimous with remaining Commissioners voting yea.

### VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None



## VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Shirley Stiles made a motion to **ADJOURN**, seconded by Commissioner Charlie Barner. The **MOTION** was unanimous remaining Commissioners voting yea. The meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

Meetings of the Planning Commission and the Board of Commissioners are open to the public.

Georgia law requires that all parties who have made campaign contributions to any member of the Board of Commissioners in excess of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) within two (2) years immediately preceding the filing of this request, and who desire to appear at the public hearing in opposition to the application, shall, at least five (5) days prior to the public hearing, file a campaign contribution report with the Lee County Planning Commission.

Persons with special needs relating to handicapped accessibility or foreign language interpretation should contact the ADA Coordinator at (229) 759-6000 or through the Georgia Relay Service (800) 255-0056 (TDD) or (800) 355-0135 (voice). This person can be contacted at the T. Page Tharp Building in Leesburg, Georgia between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays, and will assist citizens with special needs given proper notice of seven (7) working days. The meeting rooms and buildings are handicap accessible.