

MINUTES

Valdosta-Lowndes Zoning Board of Appeals

Valdosta City Hall Annex Multi-Purpose Room

300 North Lee Street, Valdosta, Georgia

April 4, 2017

2:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Paul Alvarado arrived at
2:37 PM
Nancy Hobby
John Hogan, III
Dr. Willie Houseal

John "Mac" McCall
Gretchen Quarterman
Allan Strickland

MEMBERS ABSENT

Nathan Brantley

STAFF PRESENT

Ted Bilak
Carmella Braswell
Tracy Tolley

VISITORS PRESENT

Kenneth Berrian
Cary Brown

Brad Folsom
Gary Moser
Marjorie Price

Wendell M Price
Sandra Washington

Agenda Item # 1: CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Strickland at 2:30 p.m. and it was determined that a quorum of members was present. Chairman Strickland thanked everyone for coming and reviewed the meeting procedures with those in attendance today.

LOWNDES COUNTY CASES

Agenda Item # 2: VAR-2017-04 --- GDB Capital Group, LLC Don Brotherton (6776 Clyattstone Road, Hahira)

Mrs. Braswell stated that GDB Capital Group, LLC, is requesting a variance to the lot frontage/lot access requirement. The subject property, located at 6776 Clyattstone Road, consists of 2.697 acres and is zoned R-1. Sections 4.04.03(D) and 6.01.02(D) provide that lots shall have frontage and access to public streets. Staff determined after reviewing a new survey of the property that the surveyed property did not meet the current minimum standards for frontage/access. Therefore, a variance is being requested to the lot frontage/lot access requirement. The property is accessed through a twenty foot ingress/egress easement and dirt path that has been used for many years. To staff's knowledge, no records/documents have reflected any previous variances to the County's lot frontage/access requirements. Additionally, there is no record of staff's review of the original recorded survey plat depicting the subject property. Ultimately, the TRC recommended approval with no conditions. The following factors were considered—the variance request is not a result of action by the applicant, the variance does not appear that it will cause substantial detriment to the public good, and the subject property does have a recorded ingress/egress easement for access purposes.

Mrs. Quarterman asked if the easement relieved the requirement for public street frontage. Mrs. Braswell stated it did not.

There being no further questions from the Board, Chairman Strickland asked if anyone would like to speak on behalf of the application. Mr. Gary Moser, 1706 N. Patterson Street, spoke on behalf of the application. This property was split up into this configuration in approximately 1978. The property fell into despair, and Mr. Moser's client bought it at a tax sale to try to revive it. Chairman Strickland asked what the intent of the property was to be. Mr. Moser stated his client intended it to be a residential property. Chairman Strickland asked if it would be maintained so that emergency vehicles could access it. Mr. Moser stated that if the Board required it, they would do so.

Chairman Strickland asked if there was anyone else in support of the application. No one spoke. Chairman Strickland asked if there was anyone to speak in opposition to the application or if anyone had questions. Mr. Kenneth Berrian, 6711 Clyattstone Road, asked if the variance was for one residential unit or for two. Chairman Strickland stated that the request in front of them was for one lot, and that if they wanted any additional parcels/houses, they would need additional variances. Mr. Moser stated it was not the intent of his client to

subdivide. Chairman Strickland asked if there had been any contact to Mrs. Braswell's office. Mrs. Braswell stated she did get a couple of calls and their concerns were a potential subdivision.

There being no further questions, Chairman Strickland opened the floor for a motion. Dr. Houseal made a motion to approve the request as presented, citing criteria "D" and "H" with the requirement that emergency vehicles be able to utilize the access. Mr. McCall seconded the motion and it was called and carried unanimously (6-0 vote).

Agenda Item # 3: APP-2017-01 --- Valdosta Country Club (3500 Country Club Rd, Valdosta)

Chairman Strickland stated that Mrs. Hobby would abstain from discussion and voting on this item due to a conflict of interest. Mrs. Hobby left the Board table and sat in the back of the audience.

Ms. Tolley stated that that Valdosta Country Club, 3500 Country Club Road, is proposing to build a 65.3 ft by 127 ft metal building for golf cart storage. The subject property consists of 338 acres and is zoned mostly R-15 with a small portion of C-C. Section 214-7 of the LDR requires that metal buildings, in every zoning district other than M-1 and M-2, be clad with something (such as brick, stone, stucco, or wood) other than metal siding on the elevation facing the front yard and ten feet back on either side to avoid the appearance of industrial looking buildings in non-industrial zoning. The applicant is requesting a variance to leave the metal siding exposed on all sides of the building. Plans have been submitted, which show split face masonry units being utilized to cover the appropriate elevations so that construction can start while the variance is being reviewed. If the variance request is approved, the applicant is proposing to keep the existing landscaping (and add some additional plantings) along Country Club Road and utilize green-colored metal siding to help further buffer the appearance of the building. Staff reviewed the request, and did not find hardship beyond design's control to recommend approval, and therefore recommends denial of the variance. However, if the Board recommends approval of the variance, staff recommends approval with three conditions—that the variance be approved for only this building as shown on the submitted site plan, that the existing dense vegetative buffer along Country Club Road shall be maintained, and that the proposed sheet metal siding of the building shall be dark green colored.

Mr. McCall asked if plans had been approved with the building being clad with split-face masonry units. Ms. Tolley stated that was true, that the front of the building and ten back on each side would be covered with split-face masonry units, but the rest of the building would be metal. Mrs. Quarterman asked if the building was built in the C-C portion, would these particular regulations apply? Ms. Tolley stated yes, they would. Mr. McCall stated that the metal side of the building would still be visible from the entrance. Ms. Tolley stated that the regulations mandated the front and 10 feet back on each side be covered. Mrs. Quarterman stated that if the property had been a property that wasn't so big, like on St. Augustine, the metal sides wouldn't be as visible. Mr. Alvarado stated this was the back of the building, as golf carts would be pulled in the front of the building, which faced the interior of the club property. Mr. Alvarado asked why the club didn't brick the entire building. Ms. Tolley stated that was a question best posed to club representatives. Dr. Houseal asked if there was a meeting of the minds regarding the proposed conditions. Ms. Tolley stated that she had emailed the staff report to the contact persons, and that Mr. Matt Martin, Planning & Zoning Administrator, had talked to the contact persons, but she was unaware of whether the representatives were in accordance with the conditions. Mr. McCall asked if the whole building was wrapped. Ms. Tolley stated it was not, just the front and ten feet back on each sides as required. Mr. Alvarado asked how tall the building was. Ms. Tolley stated she was not sure.

There being no further questions for staff, Chairman Strickland asked if there was anyone who would like to speak on behalf of the application. Mr. Brad Folsom, 2611 N Patterson, President of the Valdosta Country Club, spoke on behalf of the application. Mr. Folsom stated that metal buildings were allowed, but the front elevations and a portion of each adjacent side were required to be clad with another material in non-industrial districts. Mr. Folsom stated that there were previously trash dumpsters where this building is going, and a strip of dense vegetation along the road, between the site and the road. Mr. Folsom stated that, by right, they could have placed bright pink vinyl siding on the building and left the trash dumpsters on site, but they are trying to make the site better. They have spoken to most of the residents along Country Club, and most of those residents are in support of the project. Mr. Folsom stated they intended to use trees like Leland cypress to further landscape the property. Mr. Folsom stated that he understood that on the original application, it stated that the building would be green metal, but that for no additional cost, they could order a darker gray that matched the current buildings' color, so that is what they ordered. Mr. Folsom stated he would appreciate if that was not a condition of approval, but they did intend to buffer the building with landscaping. If they were required to façade with another material, it could be another five to eight thousand in expenses for no purpose.

Mr. Alvarado asked how tall the building is. Mr. Folsom stated it was ten feet in height. Mr. Alvarado asked what the pitch is. Mr. Folsom said it was a small pitch, about 1 to 12. Mr. Alvarado asked what the square footage of the building is. Chairman Strickland stated about 8300 square feet. Chairman Strickland stated that when the variance request was first submitted, the building was proposed to be green. Mr. Folsom stated yes, but the LDR had no color requirements. Mr. McCall asked where the detention pond was. Mr. Folsom stated it was just to the north of the cart building. Chairman Strickland asked if they had a color chip to show the Board what color the building would be. Mr. Folsom stated they did not, but it would be the same basic color as the main building. Mrs. Quarterman asked if they could put vinyl siding on the building. Ms. Tolley stated they could. Mrs. Quarterman stated that they were lucky not to have two front yards, because some parcels in town had two front yards. Mrs. Quarterman stated, when she was young, she read a book about building a fort, and they built a green fort to blend in with the landscaping, but once the leaves fell off and the gray trunks were left, the fort was more visible, like a green building would be once the leaves fell off of deciduous landscaping. Mr. McCall stated you wouldn't see the end (front) of the building as much as you would the side facing the entrance. Mrs. Quarterman stated, being a master gardener, she would much rather them use a native plant in landscaping the yard. Chairman Strickland asked if they would have a problem with a requirement of an evergreen landscaping around the western side of the building? Mr. Alvarado asked if there was some sort of bamboo along the front of the building? Mr. Folsom stated there was. Mr. Alvarado stated that on Amelia Island, everything was green so everything blended in. Mr. Alvarado asked how difficult it would be for the building to be green. Mr. Folsom stated the building had already been ordered and it was gray, and they were trying to get the most out of their membership's dollars. Mr. Folsom stated that if they were required to spend five to seven thousand dollars in landscaping, or install a fence, they might as well spend the money to cover the building as required. Mr. Alvarado asked what kind of roof the building has. Mr. Folsom stated it has a dark gray metal roof. Mr. Alvarado asked why they ordered a gray building. Mr. Folsom stated that the LDR did not require a particular color, and that no matter how you buffer it, you will see a building. Mr. Hogan asked if it would be a hardship to meet the requirements. Mr. Folsom stated they would save a few thousand dollars that they could use elsewhere.

There being no further discussion with Mr. Folsom, Chairman Strickland asked if there was anyone else who would like to speak in support. No one spoke. Chairman Strickland asked if there was anyone who would like to speak in opposition to the request. No one spoke. Chairman Strickland asked Ms. Tolley if anyone had contacted her office. Ms. Tolley stated that a neighbor had, but due to medical difficulties, could not come to the meeting. The neighbor stated that she did not want a metal building placed there because she did not want to look at an industrial building across the street from her house.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Strickland opened the floor for a motion. Mrs. Quarterman made a motion to approve the variance as presented with three conditions: Approval is for this building only, the existing vegetative buffer along Country Club Road is to be maintained, and additional buffering of a native evergreen species, such as wax myrtle or native holly, is to be added in a density as required by new commercial development being constructed adjacent to an existing residential development. Dr. Houseal seconded the motion. The motion was called and carried with a vote of 3-2-1, with Mr. Hogan and Mr. Alvarado voting against the motion. Mrs. Quarterman asked what the number of plantings was to meet the buffer requirements. Ms. Tolley stated she was not familiar with the specific numbers. Mrs. Quarterman stated she wanted a solid buffering of plantings.

OTHER BUSINESS

Agenda Item # 4: Approval of Minutes: March 7, 2017

Mrs. Hobby resumed her seat at the table.

Chairman Strickland asked if there were any concerns with the draft minutes. There being none, he called for a motion. Dr. Houseal made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mrs. Hobby seconded the motion and it was called and carried unanimously (6-0 vote).

Agenda Item # 5: Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

/s/ Allan Strickland, IV
Allan Strickland, IV, Chairman

May 2, 2017
Date