

MINUTES
JAMES CITY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
BUILDING A
101 MOUNTS BAY ROAD, WILLIAMSBURG, VA 23185
December 13, 2023
4:00 PM

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Rodgers called the meeting to order at approximately 4 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Present:

Steve Rodgers, Chair
Barbara Null
Rob Rose
Frank Polster

Staff:

Susan Istenes, Director of Planning
Josh Crump, Principal Planner
Thomas Wysong, Principal Planner
Suzanne Yeats, Planner

C. MINUTES

1. Minutes of the July 19, 2023, Meeting

Mr. Polster made a motion to Approve the minutes of the July 19, 2023, meeting.

On a voice vote, the Development Review Committee (DRC) voted to approve the Minutes of the July 19, 2023, meeting (4-0).

D. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business for discussion.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. C-23-0038. 8425 Croaker Rd - Shared Driveway Exception Request

Ms. Suzanne Yeats, Planner, addressed the Committee with the details of the application. She noted the applicant was also available for any questions. Ms. Yeats stated that staff reviewed the application in relation to the County's Subdivision Ordinance and found this subdivision failed to meet all the required criteria. Ms. Yeats stated the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) recommended against the proposed shared driveway. She noted additional entrances onto Croaker Road would be created if this application were approved. Ms. Yeats stated one telephone inquiry had been received from an adjacent property owner regarding the dimensions

of the proposed egress/ingress in relation to her property line.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Polster asked if the two parcels were part of the minor subdivision.

Ms. Yeats responded no.

Mr. Polster asked if an entrance already existed there.

Ms. Yeats confirmed yes. She noted staff's recommendation was that the DRC recommend denial of the application to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Polster noted he had a question for the applicant. He asked why the applicant had not responded to VDOT's four items on the letter it sent regarding the proposed driveway. Mr. Polster stated the four items listed in the letter.

Mr. Chase Grogg, LandTech Resources, Inc., noted he was not the applicant, but stated one point addressed signage, adding the other points appeared, in his opinion, to be post-construction items. He added that if the application was approved then he thought those items would be constructed per the documented standards. Mr. Grogg addressed various points the Committee members asked regarding the property and possible driveway access.

Mr. Polster noted the importance of VDOT criteria when he reviewed applications. He referenced a recent case where VDOT and the landowners met and reconciled differing points. Mr. Polster addressed the point that VDOT was not in concurrence with the driveway proposal at this time.

Ms. Yeats confirmed that was correct.

Mr. Polster noted that minor subdivisions were not subject to stormwater criteria. He stated his concerns regarding impervious cover and the proposed driveway bordering Croaker Road. Mr. Polster noted the culvert and problems for VDOT with increased rainwater at that location. He also addressed a concern for the driveway as it would have a sharp right turn which could pose difficult for Fire or Emergency vehicles to navigate it. Mr. Polster added that the Fire Department had stated they would not have an issue with the driveway, but he expressed concerns about accessibility. He asked staff about the shared driveway and the two back parcels.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Polster stated he wanted to differentiate between the existing gravel road shown and the entrance to the right. He noted the map did not show the right-side entrance extending all the way to the back of the property to access Lot Nos. 2-4. Mr. Polster stated those lots were only accessible by the gravel road and questioned the driveway location for those particular lots.

Ms. Yeats provided details on the accessibility.

Discussion ensued on setbacks and other points.

Mr. Polster noted the forestal area fronting the property and the rural look. He stated the southern view down Croaker Road was open field as well as the eastern side of the intersection. Mr. Polster stated he was in favor of saving the trees.

Ms. Null agreed with saving the trees. She noted six lots shared one driveway onto Croaker Road and two lots used Ware Creek Road.

Mr. Polster confirmed yes.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Rodgers asked about the location of the six lots and driveways. He noted the traffic issues on Jamestown Road with the number of driveways there. Mr. Rodgers stated the idea of a shared driveway was appealing and more attractive in his opinion.

Mr. Grogg addressed Mr. Rodgers' question.

Discussion ensued on the 90-degree right turn that Mr. Polster had referenced earlier.

Mr. Rose referenced the turn, adding VDOT had not addressed concerns regarding if safety issues existed with a driveway at that location. He noted VDOT might come back later with safety concerns.

Mr. Polster stated that was why he asked that question earlier.

Ms. Yeats asked if the DRC recommended a deferral on this application until VDOT responded.

Mr. Polster noted there was a consensus to have a straw vote on the deferral.

Mr. Thomas Wysong, Principal Planner, asked Mr. Grogg if he had spoken with VDOT about the land use permit aspect. He noted if a driveway was to be installed on a state roadway then VDOT would have to confirm access management criteria were met and adequate spacing was available. Mr. Wysong stated Mr. Grogg dealt with VDOT regarding the permit aspect.

Mr. Grogg noted a month's deferral would possibly allow time for VDOT to respond to any questions.

Mr. Polster referenced Mr. Wysong's question and asked Mr. Grogg if he was confident of VDOT's concurrence at permit time.

Mr. Grogg responded yes, adding he was confident everything would pass.

Mr. Polster noted a condition could be incorporated that approval was contingent on the safety issue. He stated he was amenable to that action.

The Committee members concurred.

Mr. Rodgers stated the varied speed limits on different sections of John Tyler Highway. He noted he had been told the speed limits were established based on the number of driveways in the different sections.

Mr. Polster referenced sections of Croaker Road and traffic impacts as the road narrowed near Sycamore Landing. He added the traffic issues in the morning and evening with school buses and numerous mailboxes there.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Polster noted the condition would be incorporated for review at the Master Plan stage.

A motion was made by Frank Polster that the DRC recommend approval of the exception request with the condition to the Planning Commission.

The motion passed by a vote of 4-0.

Discussion ensued on permit exceptions, applications, and other points.

Mr. Polster extended well wishes to Ms. Null and Mr. Rose.

Mr. Crump confirmed both Committee members would still be available in January, but the two vacancies would need to be addressed for February.

Mr. Rose addressed nonvehicular mobility in the County and VDOT. He questioned the 55-mph speed limit on Rochambeau Drive in front of Bruton High School. Mr. Rose noted that area also had bike lanes, adding the speed limit created a dangerous situation.

Discussion ensued.

Ms. Null noted the County could petition VDOT to lower the speed limits as that had been done previously on Route 30 at Stonehouse.

Mr. Rodgers asked about the crosswalk designs at New Town.

General discussion on traffic and speed limits in the County ensued.

F. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Rodgers made a motion to Adjourn.

On a voice vote, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:35 p.m.

Steve Rodgers, Chair

Susan Istenes, Secretary