

MINUTES

Valdosta-Lowndes Zoning Board of Appeals
Valdosta City Hall Annex Multi-Purpose Room
300 North Lee Street, Valdosta, Georgia

June 2, 2015

2:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Paul Alvarado
Nancy Hobby
John Hogan III
Dr. Willie Houseal

John "Mac" McCall
Gretchen Quarterman
Allan Strickland

MEMBERS ABSENT

Satrina Plyler

STAFF PRESENT

Ted Bilak
Carmella Braswell
Tracy Tolley

VISITORS PRESENT

Mike Bland
Sunnie Bland

Bart Holt
Sandra Tooley

Agenda Item # 1: CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Strickland at 2:30pm 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-2015-09-- Richard Hill & Associates on behalf of Sunnie Bland DBA Gloryhill Cowboy Church (3029 Pecan Plantation Road, Valdosta)

Chairman Strickland announced the case.

Mrs. Braswell stated that Gloryhill Cowboy Church is proposing an addition to their existing church facility and an open air pavilion. The subject property consists of 5.45 acres and is located on the NE corner of US Highway 84 W and Pecan Plantation Road in a R-21 zoning district. Table 4.01.02(E) of the ULDC requires that the minimum side yard setback requirement be 87 feet from the centerline of Pecan Plantation Road, and 72 feet from the right of way (ROW)/property line. The applicant is proposing a 30 feet setback from the property line, therefore requesting a 42 foot variance to the minimum side yard setback along Pecan Plantation Road. Both the proposed addition and pavilion encroach into the side yard setback. This being a secondary front yard setback requires a larger setback than an ordinary side yard setback does, due to the potential future ROW improvements and providing for visibility from the intersection. The subject property is in a semi-rural residential setting and is located within one of the County's Corridor Overlay districts. One of the purposes of the overlay is to create design standards for compatible development due to its location in a gateway into the community. According to the applicant, the church is growing and is in need of the additional space for classrooms and restroom facilities. The ideal scope of a cowboy church is to create a vast amount of open space because the activities and events are built around livestock. Staff reviewed the request and was concerned with the buildings' proximity to the new ROW—only 15 feet. Other concerns were raised regarding the amount of property that is available for the proposed additions and the hardships of not being able to relocate the buildings. As such, staff ultimately understood the uniqueness of a cowboy church and recommended approval of a lesser variance than requested. The TRC feels that a variance should be specific to this development on five acres of land. Following ZBOA's previous variance approval (VAR-2010-14) the TRC unanimously recommends approval of a variance of 26 feet from the existing ROW line (resulting in a building setback of 46 feet) OR a building setback of 30 feet from the

new ROW line, with 1 condition—that the approval is specific only to this development as presented on the site plan. However, Mrs. Braswell stated that the applicant has amended his request to a 30 ft setback, which staff recommends approval of.

There being no questions, Chairman Strickland asked if anyone would like to speak in support of the application. There being no one, Chairman Strickland asked if anyone would like to speak in opposition of the request. There being no one, Chairman Strickland asked if anyone had contacted the office. Mrs. Braswell stated that no one had contacted the office.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Strickland called for a motion. Mr. Alvarado made a motion to approve the request as presented by staff, citing criteria “d.” Mr. McCall seconded the motion and it was called and carried unanimously (6-0 vote).

Agenda Item # 3: VAR-2015-10 --- Bart Holt, Fairway Outdoor on behalf of Massimo Pistelli (4143 North Valdosta Road, Valdosta)

Chairman Strickland announced the case.

Mrs. Braswell stated that Fairway Outdoor Advertising is proposing to modify an existing off-premise sign located at Mom and Dad’s restaurant located at 4143 North Valdosta Road, in a C-H zoning district. The applicant is proposing to modify the existing nonconforming sign (permitted prior to the ULDC’s adoption) from a 24-foot by 30-foot sign at about 70 feet in height, to 10.5 feet by 36 feet digital face at 55 feet overall height. The applicant intends to take the sign from two stacked static faces to one digital face Section 5.04.09(D) in the ULDC states that “no structural repairs or changes in the size of shape of a sign shall be permitted except to make the sign comply with the requirement of this ULDC.” The nonconformity exists in the sign’s size and overall height. Because of the sign’s current nonconforming status, the applicant is unable to make the proposed modifications without the approval of a variance. Staff reviewed the variance request, and found it to be an improvement in the fact that it decreases the nonconformity, and the TRC concluded that the reuse of the existing sign was not out of character with the current existing uses nor would the modifications negatively affect adjacent properties. The TRC recommends approval of the request as presented.

Mrs. Quarterman asked if both sides were proposed to be digital. Mrs. Braswell stated that yes, both sides were to be digital. Mrs. Quarterman stated that there were 3 signs on the property. Chairman Strickland stated that the signs were legal nonconforming and are grandfathered in, since they were permitted prior to the ULDC’s adoption and that the property was eligible for two freestanding signs due to two road frontages. Mrs. Quarterman asked if the property could have a billboard. Mrs. Braswell stated that it could, if they met the distance requirements. Mrs. Quarterman asked if the digital faces would be dimmed at night. Mrs. Braswell stated that the applicant was here, and could better answer that question.

Chairman Strickland asked if anyone would like to speak in support of the application. Mr. Bart Holt, 369 Enterprise Drive, spoke in support of the application. Mr. Holt stated that the faces would be dimmed at night. Mrs. Quarterman asked if the sign had a spotlight on it. Mr. Holt stated there were lights on the sign. Dr. Houseal asked if the sign would advertise businesses other than Mom and Dad’s. Mr. Holt stated it would. Mr. Alvarado asked if the County had a limit of 8 digital faces. Mrs. Braswell stated that was a City requirement rather than a County requirement. Mrs. Quarterman asked how far it was from the next closest billboard. Mr. Holt stated it was about 400 feet away from the closest billboard.

There being no one else to speak in favor of the application, Chairman Strickland asked if anyone would like to speak in opposition of the application. No one spoke. Chairman Strickland asked if there was any contact to Mrs. Braswell’s office. Mrs. Braswell stated that there was one call, to inquire about the request.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Strickland called for a motion. Mr. Hogan made a motion to approve the variance as requested, citing criteria “d.” Mr. Alvarado seconded the motion and it was called and carried unanimously (6-0 vote).

OTHER BUSINESS

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Agenda Item #4 : Approval of Minutes: May 5, 2015

Chairman Strickland asked if anyone had any issues/corrections with the May 5, 2015 draft minutes. There were no suggested changes. Mrs. Quarterman made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Dr. Houseal 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 2:54 pm.

/s/ Allan Strickland
Allan Strickland, Chairman

8/04/2015
Date