

MINUTES

Valdosta-Lowndes Zoning Board of Appeals

Valdosta City Hall Annex Multi-Purpose Room

300 North Lee Street, Valdosta, Georgia

September 7, 2021 2:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dr. Samuel Clemons
Nathan Brantley
John "Mac" McCall
Allan Strickland
Marion Ramsey

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Hogan, III
Nancy Hobby
Victoria Copeland

STAFF PRESENT

JD Dillard
Lauren Hurley
Tracy Tolley

VISITORS PRESENT

Charles Wilson
Karen Wilson
Lonnie O'Neal
Carl Sloamb
Jason Wisenbaker

Agenda Item # 1: CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman McCall at 2:38pm. It was determined that a quorum of members was present. Chairman McCall thanked everyone for coming and reviewed the meeting procedures with those in attendance today.

LOWNDES COUNTY CASES:

Agenda Item # 2: VAR-2021-10- Southern Cooking Inc. (2720 Park Avenue Road)

JD Dillard presented the staff report for the request for a variance to ULDC Table 5.04.08 (E)(1) as it pertains to nonconforming signs along interstate highways. The property is zoned R-1 (a residential zoning district), however there are no residences on the property. The applicant is requesting to replace the static billboards with an LED billboard sign. Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has confirmed that this is a conforming billboard to their standards and a multimessage LED face has been approved for use at this location. Because of the residential zoning, it only allows 32 square feet maximum but because this is a legal nonconforming, the applicant is requesting to keep it nonconforming but upgrade to an LED face. The billboard is located across the interstate from Lowndes High School off exit 16.

Dr. Clemons asked how old the sign is. Mr. Dillard replied that the applicant can speak to the age of the sign, but he would estimate that it was erected around 2006 which was when the ULDC was adopted making it a legal nonconforming sign. Nathan Brantley asked if the property was zoned commercial, the sign could be up to 750 square feet. Mr. Dillard stated that that is correct. With no further questions from staff, Chairman McCall asked if the applicant would like to address the board.

Jason Wisenbaker approached the lectern and stated that the reason they are applying for a variance is because the property is zoned R-1. He stated that there is nothing on the property that resembles R-1. It is owned by the cell tower company and have 3 towers and an additional billboard on the property. He

states that it has no business being zoned R-1. The applicant stated that he is unsure when or how the county zoned it R-1. They meet every other guideline as stated by Mr. Dillard and GDOT. He reiterated that the property is a commercial property inaccurately zoned.

Mr. Strickland asked if the plan was to use the existing poles or to reconstruct the billboard. Mr. Wisenbaker stated that they were going to install the LED right on the face of the billboard without replacing the poles. When asked if there was anyone else in support of the case, Lonnie O'Neal spoke. He stated that he is the owner of the billboard and that there is not yet an LED billboard on the interstate. He stated that the reason that he wanted to change to LED is because he has so many customers who cannot afford a long-term contract but could afford 2 to 3 months of advertising. He originally built the structure to be able to hold LED panels and now he is asking permission to do just that. With no one else in support or opposition of the case, Chairman McCall asked Mr. Dillard if their office was contacted concerning the case. Mr. Dillard stated that one call came in only to ask details of the variance.

With no further questions, Mr. Strickland made a motion to approve the request as presented. Dr. Clemons seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous (5-0 vote).

Agenda Item # 3: VAR-2021-11- Charles & Karen Wilson (5705 Clyattville Lake Park Road)

Mr. Dillard presented the case for the request for a variance to ULDC Table 4.01.03 (B) as it pertains to design standards for manufactured homes. The section states that a single wide mobile home is not permitted however mobile homes are permitted within other residential zonings. TRC reviewed the request and decided that the placement of a single wide mobile home will not adversely affect the neighborhood. It is within the county requirements of water and can be connected to water. The parcel was originally created in 2004 along with its neighboring lots. The lots are long, flag parcel lots. There are multiple manufactured homes on these lots as well as in the surrounding area. Double wides are permitted in the area but not single wides. The lot was originally zoned R-1 which require standards allowing double wide mobile homes. It was also stated that there is county water available for hook up but currently no sewer hookup.

With no other questions for staff, Chairman McCall asked if the applicants would like to address the board. Mr. Carl Sloamb from Clayton Homes (manufactured home salesperson) stating that the Wilsons selected a home and that he contacted the Lowndes County Planning and Zoning office to ensure that the home could be placed on their lot. He completed the variance application with Mr. Dillard's assistance and is asking for an exception to the regulations for this case. He stated that within 1500 feet of their lot, land is zoned to permit single wides. He also cited the ULDC stating that if adhering to the code should cause hardship, then considerations will be made. He stated that Mr. Wilson is 75 years old and drives a cargo truck. Their household is a single income household. They purchased the home under the pretense that they could place it on the lot without issues. Within .2 miles there is a single wide and multiple single wides can be found within a mile. With their lot being flag shaped, the mobile home will not be visible from the road at all. With no one else in support or opposition, Chairman McCall asked if the Lowndes County Planning and Zoning office had contact regarding the case. Mr. Dillard said no.

Mr. Ramsey asked what the staff recommendation is. Mr. Dillard stated that the TRC said that there would be no adverse effect on the neighborhood if the variance was granted. Dr. Clemons made the motion that the applicant be granted the ability to place a single wide mobile home on the property. Mr. Ramsey seconded the motion. It was unanimous (5-0 vote).

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Agenda Item # 4: Review of Minutes

Chairman McCall asked if any edits were needed for the draft minutes. No changes or corrections were noted. Mr. Strickland made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Brantley seconded the motion. The vote was called and carried with a vote of 5-0.

Agenda Item # 5: Attendance Review

Chairman McCall noted that Mr. Hogan was not in attendance today due to sickness. Mrs. Hobby was not in attendance due to an emergency. Mrs. Copeland was not in attendance due to a business meeting. All three of those are excused.

Agenda Item # 6: Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:55 PM.

/s/ John "Mac" McCall
John "Mac" McCall, Chairman

October 5, 2021
Date