

**MONROE PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES—August 15, 2023**

- Present:** Shauna Mathias, Randy Camp, Rosalind Parks,
- Absent:** Mike Eckles, Nate Treadaway
- Staff:** Brad Callender—City Planner
Laura Wilson—Code Assistant
- Visitors:** Timothy Kemp, Connie Bentley, Harvey Lawson, Akil Lawson, Gertha Lawson, John Raines, Teresa Raines, Laura Campbell, Amy Pieroni, Chad Locklear, No Tutus-Witler, Patrick Witler, Ray Bostwick, Janice Baldwin

Call to Order by Chairman Eckles at 5:30 pm.

Motion to Approve the Agenda

Motion Parks. Second Mathias.
Motion carried

Chairman Camp asked for any changes, corrections or additions to the July 18, 2023 minutes.
Motion to approve

Motion Mathias. Second Parks
Motion carried

Chairman Eckles asked for the Code Officer’s Report: None

Old Business: None

The First Item of Business is Certificate of Appropriateness Case #2557, a request to modify the existing site at 703 W. Spring St. to allow for additional accessory uses and features. The applicant proposes to reduce parking to accommodate a shaded outdoor platform for outdoor sales, a propane tank, pallet rack storage, pine straw storage, and an enclosed storage area. The existing parking will be reduced from 69 to 45 spaces to accommodate the additional accessory and outdoor features. The metal storage container under the former drive thru will be screened as described in the application. Staff recommends approval as submitted. John Raines spoke in favor of the project.

Chairman Camp: Anyone else here to speak in opposition? None

Motion to approved

Motion Mathias. Second Parks.
Motion Carried

The Second Item of Business is Conditional Use Permit #2558; a request to convert an existing single-family residence into a Family Personal Care Home at 313 Ash St. Per the Zoning Ordinance, a Family Personal Care Home is conducted in a residential setting and provides care for two through six persons. 313 Ash St. is currently zoned R-1A. The property shares a driveway with 311 Ash St. Due to the shared driveway, there is a maximum potential for only two cars to be parked at each property. Lack of available parking in the driveway could potentially negatively impact neighborhood traffic and adjacent properties through overflow parking occurring on Ash St. Staff recommends denial of the request. The applicant and property owner Nikeisha Titus Witter and Patrick Witter spoke in favor of the request.

N. Witter indicated they will add a second driveway on the other side of the house in alleviate any concerns with inadequate parking.

Callendar: By the City's Code of Ordinances, parking is not permitted in front of a residence. Also, this house touches the property line on the right side so it would be impossible to construct a driveway on this side of the house. It might be best to withdraw the application until you can reach an agreement with the property owner at 311 Ash St. If City Council denies the application, it will be a year before you can apply again.

The applicant withdrew the application.

The Third Item of Business is Rezone request #2559 for Madison Ridge Subdivision located at 635 James Huff Rd. The request is to change from R-1A (Medium Lot Residential) to PRD (Planned Residential District). The property was annexed into the City in 2006 and zoned R-1A at that time. The basis of the request is to comply with Section 820 of the Zoning Ordinance requiring all new single-family residential development be rezoned to a planned district. The applicant proposes to develop the site with 129 lots and an amenity area. A second entrance has been added off of Old Athens Hwy to comply with current regulations. The applicant proposes to meet the minimum requirements for housing as regulated in Section 910 of the Zoning Ordinance. Staff recommends approval with conditions. Taylor Anderson spoke on behalf of the applicants; they are in agreement with staff's recommendation and accept the conditions listed in the staff report.

Commissioner Mathias: What are the prices of the homes?

Anderson: In the 4s (\$400,000s)

Commissioner Parks: Square footage of each? Of the smallest house?

Anderson: It would be in compliance with the PRD standards under R-1A so 1500 sq ft

Chairman Camp: Anyone else here to speak in opposition? Yes—please come forward

1. Janice Baldwin—585 James Huff Rd

a. Our biggest concern is what are they going to do with the creek that runs along the back and about the southern border—would like to see a buffer

i. Callendar: The applicant is proposing to mitigate the bond and floodplain along the southern border

- b. We would like to see a buffer as well; the pond is a spring fed pond. It's not just a wet weather pond. It's always filled with water.
 - i. Callender: If that is the case, then a bunch of environmental restrictions will kick in and the development may lose 7 or 8 lots in that area of the development; development is not permitted in the city around a spring; we will research that further;
 - ii. Response from developer, William Coleman—the property has been through an environmental test and wetlands test; there are no wetlands in the property along the southern border
 - iii. Callender: You do have a wetlands permit to remove that pond
 - iv. Coleman: Yes we do, because it was dry
- 2. Connie Bentley—1358 Old Athens Highway
 - a. The original rezone was a mix of ranch and two story with a minimum size of 1800 and 2000 square feet. Each house would have a two-car garage and the development density was 2.65. The current proposal has a minimum house size of 1500 sq ft, a density of 4, and no mention of garages.
 - b. The current proposal also does not meet City Ordinances (no traffic study); lots of traffic already on James Huff Rd
 - c. Fire & Police response times will be longer
- 3. Amy Pieroni—1400 Old Athens Highway
 - a. A large tree (8 feet in diameter or larger) on property—please preserve the tree
- 4. Tim Kemp—946 James Huff Rd
 - a. As cited in Cemeteries of Walton County, potential unmarked cemetery on property with potential slave graves
 - b. Restated terrible traffic; has requested a traffic study from Walton County
 - i. Chairman Camp: Is the cemetery you described on the property or adjacent to it? It's on the property
 - c. Would like to see this tabled

Applicant Response by William Coleman—no cemetery identified on surveys; asking for just as many houses as in 2006; the made changes to the approval process so this is not rezone—just complying with City's policies

Motion to table to verify the spring and cemetery; applicant to provide information to staff prior next Planning Commission meeting

Motion Mathias. Second Parks

Motion carried

The Fourth Item of Business is Preliminary Plat approval request #2560, for The Vines of Monroe Subdivision located at 455 Vine St. Development of the site has started. It needs reapproval because the preliminary plat and land disturbance permit have expired. The project was originally approved in 2021. Staff recommends approval without conditions. The applicant, Chad Locklear spoke in favor of the project.

Chairman Eckles: Anyone else here to speak in opposition? None

Motion to approve

Motion Mathias. Second Parks
Motion carried

Chairman Eckles entertained a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn

Motion Mathias. Second Parks
Meeting adjourned; 6:13pm