

**TOWN OF YOUNGSVILLE  
PLANNING BOARD VIRTUAL MEETING  
Microsoft Teams Teleconference  
October 6, 2020  
6:00 PM**

Chairman Mark Hurt called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

In attendance were Chairman Hurt; Members Scott Anderson, Robert Martin, and Keith Tew; Planning and Zoning Administrator Erin Klinger; and Planning and Zoning Officer Bob Clark. Vice-Chairman John Cyrus and Town Administrator Phil Cordeiro were not present.

Chairman Hurt then requested a motion to approve the Minutes prepared of the Planning Board meeting held on August 4, 2020. Without further discussion, the following motion was made by Member Robert Martin, seconded by Member Scott Anderson, and unanimously carried.

**MOTION: The Minutes of the Planning Board meeting held on August 4, 2020, are approved, as presented.**

The next item on the Agenda was review and approval of the revised phasing plan for Holden Creek Preserve. Ms. Klinger stated the revised phasing plan shows how the developers are planning to split Phase 6 of the development into Phase 6A and Phase 6B. The developers also added approximately twenty acres of open space on the western edge of the subdivision. Ms. Klinger mentioned that there were some minor technical corrections that needed to be made to the plan. She said the plan still needs to show the sidewalks for phases six through ten; street names were missing for the latter phases; the revision dates needed to be updated; and open space access needed to be added at the southern edge of the cul-de-sac in phase eight. Otherwise, the plan was ready for the Board's approval that evening.

Mr. Clark added that the developers had since submitted a revised plan that considered some of the recommendations that were made for technical corrections and that they have shown a future sewer line easement that would also be a greenway access easement giving access to the open space at the southern portion of the property. He also mentioned that an earlier version of the plan had shown ten acres of open space in the northwest portion of the development and that that section had been removed and replaced with the twenty-acre section Ms. Klinger already discussed. He stated that the open space requirements were determined by the old zoning ordinance and the lot size adjustments that occurred in this development were made possible by increasing the required amount of open space.

At the conclusion of Mr. Clark's statements, Chairman Hurt asked town staff to clarify that they were recommending approval of the changes to the Holden Creek Preserve phasing plan and both Ms. Klinger and Mr. Clark responded that this was the case. Chairman Hurt then asked if any of the Planning Board members had any comments. Member Tew questioned whether the Youngsville Fire Department had reviewed the proposed phasing plan and whether they would require a temporary hammerhead turnaround in Phase 6A since the road would not be looped at that time. Mr. Clark responded that the developers would be installing ten-foot wide access at

both ends of Porterfield Drive so that there would be temporary access through to the homes in Phase 6A for emergency purposes and for construction vehicles.

When there were no further comments or questions, the following motion was made by Member Keith Tew, seconded by Member Martin, and unanimously approved following a roll call vote:

**MOTION: To approve the revised phasing plan for Holden Creek Preserve as presented with the minor technical corrections advised by staff.**

In keeping with the Agenda, Chairman Hurt turned everyone's attention to the next item: text amendments to the Youngsville Development Ordinance – Article 3, Definitions; Table 8.1, Table of Uses; Section 10.1-18, Food Trucks (new section); and Table 15.1 – Special Events and Temporary Structures. Ms. Klinger mentioned that starting at the end of August, the Town heard several complaints from food truck owners that the current five-day-per-year operating restriction placed a severe hardship on their businesses. She stated that with Town Administrator Cordeiro's permission, she researched how surrounding municipalities were regulating food trucks and borrowed from their ordinances the provisions that would best fit Youngsville. The proposed amendments remove the five-day restriction, instead switching to an unlimited number of days per location, while also adding some additional regulations. She advised that a new definition for food trucks would be added to the ordinance; the use table will be amended to specify in which districts food trucks will be allowed; the requirements for obtaining a food truck permit are specified; detail was added as to where on a property food trucks may be located; and the hours that a food truck may operate are now specified and those coincide with the hours laid out in the town's noise ordinance. She added that the new regulations also detail any enforcement actions that may be taken for a food truck that is in violation of the ordinance.

At the conclusion of Ms. Klinger's remarks, Member Martin asked what the town's noise ordinance specified regarding operating times. Ms. Klinger responded that Sunday through Thursday the hours were 7 am to 10 pm and Friday and Saturday that was extended to 11 pm. She added that if the food truck was located within 150 feet of a residence, they can operate only until 9 pm. Member Tew mentioned that he knew kitchens were required to have potable water and that they generated wastewater. He said he noticed in the staff report that food truck owners would be responsible for collecting their own trash and that they would not be allowed to discharge grease into sanitary sewers. He asked if Ms. Klinger or any of the Planning Board members knew if food trucks had their own water supply and contained their own wastewater, and, if not, had Franklin County Public Utilities been part of the conversation about the verbiage of the regulations, as he knew they would likely have concerns over grease and backflow prevention. Ms. Klinger responded that Franklin County Public Utilities had not been consulted about the new regulations. She said she did not know if food trucks had their own water supply but that she did not remember seeing any hoses the day the original food truck violation was noticed. She added that food trucks are required to obtain health department permit from the county first and that food truck owner must provide copies of those permits to the town in order to obtain their zoning permit. Member Tew responded that he figured that food trucks would be responsible to the county health department, but that he wasn't sure if there would be any utility implications. He added that certainly if the food truck needed to hook up to a hose at the property on which they were located, that water would be metered and billed to the property owner. Ms.

Klinger added the new food truck permit application will require property owner's signature so the town will have proof the food truck is allowed to operate at that location.

Chairman Hurt added that he did not see any problems with the text Ms. Klinger had added or changed. When none of the other members had any questions, the following motion was made by Member Anderson, seconded by Member Martin, and unanimously approved following a roll call vote:

**MOTION: To accept the planning staff report and recommend the Board of Commissioners approve the requested amendments to the Youngsville Development Ordinance because: (1) the current requirements do not permit food trucks to operate any more than five (5) days per calendar year and (2) the amendments are consistent with the goals of the Town Plan 2040 – Comprehensive Land Use Plan of “Downtown Business Retention” and “Attract New Businesses”.**

Continuing with the Agenda, Chairman Hurt turned everyone's attention to item five, consideration of an application for a zoning map amendment for property located at 2179 Hicks Road from Single-Family Residential-3 (SFR-3) to Civic for purposes of siting a new high school. Ms. Klinger stated that she was approached by Youngsville Academy in the summer about rezoning the subject parcel. The school currently has a conditional use permit from Franklin County permitting them to locate the high school next to their existing location across Hicks Road from the parcel in question; however, that location would not allow them to invest in the fields and parking that are shown on the master plan that was included in the Planning Board's packet. The Youngsville Academy representatives have indicated that they want the existing soccer fields to stay in the use of the community. Ms. Klinger added that the proposed road at the north of the site would be built in conjunction with another development. She stated that a representative from the school was on the line and asked if they wanted to add anything. Mr. Larry Henson reiterated that they would like to locate the high school across the street from where the elementary school is now because, as they develop the properties, they would like to develop out the soccer field areas as well as other sporting areas and make these areas accessible to the community as well. He added that if they could complete the project on the location in question, they could do all of the above right away in addition to the required parking areas.

Ms. Klinger thanked Mr. Henson for his comments and asked if any of the Planning Board members had any questions. Member Tew commented that it seemed like an ideal rezoning case and that it was certainly compatible with the surrounding uses. He added that he found it interesting that the owners of the adjacent parcel were not in attendance at the neighborhood meeting. He mentioned that he noticed there would be a fifteen-foot buffer required and asked Ms. Klinger if this would be a landscape buffer; she responded that that was correct, and a fifteen-foot Type “B” landscape buffer would be required between the subject parcel and the adjacent properties. When none of the other members had comments, the following motion was made by Member Anderson, seconded by Member Martin, and unanimously approved following a roll call vote:

**MOTION: To accept the planning staff report and recommend the Board of Commissioners approve the requested rezoning of the applicant’s property from SFR-3 to CIV because: (1) the zoning map amendment is harmonious with the surrounding zoning in the area and (2) the proposed amendment is consistent with several of the goals of the Town Plan 2040 – Comprehensive Land Use Plan, among them “Plan for Growth”.**

Following the vote, Chairman Hurt solicited comments from the Planning Board. When there were none, he moved to item seven on the Agenda, public comments. Ms. Klinger stated that there were several people that wanted to speak during the public comment period and invited Mr. Gordon Poulson to begin his presentation. Mr. Poulson said that there were six developers on the call that had completed projects in Franklin County and were currently working on projects in the area. They wanted to take a few minutes to have the Planning Board members consider some of the items in the zoning ordinance. Mr. Poulson mentioned that after he spoke, Mr. Jon Frazier would be discussing the site plan for the development in question; and Mr. Rich Ohmann, Mr. Jay Colvin, and Mr. Jonathan Hayward would talk about specifics of projects they have built.

Mr. Poulson continued by introducing the project in question. The new development would be located in Youngsville on Holden Road. He stated his presentation will address the bypass road and the connector road, both of which were required by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. He said there are often unintended consequences when a new zoning ordinance is passed that unfortunately did not arise when the ordinance was adopted, and that there were several items he would like the Planning Board members to consider as the speakers moved through their presentations. His understanding of the reasons the specific code provisions was passed was that the town wanted to control stormwater and wastewater, among other items. He continued by stating that the housing market dictates what type of product is produced as well as the price of that product. The first consideration that most home buyers have is price point, which translates into a combination of down payment and all-in costs, i.e., the buyer’s monthly payments. He questioned whether rules and ordinances that affect the price of housing benefit the buyer or somebody else.

Mr. Poulson quoted Warren Buffett: “Price is what you pay, and value is what you get.” He added that crawlspaces were now required by the Youngsville Development Ordinance and that by default, slabs could not be a part of home construction. He cited several items that make a difference in cost between homes with a crawlspace and slab-on-grade homes. There can be a difference of up to an additional \$22,000 of cost with a crawlspace. He mentioned there are pros and cons to each. If a home is located on sloped land, slab-on-grade is not ideal. Slabs are resistant to moisture accumulation, while crawlspaces trap water. Slab is a great insulator and is more energy efficient. He mentioned that if you are not able to build a slab for a townhouse, the final sales price will be in the \$400,000 to \$500,000 range which there is not a market for in Youngsville or Franklin County.

His next slide showed the five different ways that a foundation can be placed under a house and what the different costs are from high to low. A monolithic slab can cost anywhere from \$4,600 to \$20,000 while a full basement could cost up to \$50,000. Mr. Poulson then presented an additional way to view the cost of a custom foundation. He said that a correctly installed foundation holds the weight and load of the house, keeps water out, insulates from the cold, and resists the movement of the surrounding earth. The key question for builders and homeowners

was whether there would be future warranty work, meaning the customer is unhappy, and the building is receiving complaints.

The presentation continued with Mr. Jon Frazier's discussion of the proposed site plan. He stated that the developers were looking at the need to potentially do mass grading and slab foundations on the subject property. The site plan shows the connector roads that the development team has worked on with planning staff. He mentioned that they were still drafting the site layout which was one of the reasons why they were speaking at this meeting. They are proposing to connect to water and sewer utilities. The site itself is very deep and long and has some challenging topography, including streams running through and adjacent to the site. Mr. Frazier reported that when you connect to public sewer and must deal with topographic challenges where you are running gravity sewer over long distances, there can often be the need to use grades to cut and fill as well as the need to use mass grading to facilitate the sewer connections. He added they would have to run sewer on this site up to the Holden Road lift station. The elevation is available on the site to do so; however, with some of the topography, there may be a need for mass grading. This project is not much different from others where there is a need to connect to public water and sewer. When a project has topographic constraints, there is often the need to mass grade. Typically, you're looking to increase density as well, and slab is advantageous for smaller lots. He concluded by saying this was something they wanted to point out based on the constraints they see in the new ordinance. He believed the other gentlemen that were speaking had more practical home-building knowledge and the constraints associated with non-slab foundations.

Mr. Rich Ohmann was the next person to speak. He works with the company that developed the Mason Oaks subdivision in Wake Forest. He began by stating that oftentimes when you hear builders and developers resisting crawlspace foundations, the first reaction is to think the developers are looking for the cheapest way out, when really what they want is a community everyone can be proud of. The product they are looking for is one that will allow the customers to enjoy the community in which they live. He mentioned that builders and developers risk their own capital. This is done with consideration to three key questions: who is buying the houses, what are the buyers looking for, and are the developers taking a prudent risk. These are the main reasons they think it's critical to look at grading and foundation choices at the beginning. If they start with a product that's too expensive, they will never hit the market at the end of the process.

Mr. Ohmann added that there was a cost difference between slab and crawlspace foundations. A crawlspace adds about \$5,800 in lumber and framing costs for a 2,000 square foot house. An additional \$700 is added to the cost to insulate the crawlspace. Steps to get into the house and a deck add another \$2,000 and there is another \$1,000 added for concrete pump trucks and stone hauling, among others. On average, a crawlspace ends up adding at least \$8,900 to the cost of a house. This means that, on the sales floor, a customer is charged approximately \$10,700. This translates to \$54 added to each mortgage payment and an increased down payment of \$400. Adding extra dollars to the cost of the house, particularly in an area where price is a sensitive issue, may cause builders to eliminate more attractive facades.

The next topic Mr. Ohmann discussed was mass grading versus individual lot grading. Individual lot grading does not allow builders to cut and fill. This is very critical when looking at a group of four lots. He gave an example of four seventy-foot lots that abut one another and can only be

developed once the developers have a building permit. Water would not be conducted properly, dirt could not be moved from one lot to another, and the builders are left at the mercy of the existing topography. This will result in drainage issues and steep driveways. The first house that is built will determine how builders deal with the other houses on the street. He mentioned that the town of Apex had similar issues in the past. They have what is called a turn-down foundation. They did not legislate the type of foundation; instead they legislated what the foundation should look like. They felt foundations should be raised up from the ground as that would provide better drainage from the surrounding houses and would also look better from the street. In Apex, developers can build a house on a monolithic slab, but the edges of the slab are “turned down”. On that turn-down edge, two steps are added into the house. This results in a house that looks exactly like one with a crawlspace, but where thousands of dollars are saved in cost. Individually graded lots will also cause builders to constantly have to run heavy equipment over the roads, inconveniencing existing owners in the community.

Mr. Ohmann stated that mass grading suggests the idea of clear cutting. He said planners often give the example of “v” ditches where there is a massive “v” between two lots. What this does is present the worst-case scenario for how the slabs were installed. He stated that if the slabs are installed properly, it results in a gentle divide between lots that conducts water from one side to the other. He mentioned his company uses an Intermediate Grading Plan, where no more than one bucket of dirt is removed from one lot and transferred to another. Their goal is to have a balanced grade.

He encouraged the town to think about foundations that support different types of housing. For example, active adult housing on a crawlspace foundation would likely be unsuccessful. He urged Youngsville to consider the Apex model, where slab foundations are used for active adult housing and turned-down slabs are used for other housing types. Mr. Ohmann continued by detailing some of the misconceptions about crawlspaces. The first one he mentioned was that crawlspaces can be used for storage. However, doing so could potentially ruin the natural crawlspace drainage as well as any items a homeowner might store in a crawlspace. Secondly, Mr. Ohmann addressed the misconception that slab foundations look cheap. He said that, when properly executed, slab foundations are the opposite.

The next slide illustrated what a turned-down slab looks like. After that, the conversation turned to the hidden costs of crawlspace foundations. Mr. Ohmann showed several charts that showed the direction of the grade in relation to crawlspaces. He said every graph block that you go down on the depicted trendline is an additional block that must be buried underground. This is what contributes to the additional costs that come with crawlspace foundations. In closing, Mr. Ohmann said that as builders and developers, they needed to remember that they serve the housing market rather than make it. Adding costs to a home that must be passed on to the customer is risky. He added that the average cost of permit fees for all the homes in this development would be \$1,400,000 alone. Mr. Ohmann stated that he believed a development ordinance was a great tool, but that a future land use map could be a better alternative. This would allow developers to serve the market and would allow staff to tell the developers where they needed to locate better homes. He concluded his presentation by thanking everyone for their time.

Mr. Jay Colvin with Dan Ryan Builders spoke next. He articulated that \$15,000 in increased foundation costs was really the best-case scenario for a crawlspace. By code, builders are required to have enough space for inspectors to get under the foundation. He said the minimum height for a foundation is 32 inches, representing a perfectly graded crawlspace lot, which would not be allowed under a prohibition on mass grading. On a typical site that has somewhere between four to six feet of fall across it, the added cost would be closer to \$25,000. Mr. Colvin said that a prohibition on mass grading also bans mass clearing and this requires individual lots to be cleared instead of the entire site, adding an additional \$4,000 - \$5,000 per lot for a total of \$25,000 - \$30,000 per home. He commented that new homes in Youngsville that have sold year-to-date averaged just under \$330,000. A \$25,000 increase would be approximately 7.5% of that figure with no real discernible benefit to the homeowner. Breaking that percentage down, it would be \$100 a month at a 3% interest rate that a homeowner would not be able to put into exterior options or other options in the house that they may have been able to afford before. He mentioned that, on average, Wake Forest homes sell for approximately \$125,000 more than homes in Youngsville. Raising the average cost of homes might cause buyers to look further out in the county, which would place a strain on existing infrastructure. He added that if a builder cannot mass grade a site but wants to locate sewer there, there will be extreme depth issues with the sewer. It could also create the need to have multiple pump stations on site, which, again, would lead to additional costs, particularly regarding future maintenance considerations for the town. The cost impact challenges buyers who are looking at Franklin County and Youngsville as a great place to move to; instead, they will have to start considering other places to live where they can afford to purchase a home. Mr. Colvin concluded by stating that affordability is already a major issue in the area and adding another \$25,000 to the cost of a home is a considerable burden for the average homebuyer to bear.

Mr. Poulson then introduced Mr. Jonathan Hayward with KB Homes. Mr. Hayward's discussion focused on townhomes. He said that, to his knowledge, there are not currently any townhouses under construction in the Triangle area that are being built on a crawlspace foundation. Closer to Franklin County, for example, in Wake Forest, all the townhouse developments are being built on slab. He added that the only townhouse development he has seen in the Triangle with crawlspace foundations is at MacGregor Downs in Cary, where the homes were priced between \$500,000 and \$600,000. The developers of that project sold only six to seven units per year due to the price range. On townhouses, it is nearly impossible to add the cost of a crawlspace and make it affordable. Mr. Hayward expressed that, from a builder's perspective, it's difficult for anyone to make the conscious decision that it makes economical sense to build on a lot. The key question is whether they can sell houses and remain competitive when they are adding \$25,000 to \$30,000 to the price to cover the cost of a crawlspace. He then gave examples of some of the competing developers in the area and their respective developments, all of which had been built on slab. He added that history shows in Franklin County that crawlspaces are built by custom builders. Most of the custom-built developments are on the western side of Capital Boulevard. The sales pace of these builders is minimal – approximately 2.8 units per month. Mr. Hayward concluded by emphasizing that it's hard for builders to recoup their money at such a slow pace.

Lastly, Mr. Curtis White spoke. He stated there was not much more he could add to the discussion other than what had already been said. He wanted to ask the town to revisit the crawlspace requirement in the UDO and to consider going with the future land use idea mentioned by Mr. Ohmann. Mr. White indicated he agrees with the comment that it will not be a

viable market and believes it will cost Youngsville dearly. The benefits of slab foundation that Mr. Poulson spoke about were just a few of the many available. He briefly discussed the hilly topography of Youngsville and how that might dictate how houses are built. Mr. White concluded by stating the town should reconsider the requirement so that it does not significantly limit the development opportunities in Youngsville.

Mr. Poulson wrapped up the discussion by returning the Planning Board's attention to Mr. Frazier's presentation. He said the subject property has a crown going through the middle of it. If the sewer is located where it can work properly, the line will have to be buried eighteen feet deep. This increases the cost of sewer installation exponentially and could cause problems in the future if the sewer line needs to be repaired or maintained. Mr. Poulson concluded by observing that a homeowner will purchase the best value they can afford and asked if the members of the Planning Board had any questions. Chairman Hurt stated that he was not sure what the board would need to do about making any amendments to the ordinance to remove the crawlspace requirement. He added that his development team regularly used slabs in their project and that slab homes were very energy efficient. He thought the Planning Board needed to revisit that ordinance provision and understand what benefit it is to Youngsville to require developers to build on crawlspaces. Member Anderson added that he really appreciated all the input from the builders. He asked if they could schedule an additional Planning Board meeting where they can discuss the presented information, review the slides that had been presented, and consider what the options are regarding revising the ordinance or recommending a revision of the ordinance to the Board of Commissioners. Ms. Klinger answered that she would be happy to put that topic on the Agenda for November's meeting. Mr. Poulson responded that they would be pleased to work with the town on this. He said that he had worked with Raleigh on their UDO for two-and-a-half years. He thought that if everybody was open and honest, they could all work together to end up with regulations that worked for everybody. Mr. White thanked the board members for letting everyone speak on this topic tonight as it really needed to be changed. He reiterated his belief that the regulations would inhibit the marketability of Youngsville's land, particularly that between Youngsville and Capital Boulevard. He mentioned he had plans for active adult housing he had been working on for some time that called for slab foundation.

Following Mr. White's comments, Chairman Hurt moved to the next item on the Agenda, the Around-the-Town report from Planning staff. Ms. Klinger started by asking if any of the Planning Board members had an issue with postponing the November meeting a week as the scheduled meeting conflicted with election night. The Planning Board members all answered that the 10<sup>th</sup> worked for a rescheduled meeting. Ms. Klinger then mentioned that at next month's meeting they would have the final plat for Phases 6A and 6B of Holden Creek Preserve as well as a rezoning petition for the portion of land just north of the one that had been discussed this evening. This petition would rezone the land from SFR-3 to MU-1 which would provide a good transition between the civic use and the existing single-family residences in Stephen's Glen. Mr. Clark thanked everyone on the Conyers team for the information they shared and that he looked forward to working with everyone on those provisions. He mentioned that the road layout for that project had been tweaked some from the original plan and that the US-1 Planning Council would hear the plan at their meeting that Friday. He added that Scott Wheeler, the District Engineer for NCDOT had been involved in those conversations. Mr. Clark also added that the official population estimates for Youngsville shows that the population had increased to 1,776 from 1,400 between 2018 and 2019 which was represented approximately a 25% increase. He

asked if Ms. Klinger had heard anything about the certified number from the State Demographer. She answered that she remembered reading Mr. Clark's comments to Mr. Cline in September but that she had not heard anything further since then. Mr. Clark then congratulated Member Anderson and his wife on the grand opening of their new downtown business.

At the conclusion of Mr. Clark's comments, Chairman Hurt adjourned the meeting at 7:16 pm.