

**Minutes**  
**Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission**  
**City of Chattahoochee Hills, Georgia**  
**May 23, 2017/6:30 p.m.**

**Call to Order**

*Chair Bob Simpson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Present were Bob Simpson, Robin Cailloux, Rocky Reeves, Mark Prater, and Alan Merrill. All members were present. Also present was City Planner Mike Morton.*

**Pledge of Allegiance**

*Mr. Simpson led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

**Approval of Agenda**

*Mr. Reeves requested to add a discussion regarding having Work Sessions to work on some items that need to be addressed. Mr. Prater made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Ms. Cailloux seconded. The motion passed unanimously.*

**Approval of Minutes**

1. Approval of April 20, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes  
*Mr. Prater made a motion to approve the April 20, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes. Mr. Merrill seconded. The motion passed unanimously.*

**Public Hearings**

2. 17V-001 Hart Fence Variance – 10400 Cedar Grove Road  
*Mr. Simpson read the rules for the Public Hearing and then opened the Public Hearing.*

*The following person spoke in favor of the item:*

1. *Tara Hart, 10400 Cedar Grove Road (applicant) – said when the home was built three years ago, plans were to build a wrought iron fence. She was not aware the zoning ordinance had changed since then. She mentioned several other houses near her that have the same type of fence.*

*There was no public comment in opposition to the item.*

*City Planner Mike Morton presented the item. The application is for a variance to allow a stone and wrought iron style fence and to allow a fence height greater than four feet in the first layer. The applicant submitted photographs of several other houses in the area with the same type of fence and support from the neighbors. Mr. Morton said the variance to the fence material does not meet the variance criteria. However, the variance to the height requirement does meet the variance criteria. He*

*recommends denial of the variance to the fence materials and approval of the variance to the fence height with the condition that the fence comply with the height requirement when measured from the natural grade of the base of the fence.*

*Mr. Simpson closed the Public Hearing.*

*Ms. Cailloux said the Zoning Ordinance may have flaws but it is what they have to work with. The guidelines for approving variances are universal. She said there is not a hardship to the applicant based on the five guidelines.*

*Mr. Simpson said the intent of the Zoning Ordinance is to maintain the rural character. However, there are already several other houses in the area with similar fences.*

*Mr. Reeves said fence height can be a problem because taller fences do not look rural.*

*Mr. Merrill said the root of the ordinance came from the work on the first Comp Plan and the desire to be intentionally rural. Wrought iron fences have a suburban or urban feel. If an exception is made, a precedent is set that they are willing to allow things that are not rural and that is the first step on a slippery slope.*

*Mr. Prater said there are other houses with the same type of fence that were either annexed in to the city or were built before we became a city. He does not have a problem with it.*

*Mr. Prater made a motion to recommend approval of the variance application to the City Council. Mr. Reeves seconded. The motion passed 3-2, Ms. Cailloux and Mr. Merrill against.*

### **Old Business** (None)

### **New Business**

#### 3. Zoning Fence Standards and Discussion on Work Sessions

*Mr. Simpson said the discussion on Work Sessions should be combined with this agenda item. He suggested that a Work Session be scheduled to discuss the Zoning Fence Standards. A Work Session was scheduled for June 1<sup>st</sup> at 3:00 p.m.*

#### 4. Election of Planning Commission Chair

*Mr. Merrill nominated Mr. Simpson as Chair. Mr. Reeves seconded. There were no other nominations. The vote to elect Mr. Simpson as Chair was 4-0, Mr. Simpson abstained.*

*These minutes are provided as a convenience and service to the public, media, and staff. It is not the intent to transcribe proceedings verbatim. Any reproduction of this summary must include this notice. Public comments are noted and heard by the Commission, but not quoted. This is an official record of the City of Chattahoochee Hills Planning Commission Meeting proceedings.*

5. Election of Planning Commission Vice Chair

*Mr. Reeves nominated Ms. Cailloux as Vice Chair. Mr. Simpson seconded. There were no other nominations. The vote to elect Ms. Cailloux as Vice Chair was 4-0, Ms. Cailloux abstained.*

**Staff Reports**

*Mr. Morton reported that he had an inquiry from the engineer at Serenbe regarding a rezoning question. They have asked if the property that was part of the hamlet prior to the adoption of the new zoning ordinance is treated differently. He does not think it is, but there is no requirement in the zoning that you cannot put two hamlets next to each other. He also received an inquiry regarding gated farmettes. He has not heard any more on any of the dead subdivision. He also answered questions from the Planning Commission members regarding building permits and the Watkins Road farmettes.*

**Adjourn Meeting**

*Ms. Cailloux made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Merrill seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.*

Approved this 15<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2017.

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Bob Simpson, Chairman

Attest:

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Dana Wicher, City Clerk