TOWN OF GEORGETOWN - BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Meeting Minutes
October 1, 2014

ATTENDANCE

Board Members
Jane Hovington
Eric Evans
Bo Shockley - absent
Ray Hopkins
Shirley Hitchens

Staff
Jocelyn Godwin
Jamie Craddock

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
Chairperson Hovington called the meeting to order in the Town Hall at 4:58 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MARCH 5, 2014 MEETING MINUTES
Member Hopkins moved, seconded by Member Evans, to approve the March 5, 2014 regular meeting minutes as presented. 3 – Yeas, 1- abstain (Hitchens) **APPROVED**

3. Introduction of Members

4. BOA CASE #2014-14

An application by Frank Kea, on behalf of Solutions Integrated Planning, Engineering and Management, LLC., requesting from the Code of the Town of Georgetown (1) a special exception from §230-148 for a reduction of the required 21 parking spaces to the proposed 12; (2) a special exception from §230-151 (F) for a reduction of the required 25' interior drive width to the proposed 12' – 16' width; (3) a special exception from §230-151 (A) for a reduction of the required 10' x 22' parallel parking space to the proposed 8' x 22'; (4) a special exception from §230-151 (I) for relief of the required continuous visual 6' screening requirement. The property is located at 202 North Bedford Street, identified as Sussex County Tax District 135 Map 14.20 Parcel 129.00, zoned UR2 (Medium Residential).

The Planning Department confirmed that the application was duly advertised.

Frank Kea presented the application. The applicant is currently at 132 East Market Street and they are looking to move their office to this property. Their current location is getting too small.

There is not enough space on the property to put in 21 parking spaces. Along the north property line, there are a series of large sycamore trees and a lot of vegetation where the tower is. There is also a power pole in the corner of the property that would have to be moved if the driveway was widened.

The applicant would like a reduction of parking spaces, leave the curb cuts where they are, and put in a series of angled parking spaces and parallel spaces with reduced width. The office has five employees and meetings with clients with potentially three cars. The applicant tried to place as many spaces as possible with the least amount of damage to the site.

Traffic flow is proposed one way in on Depot Street and exit out through North Bedford. Applicant will clean up the brush, replace the power pole and renovate the building, inside and out.

The property has vegetative screening now along the side of the water tower, the commercial property to the back, and on the other side as well, an Amelia hedge. It will be cleaned up, leaving the crape myrtles and the privet hedge. The trees will be cleaned up and remain.

The Board asked if DelDOT has reviewed the plans. The applicant stated not yet. The Board questioned how the spaces will be delineated if the parking area is stone. The applicant stated that there will be concrete wheel stops except for the parallel spaces. Applicant feels most customers will park near the front door on Depot Street. The Board confirmed there are five employees. The applicant stated they may add one more.

Chairperson Hovington confirmed that the applicant understood the prerequisites for the Board to grant a variance. The parking requirement is determined as 1 space per 200 square feet of floor area.

Chairperson Hovington asked if there was any public comment, either for or against, the application. There was no public comment either for or against.

For item 1, special exception for a reduction of the required 21 parking spaces to the proposed 12:

Member Hopkins moved, seconded by Member Hitchens, to APPROVE the proposed change from the required 21 parking spaces to the proposed 12.
Member Hitchens – Yea, there is sufficient parking for the use.
Member Hopkins – Yea, based on 6 employees and 3 clients the parking is sufficient.
Member Evans – Yea, the size of the structure creates a hardship and some of the space will not be used.
Chairperson Hovington – Yea, the size of the house restricts the parking spaces.
<u>APPROVED</u> (Unanimous)

For item 2, special exception for a reduction of the required 25' drive width to the proposed 12' – 16' width:

Member Evans moved, seconded by Member Hopkins, to APPROVE the reduction of the drive width to 16' contingent upon DelDOT approval.
Member Hitchens – Yea, there is appropriate room.
Member Hopkins – Yea, no adverse impact with 16', plenty of room for vehicles.
Member Evans – Yea, would like to see the natural vegetation remain. Roadway for travel at 16' is sufficient.

Chairperson Hovington – Yea, agrees that 16' meets the needs.
APPROVED (Unanimous)

For item 3, special exception for reduction of the required 10' x 22' parallel parking space to the proposed 8' x 22':

Member Evans moved, seconded by Member Hopkins, to APPROVE the request.
Member Hitchens – Yea, applicant fixed with what they have available.
Member Hopkins – Yea, as discussed.
Member Evans – Yea, as stated previously.
Chairperson Hovington – Yea, applicant has a good plan, strapped with what can be done.
APPROVED (Unanimous)

For item 4, special exception for relief of the required continuous visual 6' screening:

Concerns were expressed by the Board that the house to the north could become a residence and some of the current plantings are not on the applicants' property.
Member Evans moved, seconded by Member Hopkins, to APPROVE the request with the condition that should the property to the north become a residence, a 4' fence will be placed down the property line to the front yard setback line and then to 6'tall the remainder back. Following discussion, Member Evans amended his motion, seconded by Member Hopkins, to allow vegetative screening or fence.
Member Hitchens – Yea, it would be appropriate for right now.
Member Hopkins – Yea, likes the idea of vegetative screening and helps a new business to not have the expense up front.
Member Evans – Yea, based on the motion made.
Chairperson Hovington – Yea, agrees with comments.
APPROVED (Unanimous)

5. BOA CASE #2014-16

An application by Beacon Hospitality II, requesting from the Code of the Town of Georgetown a variance from §230-170 (E) to allow for one (1) additional wall sign. The property is located at 22297 Dupont Boulevard, identified as Sussex County Tax District 135 Map 19.00 Parcel 63.01, zoned HC (Highway Commercial).

Robert Ruggio, representing Wyndham Hotels, Beacon Hospitality II and the Moore family, presented the application. The applicant stated 27 new jobs have been filled in Georgetown and two more will be filled.

Wyndham requirements were noted to include two building signs, one on the north side and one on the south side. The Board confirmed that both signs are the same and that signage was not addressed with the full plan. The applicant stated the signage requirements were received after the plan was completed.

Mrs. Godwin confirmed that no correspondence was received either for, or against, the application.

Chairperson Hovington asked if there was any public comment. No one was in attendance either for or against.

Member Hopkins moved, seconded by Member Hitchens, to APPROVE the variance for the fourth sign, the second sign on the building to be placed on the north side.
Member Hitchens – Yea, because of the policy of the company.
Member Hopkins – Yea, the sign will not degrade the building or the neighborhood and franchise rules are understood.
Member Evans – Yea, signs on two sides of the building when there are two road frontages is acceptable.
Chairperson Hovington – Yea, as it is required by the company.
APPROVED (Unanimous)

6. ADJOURNMENT

Member Evans moved, seconded by Member Hopkins, to close the meeting at 5:53 p.m.
APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)

APPROVED: Jane Hovington
Jane Hovington, Chairperson

ATTEST: Joc Godwin
Jocelyn Godwin, Planning Department