

MINUTES, PLANNING COMMISSION, JANUARY 27, 2025

The Planning Commission of the City of Robertsdale, Alabama met Monday, January 27, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Robertsdale City Hall, that being the date, time, and place for such meeting.

Upon roll call the following members of the Commission were found to be present: Chairman Eric Spaulding, Councilmember Joe Kitchens, Cheryl Parnell, Fabia Waters, Mark Fincher, and Mayor Charles Murphy. Absent: Jonathan Kitchens, Samantha Rockenbauer, and Tonya Lynn. A quorum being present the meeting proceeded with the transaction of business.

Chairman Spaulding presided over the meeting. Kate Whalley served as Secretary. Greg Smith, City Engineer, was also in attendance.

Chairman Spaulding called for any additions or corrections to the minutes presented for approval from the November 25, 2024 meeting. There being none, a motion was made by Charles Murphy, seconded by Fabia Waters, with a unanimous approval to accept the minutes from the November 25, 2024 meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Eric Spaulding announced that there would be no public hearings tonight. He then introduced the first agenda item: the final plat for Blackwater Ridge Phase One by Robertsdale Development, LLC. This property is located on the northwest corner of Wilters Street and Baldwin Beach Express.

Greg Smith gave an update on Blackwater Ridge, located just before the Beach Express on Wilters Street. Phase one of the development is now complete, and the developer is requesting final plat approval. Greg noted that a final inspection was conducted, and a punch list with a few outstanding items has been provided. One of the last steps to be completed was the activation of the sewer pump station, which occurred following the installation of a transformer by Baldwin EMC to provide power. This was finalized shortly after Christmas, allowing for the start-up of the station. The remaining punch list items include adding "Single Family Design Standards" per the approved PUD to the final plat, removing "Gas" from the Robertsdale Public Works certificate, adding the certificate for signature by Baldwin EMC, submitting a maintenance bond for improvements, and addressing all outstanding issues noted during the final inspection. Greg recommended approval of the final plat, contingent upon the submission of all required closeout documents and completion of the punch list items.

Charles Murphy made a motion to grant final approval for Phase One of Blackwater Ridge, provided that the developer meets all the requirements set forth by the City Engineer. Fabia Waters seconded the motion, and with no objections, the motion was approved.

Eric Spaulding introduced the second item on the agenda: an extension request from Jade Consulting for Blackwater Ridge Phases 2 and 3.

Greg Smith explained that the property is located at the northwest corner of Wilters and Baldwin Beach Express. He noted that Phases One, Two, and Three were approved just a few months apart. While Phase One has been completed, Phase Two had not yet commenced, and its preliminary plat is approaching its expiration date. The developer has requested an extension for both Phases Two and Three, with construction for Phase Two set to begin soon and Phase Three expected to require more time. Based on these factors, Greg recommended a 24-month extension, which would allow approximately 12 months for construction of each phase.

Cheryl Parnell made a motion to approve Jade Consulting's request for a 24-month extension of Blackwater Ridge Phases 2 and 3. Joe Kitchens seconded the motion, and with no objections, the motion carried.

Eric Spaulding introduced the next agenda item, the Martha Dale Paulsen Trust Sketch Plat Review for the property located at 21026 County Road 48, situated between County Road 71 and Adams Drive.

Greg Smith provided an overview of a roughly 80-acre tract under discussion. He explained that the property is located across College Avenue, near the electrical substation to the west, and east of Adams Drive, where Amberley Subdivision Phase Two is currently under construction. The property is not currently within the city limits, and in order to access Robertsdale's water and sewer services, annexation would be required. Greg mentioned that the developers are considering annexation along with rezoning the property to either a Planned Unit Development (PUD) or Residential Garden Patio (RGP). However, he recommended the PUD designation, as it would allow for more oversight and control, aligning with previous Planning Commission preferences when dealing with small lot developments. He also noted that Mr. Thomas and Mr. Blanchard, the developer, were present to discuss the proposal and answer any questions.

Planning Commission discussed several key considerations for the proposed development. There was a preference for larger lots to maintain a less dense residential layout, as well as a request for a centralized, usable community greenspace positioned away from the entrances to ensure accessibility for all residents. The Commission also expressed interest in seeing a connection to the existing walking path to prevent the development from feeling isolated and to allow children to walk or bike to school safely. In terms of access, they emphasized the need for thoughtful planning to ensure the development integrates well with neighboring subdivisions. Traffic control was another concern, with a suggestion to incorporate measures to discourage speeding in straightaways, such as traffic islands, while still keeping emergency accessibility in mind. Before moving forward with a preliminary plat, the Commission requested that the applicant return with a revised sketch plan incorporating these considerations.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made by Cheryl Parnell, seconded by Fabia Waters, with unanimous approval to adjourn. Motion carried.

APPROVED THIS 24 DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2025.



SECRETARY

CHAIRMAN