

**Minutes
Regular Meeting of the
Elon Planning Board**

**March 8th, 2022
Tuesday, 6:00 p.m.**

**Elon Town Hall and In-Person
Elon, North Carolina**

Attendees: Diane Gill, John Harmon, Aeisha Leath, Philip Owens

Attending via Zoom: Jim Beasley

Staff present: Pamela DeSoto and Mary Kathryn Harward

Community Audience: Chris Jones

Item A - Chairman Beasley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Item B – New Business

Item B-i – Approval of Minutes

Ms. DeSoto presented the board with minutes from February 18th, 2022 for approval.

- Mrs. Gill made a motion to approve the February 18th minutes, with Mr. Owens seconding the motion, and was approved unanimously by the board.

Item B-ii—Rezoning Request RZ-2022-01 regarding the rezoning of 830 W Haggard Avenue.

Ms. DeSoto presented the board with a PowerPoint Presentation containing the details of the proposed rezoning. The request was made by Mr. Chris Jones, on behalf of Elon Self Storage, LLC. The Reclassification application requests a change from the Commercial (C) District to the Industrial (I) District for the 3.82 acre parcel. Mr. Jones intended to expand his self-storage facility.

Due to the existing Commercial zoning designation, the use is considered nonconforming and is restricted from expansion by the LDO. If rezoned to the Industrial district, and future expansion of the use would require a special use permit.

Current zoning: The property is adjoined by Commercial-zoned properties to the East and Public Institutional-zoned properties to the Northeast. Properties across the highway ramp are zoned commercial, and to the south properties are zoned industrial.

Existing Site Conditions: The subject property is currently developed. The site is located beside of an NCDOT on/off ramp (to the North and West), and adjacent to properties zoned industrial (to the south and southeast) and vacant parcels owned by Elon University (to the east and northeast). There are currently 5 self-storage buildings, with several vehicles being stored on the site.

The site contains no known environmental concerns and exhibits adequate sight lines to allow for safe ingress/egress at the existing driveway.

Compatibility with the Land Development Plan:

The Future Land Use and Conservation Map incorporated in the Town's current Comprehensive Land Use Plan adopted in 2019 indicates Employment uses for the subject property. The Plan's description of Employment uses include the accommodation of light industrial uses; storage uses would fall under that description, although there is not a focus on employment in a storage facility. However, the use does generate tax revenues for the Town in the form of property taxes and retail taxes. Because the current Commercial zoning designation for this property creates a nonconforming use, the owner is prohibited from expanding the use without rezoning the property and removing the nonconforming status. The light industrial category that might include mini-warehouse/self-storage uses is not accommodated in the map, although this use is present on the property currently.

Relevant Goals and Objectives offered by the Plan include the following:

- *Promote and ensure quality governance, stewardship of public resources, and sustainability of services;*
- *Ensure adequate plans are in place to support existing and future development.*

Benefits and Detriments: *The property has been developed under the Commercial zoning designation to include self-storage buildings. The use was grandfathered in and is still being claimed. There is adequate existing safe ingress and egress to the site and the use produces less traffic than is typically produced by commercial uses. Applying the Industrial designation to the property is not expected to create hardships to the neighborhood or community at large, as no change in the current use is anticipated, only a potential expansion of the use as allowed by ordinance.*

Relationships of Uses:

The fourth factor in spot zoning analysis is the relationship between the proposed uses and the current uses of adjacent properties. The greater the disparity, the more likely the rezoning is to be held illegal.

The existing uses of nearby properties include commercial, public institutional, industrial, NCDOT-controlled roadway, and vacant properties.

Staff recommends that the Planning Board consider this application, accept public comment during the scheduled meeting, and consider a recommendation on the proposal at their earliest convenience. The motions should proceed as indicated on the following slides.

Recommendations and Suggested Motions:

- **Motion 1:** Rezoning Request RZ #22-01 (is/is not) consistent with adopted plans of the Town of Elon Board of Aldermen.
The proposal is considered by staff to be consistent with the Town's Land Development Plan. A staff-recommended statement is offered as part of Motion #4.
 - Mr. Harmon motioned that the request is consistent with adopted plans; Mr. Owens seconded the motion; all were in favor.

- **Motion 2:** Based on information presented by staff and other interested parties, Rezoning Request RZ #22-01 (does/does not) have an acceptable level of impact on both the immediate area and the community as a whole.
 - Mr. Owens motioned that the rezoning does have an acceptable level of impact; Mr. Harmon seconded the motion; all were in favor.
- **Motion 3:** The Town of Elon Planning Board recommends (approval/denial) of Rezoning Request RZ # 22-01.
 - Mrs. Gill made a motion to approve the recommendation for the rezoning request; Mr. Harmon seconded the motion; all were in favor.
- **Motion 4:** In order to fully comply with N.C. General Statutes, please provide a statement regarding the decision.

Recommended statement offered by staff:

The proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, in that the Future Land Use and Conservation Map included in the Plan shows Employment Uses for the property. While storage facilities do not generate high employment numbers, the Plan's description of Employment uses include the accommodation of light industrial uses such as storage uses.

Additionally, the proposal is supported to varying degrees by the following goals, objectives, and key recommendations:

- *Promote and ensure quality governance, stewardship of public resources, and sustainability of services;*
- *Ensure adequate plans are in place to support existing and future development*
- *Focus on retention of existing industry and employment centers;*
- *Manage growth to utilize existing infrastructure capacity and discourage growth in conservation areas.*

Furthermore, the action is reasonable and in the public interest because any expansion of the use will be conditioned through a special use permit process requiring approval by the Town's elected body, because the use serves an established need for the community, and because the current use, even if expanded, has the potential to have fewer negative impacts to the area such as traffic and noise when compared with uses allowed under the current Commercial zoning.

- Mr. Owens made a motion to recommend the statement offered by the staff; Mr. Harmon seconded the motion; and all were in favor.

Item C – Items from Board Members

- Mr. Roedner updated the Board that he is now acting as interim finance director while they are searching for another director.
- Ms. DeSoto announced that she has accepted another position and will be leaving Elon at the end of the month.


Item D – Board of Aldermen Updates

- It was related that the LDO Text Decriminalization went before the board, and it was approved.
- Public hearings will be on the last Monday of the month, and regular meetings will remain on the second Tuesday.

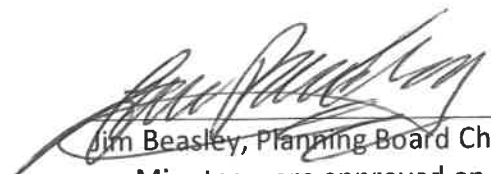
Item E - Motion to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Owens and seconded by Mrs. Gill. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.



Mary Kathryn Harward, Planner
Minutes were completed in
Draft form on March 14th, 2021



Jim Beasley, Planning Board Chair
Minutes were approved on
June 21st, 2022