



Regular Planning and Zoning Board Meeting Minutes  
September 10, 2024 at 6:00 PM

Chair Sandy Burgess  
Vice Chair Vacant  
Member Virginia Johns  
Member Williams "Bill" Menadier  
Member Keith Vermillion  
School Board Member Tina Certain

**City Manager Mike DaRoza**  
City Attorney Marian Rush

Meeting Location: James A. Lewis City Commission Chambers  
15100 NW 142 Terrace  
Alachua, FL 32615

## Planning and Zoning Board Meeting

Notice given pursuant to Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes. In order to appeal any decision made at this meeting, you will need a verbatim record of the proceedings. It will be your responsibility to ensure such a record is made.

### CALL TO ORDER

Sandy Burgess – Chair     6:00 p.m.     Virginia Johns - Member - Absent

### INVOCATION

Led by Member Bill Menadier

### PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

Led by Member Menadier

## APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Member Menadier moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Member Keith Vermillion.

Motion passed by unanimous consent.

### I. OLD BUSINESS

### II. NEW BUSINESS

#### A) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES 07-09-24

Member Menadier moved to approve the minutes from the July 09, 2024 meeting; seconded by Member Vermillion.

Motion passed by unanimous consent.

- B) SITE PLAN – PATEL FUEL & RETAIL: A REQUEST BY WALKER OWEN, P.E., OF CAUSSEAU, HEWETT, & WALPOLE, LLC, APPLICANT, ON BEHALF OF SEMOJ 13, LLC, PROPERTY OWNER, FOR CONSIDERATION OF A SITE PLAN TO CONSTRUCT A ±8,836 SQUARE FOOT CONVENIENCE STORE, RETAIL BUILDING, AND GASOLINE FUELING STATION WITH ASSOCIATED SITE IMPROVEMENTS (QUASI-JUDICIAL HEARING).

Chair Burgess requested any persons who will be speaking on this item to please stand and be sworn in.

Audience members and staff complied.

Justin Tabor, Principal Planner, presented his staff report.

Member Menadier asked how the condition of no fuel deliveries entering the site off of NW 59th Terrace will be enforced.

Mr. Tabor, Principal Planner, answered it would become a Code Enforcement issue. He also stated that when the comment was initially brought up, staff conferred with the applicant. The applicant agreed to make the entry curb distance narrower, making it difficult for any big trucks to maneuver the turn, discouraging the action.

Walker Owen, Professional Engineer, CHW also confirmed the entry was narrowed.

Chair Burgess questioned whether the applicant agrees with the four recommended conditions. She also asked the applicant to clarify findings about gopher turtles.

Mr. Owen agreed to accept recommended conditions. He reiterated the findings of their Ecological Species Survey. He stated that no gopher tortoises were found and



conditions on the property are not conducive to gopher tortoise habitats. He also stipulated that if any are encountered in the future, all Florida state laws will be followed concerning the species.

City Attorney Marian Rush voir dired the Board.

Member Vermillion moved that based upon the competent substantial evidence presented at this hearing, the presentation before this Board, and Staff's recommendation, this Board finds the application to be consistent with the City of Alachua Comprehensive Plan and in compliance with the Land Development Regulations and approves the Site Plan submitted by Walker Owen, P.E., of Causseaux, Hewett, & Walpole,, LLC on behalf of Semoj 13, LLC, subject to the four (4) conditions provided in Exhibit "A" and located on page 16 of the September 10, 2024 Staff Report to the Planning & Zoning Board; seconded by Member Menadier.

Chair Burgess opened the floor for citizens comments on this item.

Tamara Robbins commented about the NW 59th Ave access. She stated that if the site is too wet for gopher tortoises, then her concern is about the potential of run off from the fuel tanks entering the ground water. She questioned what is being done to contain any contamination of the ground water should this occur?

Walker Owen, Professional Engineer, CHW stated that this fueling system will be required to follow all environmental standards that will protect against any pollution just like any other fuel station.

Member Menadier asked for clarification about the storm water system.

Mr. Owens responded there is a wet pond designed for this site, and it is in compliance with all environmental requirements.

Mitch Glaeser commented about the overhead power lines along 441. His question was concerning the possibility of laying underground conduits for communication lines or power lines while the site is open prior to building. This would be for future construction sites.

Member Menadier questioned if the Board could require underground utilities.

City Attorney Rush stated that the Board could not vary from what was in the application and what was presented.

Trudy McMonickle expressed her wishes not to approve.

Cliff Dorsey stated that his opinion is to not approve.

Chair Burgess reiterated that the topic before the board right now is only the Patel Fuel & Retail Site Plan.

Jonathan Wallace stated that there is a gas station right across the highway from the proposed site and many more within a short distance. He questioned the need for another.

Kristin Reuben also stated that the gas station directly across the highway is never busy. She questioned the need for another?

**Motion passed by 3-0 roll call vote.**

- C) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT AMENDMENT - COMMERCIAL AND MIXED-USE FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES: A REQUEST BY THE CITY OF ALACHUA TO AMEND THE CITY OF ALACHUA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, AMENDING THE ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENT TO ESTABLISH A NEW DEFINITION FOR MIXED-USE, AMENDING THE FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT TO ESTABLISH MIXED-USE FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES, AND AMENDING THE ECONOMIC ELEMENT TO REMOVE AN EXISTING DEFINITION FOR MIXED-USE (LEGISLATIVE HEARING).

Carson Crockett, Planner presented his staff report.

Member Vermillion questioned what initiated this change.

Carson Crockett, Planner, AICP Candidate, stated Strategic Initiative 4.2, adopted by the Commission last year.

Member Menadier wanted clarification about density levels and what is considered the definition of visitor accommodations.

Carson Crockett, Planner, AICP Candidate responded.

Chair Burgess wanted clarification that this action tonight is just a text amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, not a Land Development Regulation modification.

Carson Crockett, Planner, verified her understanding and also explained what the next steps would be.

**Member Vermillion moved based upon the presentation to this Board and Staff's recommendation, this Board finds the proposed Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment to amend the Administration and Implementation, Future Land Use, and Economic Elements to be consistent with the City of Alachua Comprehensive Plan and transmits such finding to the City Commission with a recommendation to approve; seconded by Member Menadier.**



Chair opened the floor for citizen comments.

Tamara Robbins-asked for the 13 sprawl indicators to be placed on the overhead for public viewing. She also asked Member Vermillion to explain Strategic Initiative 4.2 to her since he nodded his head like he knew what it was or have another staff member explain what it is. She also asked whether these changes apply to all currently zoned commercial property in Alachua. She asked for the definition of infill and stated that a map of Alachua on the overhead would be helpful to the citizens in the audience. She also commented that Tioga is not a good example for Alachua to follow because it is the very definition of sprawl.

Carson Crockett, Planner, responded that the 13 sprawl indicators are in the staff report available to everyone at the front table as well as in the online agenda that was published. He restated the information regarding Initiative 4.2 and defined the term infill.

Jonathan Wallace expressed his concerns about development from outside sources being preferred over hometown investors. He mentioned impact to the aquifer. He also questioned the quality of construction being accomplished.

Chair Burgess reaffirmed that this discussion is not about any specific property. It is a city wide amendment. She also specified that the discussion is not about building codes either.

Sara Younger expressed concerns about the Comprehensive Plan changes. She asked the Board to consider any changes carefully before deciding because decisions could have unintended consequences.

Brian Bisher stated that mixed use development can be both beneficial or a curse. He does not believe that a city wide use of these changes would be detrimental in many ways.

Jacob Fletcher expressed concerns about the terminology -intensified mixed-use and commercial development-because all of this building would increase storm water run off which would carry pollutants into the aquifer. He asserted that they do not address controls for this.

Carson Crockett, Planner, informed the board about where the information in question could be located in Land Development Regulations.

Chair Burgess reiterated that this discussion is not about any specific property and to please keep the comments on topic.

Faith Collins also referenced Tioga as a bad example. She questioned what the purpose of the amendment is all about and who it will impact.

Carson Crockett, Planner, reiterated the definitions of each element being questioned and how the proposed amendment could impact the future of the City of Alachua.

Derek Dunlop asked how residential land could become commercial in any area of the city. He also questioned not having a map to reference. He accused the example map that was used in the presentation as being confusing and deceptive.

Carson Crockett, Planner, read directly from the staff report to answer the question of areas being affected by this change.

Dale Doranti questioned the applicability of the urban sprawl criteria and stated he believes they apply to the amendment.

Carson Crockett, Planner, explained that this is not a change to the future land use map but a change to the future land use categories.

Citizen-no name-compared this change to tract building done in the 70s.

Katherine Weitz, Current Mayor of High Springs, expressed concerns about environmental impacts. She requested the board to be ever mindful of the environmental impact of the surrounding towns.

Joe Hancock recommended that the board needs to slow down and really think about what is being approved. He also stated that good intentions could go very badly.

Jodi Boas remarked that the board should thoroughly review this proposal before acting.

Chair Burgess acknowledged all the comments and expressed concerns from the citizens. She also elaborated that some of the concerns expressed will be addressed at other levels.

Courtney Gaines brought up statistics about the development that has been approved, specifically the number of new houses. She expressed her concerns about the schools, water systems, and highway systems not being able to handle the large number of new people moving into the city.

Chair Burgess asked for more questions from the board and there were none.

**Motion passed by 3-0 roll call vote.**

**D) REMOVED FROM 9/10/24 PZB MEETING AGENDA – SPECIAL  
EXCEPTION PERMIT – TARA APRIL STORMWATER FACILITIES: A**



REQUEST BY CLAY SWEGER, AICP, LEED AP, OF EDA CONSULTANTS, INC., APPLICANT, ON BEHALF OF TARA FOREST, LLC, PROPERTY OWNER, FOR CONSIDERATION OF A SPECIAL EXCEPTION PERMIT TO ALLOW THE PLACEMENT OF A MINOR UTILITY (STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FACILITIES) IN THE AGRICULTURAL (A) ZONING DISTRICT THAT WOULD SUPPORT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ON ADJACENT LANDS ZONED COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL (CC) (QUASI-JUDICIAL HEARING).

### **III. BOARD COMMENTS/DISCUSSION**

Kathy Winburn reaffirmed that the October meeting is the second Tuesday of the month.

City Attorney Rush stated that in reference to item D being removed, there is no presentation, therefore there is nothing to comment on.

### **IV. CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Tamara Robbins reminded the audience that this section of the meeting is so they can speak to anything they wish to speak to about what this board is tasked to do. She stated that the public deserves to know why Item D was removed. She questioned the validity of how it was taken off the agenda. She questioned the knowledge of the board's understanding of the legal requirements for public notice for public hearings.

Joanne Trembley stated that building in the Mill Creek area is a direct hazard to the Santa Fe River and its world famous springs. She stated Mill Creek Sink connects to three Florida springs that connects to the Santa Fe River. She quoted the 2016 Florida Springs and Aquifer Protection Act. She argued that any development over the Mill Creek will be detrimental.

Chris Hartman inquired about when Item D will be rescheduled and why it was removed in the first place. He also related details about the underground components of the land over Mill Creek.

Chair Burgess informed the public that Item D was removed not deferred so the board does not have a schedule for when or if it will appear on any agenda.

Soyene Kojo expressed her concerns about the cost of rent and or ownership of the new homes being built. She states that Tech City houses are renting for \$1800.00 per month. She questions how the citizens of Alachua can afford those prices. She also states that the quality of the water is decreasing because of the demand.

Chair Burgess reaffirmed that this action tonight was a recommendation to the Commission, and some of the concerns expressed will be addressed at that level.

Citizen -no name- disagreed with Chair Burgess about the Board's actions tonight. He stated he wished the board could see the deteriorating condition of the caves. He referenced being a diver.

Katherine Weitz brought up the condition of the groundwater in High Springs. She stated that if the levels of contaminants are high, they have no options because the water comes from Alachua.

Brian Bisher questions the point of the Board if they claim they can not take action on some of the questions brought before them. He states that the Board needs to question staff more intently to have some of the answers when the question is asked.

Member Menadier clarified the misconception of the term density when in reference to capping the level on properties already zoned residential.

#### **ADJOURN**

**Member Vermillion moved to adjourn; seconded by Member Bill Menadier.**

Chair Burgess adjourned the meeting. 7:52 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

**CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF  
ALACHUA, FLORIDA:**

  
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Presiding Officer

  
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Staff Liaison