

Notes from 8/25/16 Re-zoning Meeting (Madison Planning Commission)

By Jay Carlson, EOA Long Range Planning Committee Chair

1. Last night along with a number of Edgewater residents I was able to attend the Planning Board meeting. The following is my synopsis of the meeting as it applied to Item 4 of the agenda, the rezoning of the 33 plus acres (a.k.a. phase 1) of Town Madison property.
2. As reported the subject parcel of land abuts Edgewater on its southern border and Mountain Brook on its eastern border was brought before the board for consideration.
3. Jeff (from the Civil Engineering (CE) firm) made the pitch to the board similar to what we were briefed at our Clubhouse event. He spoke about the firms that have been hired to do the project, the desire to model on Providence (north of US-72 in Huntsville [side note he mentioned he was the CE for the first two phases of Providence]) and Westhaven [westhaventn.com] (Franklin TN). He briefed that the "New Urban-ism" concept for neighborhood design was informing their plan.
4. The concept plan being presented to the board included building high end (high \$) single family detached homes on the lots that will border Edgewater and Mountain Brook. He emphasized the deep lots in the concept plan were for that purpose and to retain as many trees, many of them old growth, on each lot as possible in line with their concept of shooting for high end dollar per square foot (SF) for these large homes. He also briefed that on the interior smaller lots closer to the blue colored business/retail district in phase 1 that they were going to build 3000-4000 SF townhouses modeled along the lines of the ones built in Providence near the grade school. He briefed the walk-ability of the design with set backs, wide walking paths, narrow interior streets, and tree shaded sidewalks. The phase 1 would have an ~5.45 acre central park and around 185 housing units.

Public Comments: 2-3 residents from Mountain Brook rose to speak against the board approving the rezoning of the property in phase 1. Their concerns centered on 4 areas. 1) The concept plan did not provide a detailed plan to handle run-off. Homes in the Hearst Haven Ct portioned suffer from flooding in their back yards due to run off from the property. 2) Board should wait until the master plan for the whole project of Town Madison is presented before approving the rezoning of phase 1. 3) Wait until a study is done to identify the impacts of the 165 homes on Madison schools. 4) The change from big box retailers to smaller neighbor style retail and restaurants will not generate the tax dollars estimated when the original concept was pitched two years ago. IN addition one of the Mountain Brook neighbors asked if the zoning could specify "Fringe Neighborhood" which would he believed restrict the homes bordering Edgewater and Mountain Brook to single family detached.

3-4 Edgewater residents, to include myself, rose to speak as well. Comments were generally in favor the the concept plan submitted, but emphasized concern that the beautiful trees along our northern border remain and that there be some note in the record that as many trees as

possible to saved in line with the promises of Jeff and Joe representing Breiland. One resident questioned an apparent discrepancy between the boards initial report stating ~37.4 acres vs the motion for ~33.39. The board clarified the 33.39 was the correct value and that the original submission by the developer had an error which was corrected in a subsequent submission.

Response to Board Questions. When questioned by the board on projected timelines for the more detailed platting of phase 1, Jeff stated he estimated 90 days. The platting would add more details to include landscaping, drainage, and individual lot layouts. Impacts to the Madison schools was addressed by Joe Cici spoke to their research showing the child to home ratio in high end communities tends to be lower than average developments in Madison because they have a higher ratio of empty nest households. With regards to tax base Joe stated that the new retail trends and their plans to include the additional Intergraph land acquired for retail by Wall Triana will provide for more tax dollars than originally planned. When asked when they thought they would break ground on the project, Jeff (CE) stated if approved by the City Council they would hope to break ground for the infrastructure by early next year.

Board Action. Before passing the motion the board inquired whether they could make any stipulation in the approval on the fringe lots being single family detached and about the trees being protected. A member of the board (Ms. Cynthia McCollum, researched the zoning ordinances and stated to the board that the concept plan as submitted to the Planning Board would be locked with their vote and since it shows single family detached with deep lots it would not be necessary. That appeared to satisfy the board and they voted by roll call voice vote unanimously to approve.

The board did tell residents that they will have more opportunity to comment when the Planning Boards recommendations are presented to City Council and before the City Council votes on the actual rezoning.

EOA Recommendation. I recommend we continue to follow this very closely and ask that our City Council representative keep the EOA Board informed and in turn we push the information to the neighborhood. I also ask, because we cannot see everything, our Edgewater neighbors to inform the EOA Board immediately if they see any announcement or activity with regards to Town Madison and that we push the information to the neighborhood through our webpage and our mass email.

Respectfully submitted,

Jay Carlson