

Planning Board Minutes

May 5, 2021

Land Use Plan Amendment 01-21 Knotts Hill Place

Mr. Nishawala presented a proposal to amend the East Raleigh Knightdale Area Land Use Plan (ALUP) to reclassify 900 Knotts Hill Pl (PIN 1763007038) from Residential Less Than 1.5 Units Per Acre to Residential 1.5 to 4 Units Per Acre.

The subject property is 10.09 acres and was originally part of the nearby Huntsboro residential subdivision to the south but has been left undeveloped due to the environmental constraints that exist therein. The Huntsboro subdivision was completed in 1998, and the parcel is currently zoned Residential-30 (R-30). Mr. Nishawala stated the applicant is proposing this slight increase in allowable density in order to build a residential subdivision and to get a bit more density than would otherwise be allowed. At a later date, this LUPA will be accompanied by a petition to rezone the property to CU-R-10.

Mr. Nishawala stated that the request is similar to zoning and density of surrounding subdivisions, including Rutledge Landing (allows 4.35 units/acre), Ashley Hills (allows 2.17 units/acre), and Huntsboro (allows 1.5 units/acre). The Smithfield Rd/Poole Road Community Activity Center is a sufficient mixed-use development to serve the neighborhoods, and Mr. Nishawala presented a map to show proximity of municipal utilities.

Mr. Nishawala stated that, although the town of Knightdale stated that this petition is inconsistent with its Land Use Plan, staff reasoned that it does guide quality growth through the East Raleigh-Knightdale area in cooperation with local governments, and that it also encourages growth that will take advantage of existing and planned infrastructure so that municipalities are able to provide basic public services in accordance with their adopted plans.

Mr. Nishawala presented the following staff findings:

1. The density of the proposed land use amendment is largely similar to the current existing density of the surrounding area.
2. The proposed density will be achieved by tying onto the existing private sewer treatment system in the adjacent Rutledge Landing subdivision.
3. The proposed amendment is consistent the goals set forth by the East Raleigh/Knightdale Area Land Use Plan.
4. The proposed amendment is reasonable and in the best interest of the health, safety, and welfare of the general public.

Staff mailed 264 letters to adjacent property owners within a radius of 1,000 feet of the property to notify them of today's board meeting. Mr. Nishawala stated that feedback was minimal; he spoke to two property owners who requested more information and a letter was received from Ms. Susan Jones on March 4th (after the initial committee meeting) objecting to the request, which was read to the Board.

Mr. Jenkins inquired of staff about crime in the area. Mr. Nishawala did research the area crime reports and stated there was a shooting a few years ago, but there were no other reports found.

Public Comments

Mr. Clark opened the floor for public comments at 1:52 p.m.

Ms. Linetta Threatt (908 Knotts Hill Place), homeowner in the Huntsboro subdivision, shared her concerns about a possible public easement on the land adjacent to the 10-acre lot and her property at the dead-end of the subdivision, and the impact the easement would have on the value of property in the Huntsboro Subdivision and in the new subdivision.

Mr. Andy Petesch, introduced himself on behalf of the applicant, and introduced Mr. Richard Stockett of Hughes Development LLC (developer of the property) and Mr. Chase Smith (traffic engineer). Mr. Petesch stated that they held a community meeting in March of 2019 and then another in October 2020, during which that many residents expressed concerns about the public easement. Mr. Petesch stated that they have a condition in the rezoning application, which will be submitted soon, that prohibits access to the parcel from Knotts Hill Place. Mr. Petesch shared several maps for the planned development and explained that there would be a signification buffer between the new development and the homes on Knott Hill Place.

There were no other public comments.

Board Discussion

Mr. Clark requested that the chair of the Land Use Committee present its findings from the committee meeting in March. Mr. Jenkins reported that the committee heard similar presentations and discussed similar issues. After the committee received clarification that there were sufficient environmental buffers and easements from the west, the committee recommended the application for consideration of the full Board.

Mr. Clark opened the floor for board discussion at 2:06 p.m.

Mr. Van Dyk asked staff if a traffic impact analysis was required. Mr. Nishawala stated that the density for this parcel did not warrant an analysis, but the petitioner did have one completed by Ramey Kemp & Associates. The findings were that there was no significant increase in traffic that would raise any concerns.

Mr. Kadis inquired if property owners to the west of the property received notification letters. Mr. Nishawala stated that the letters were sent to property owners within a radius of 1000-ft in all directions. Mr. Nishawala further stated that the petitioner sent letters to a broader range of owners within a radius of 1200-ft (mailed in 2019) and 1500-ft (mailed in 2020) in all directions.

Mr. Kadis asked why the board would not be hearing the rezoning petition at the same time as the proposed Land Use Plan Amendment. Mr. Maloney stated that the rezoning at this time, would not be consistent with the current land use plan. An amendment to the Land Use Plan must be a legislative decision independent of the rezoning and it needs to occur prior to the rezoning decision.

Mr. Clark asked staff if this amendment would be consistent with PLANWake that was just approved by the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Nishawala stated that it will be in the community reserve designation and therefore in line with PLANWake.

Mr. Van Dyk requested the board view the map showing the proximity to municipal utilities and inquired of staff if the development is consistent with surrounding use of infrastructure, to which Mr. Nishawala confirmed that it is. Mr. Petesch further clarified that the development will be supported by private community water and sanitary sewer systems already serving Rutledge Landing. This fact is consistent with the comprehensive plan to use current infrastructure to support increased density and growth. Mr. Petesch added that there is a 25-ft tree conservation requirement around the boundary of this property, which is also consistent with the comprehensive plan by preserving existing vegetation.

Mr. Wells asked if the County would share responsibility in future traffic control measures should they be needed. Mr. Maloney stated that the County would not have any responsibility in this area.

Mr. Jenkins asked the applicant to share the planned layout of the proposed development. Mr. Petesch shared a mapped plan, that Mr. Stockett explained showed 35-36 units that match neighboring Rutledge Landing in size and will be built by the same building company. Mr. Petesch pointed out that this plan has less parcels than would be allowed if maximum density was utilized.

Mr. Clark commented that he reviewed the parcel on iMaps and agrees that the amendment is consistent with board objectives to increase density closer to existing roadways and interchanges and agrees that the amendment is consistent with PLANWake.

There being no further comments, Mr. Clark asked the Board to entertain a motion.

Motion

Mr. Kadis made a motion to recommend that the East Raleigh/Knightdale Area Land Use Plan be amended to reclassify the 10.09 acres comprising 900 Knotts Hill Place from Residential Less than 1.5 Units per Acre to Residential 1.5 to 4 Units per Acre. The motion was seconded by Mr. Van Dyk and approval was unanimous.