

City of Orangeburg  
Planning Commission Minutes  
May 16, 2024  
6:00 pm

**Members Present**

Guy Best - Chairperson  
Dr. Shirilan Mosley-Jenkins – Vice-Chairperson  
Paula Payton  
Stephon Edwards II-  
Jeanna Reynolds  
Vincent Pendarvis  
John Wolfe

**Staff Members**

Theresa Williams, Assistant City Administrator  
Kenith Salley, Jr., Administrative Coordinator  
Clayton Bozard, Director of Innovation & Technology  
Olivia Singleton, IT Support Technician  
David Epting, Building Official

<b>Citizens from the community</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Press present</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Guest (Developer)</b>	<b>1</b>

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Chairman Best opened Public Hearing at 6:00 PM for consideration of a Zoning District Map change from A-1, Residential Single-Unit District to O-I, Office-Institutional-Residential District for property belonging to Mohammed Nawaz Hussian located at 1132 Boulevard Street, NE, TMS# 0173-05-06-002.000.

Barabara DeWitt Cherry (1028 Dantzler Street) addressed the Planning Commission. She stated, "I have had a disturbance from this address since the last of April until recent from an ambulance transport service. I have endured seven ambulances slamming doors, idling for as much as an hour with no one in it which put out fumes from the vehicle and you cannot go in your yard because of the scent and sirens going off. I have encountered not only ambulances but personal vehicles, it may be as many as seven people or more because it takes more than two people to operate an ambulance. They will yell across the yard at each other, this has happened at 4 o'clock AM until. If this is a transport company, why sirens? All these sounds, rather it is in my living room or in my bedroom, it is very disturbing. I would like for this to stay a residential area."

Jospeh Houck (1031 Dantzler Street) addressed the Planning Commission. He stated, "My house is next to office buildings, and I am across the road from the proposed change. Ms. Cherry lives across the street from me and I can attest to what she is saying. This is a problem with their ambulances parked, it is not just one or two, it is more like seven or eight. They crack the sirens early in the morning at 7:30 AM. I work at night, and I have to hear the noise in the morning. The eyesore situation is horrible. I brought pictures so you can see what it looks like when all their ambulances are parked. It seems to be no regard for the residents in the area. I also have photos on my phone of the diesel smoke coming from the ambulances and drifting over to our residences. We have to cut our HVAC systems off in our homes, so the ventilation system does not suck the diesel fuel smell into our houses. They did not consider anybody in the community. Again, with the sirens cracking in the morning, I work at night, and that is the first thing I hear that wakes me up. If it was maybe a tax office or financial service with people coming in and out with their cars, that is one thing. But this is a community, and we do have a right to be residences where we have always been residences. To hear these ambulances running for one to two hours every morning without any regard, it is a complete eyesore to be there. If it was just an office, that would be fine. This is a diesel van parking lot on grass with no parking consideration for a business. This is a bad idea for this community."

Cliff Yates (567 Ellis Avenue) addressed the Planning Commission. He stated, "I have been alarmed for a while about the changing or transferring from residential in the city to other zones. There is only a finite amount of residential property within a city. If we keep zoning it for something else, we will have no City residences and I thought that was the whole point of having a city. It has gotten to the point where there is neighborhood degradation and the only houses we see in terms of new construction are habitat houses. We cannot build a city off habitat housing. For the last 15 to 20 houses, I have seen all of them have been habitat

houses. I understand everyone need a place to stay, but with projected disposable income of new inhabitants it is not going to benefit the city as much especially when we are trying to revitalize downtown.”

Kerry Bourgeois (633 Stanley Street) addressed the Planning Commission. She stated, “I work Guardian Angels Medical Transportation. The terrible eyesore, nuisance business as it has been called, which is totally exaggerated and untrue. We are the business that would like to occupy 1132 Boulevard Street and we are a decent, law-abiding business that just wants to be there. We have businesses on three sides of us and only one house behind us. I do not think we are making that much of a difference in the neighborhood as in detrimental, we are actually improving it by being there. I just ask that you consider this rezoning change because we are a business in Orangeburg. We do what we are supposed to do, we are not loud and obnoxious, we are not eyesores, we are not turning our sirens on and off and we are not leaving vehicles running for 2 hours, who can do that with current gas prices? It was rented to us as a commercial property and the landlord jumped the gun because he thought that it was taken care of, he did not understand the process that well. We do have a lease for it be a commercial property and we ask that you uphold that.”

Dawn Houck (1031 Dantzler Street) addressed the Planning Commission. She stated, “I have witnessed three times the same employee who is running his siren at 7:15 AM. I can describe the employee to them if they would like. It is only one employee that does it. Not only are they parking all those ambulances on the same side of the property, but they are exiting out of that property where there is not a driveway. It does smell, it is an eyesore, and she is okay with it because she does not have to live there that is where she does business.”

Mohammed Hussian (1132 Boulevard Street) addressed the Planning Commission. He stated, “I am here today for 1132 Boulevard Street property.”

Chairman Best asked, “Are you a resident of Orangeburg?”

Mr. Hussian replied, “No, I am a resident of Columbia. We recently bought the property on that street as well as the strip mall and the house. We have invested a lot in that property to make it look good and bring a lot of businesses to the area. We have seen that the house that we bought is the only house that is residential, everything else is commercial. We found it hard for anyone to occupy the house so we thought it would be best to change it to commercial to go along with what is already there on that street. We found a good tenant that has good experience and good reputation in Orangeburg. Since we are new here, we did not know the process, so we signed a lease with them. We later found out there is a different process required before converting into an office building. So, I am here requesting that you help to convert it to an office building.”

Christopher Tyler (675 Stanley Street) addressed the Planning Commission. He stated, “I am the operations Manager at Guardian Angels Medical Transportation. Regardless of how they feel about this, this is disingenuous. I inherited the property for less than 48 hours before I received a cease and desist. I had no business activity to run out of the property. I provide ambulance service in Orangeburg; I have done it for a long time, I am not an emergency service. All my employees park in a strip mall due to the back of my property is a liquor store, across the street from it is a gas station, and on the other side there is a bank. We are an A-1 transport that has been operating for four years. I really do not see what the problem is.”

Gloria Rickenbacker Hutto (2018 Staley Street) addressed the Planning Commission. She stated that, “I understand where they are coming from, I would not want this service by my home either. I have dealt with a similar situation in my neighborhood where they misused the ambulance vehicle and that is a disgrace. Ambulances are supposed to be used to take people to the hospital. You are supposed to use these vehicles with common sense, if they don't have common sense by misusing them and rather upset the neighbors, they need to find another place to go.”

Chairman Best asked three times if there was anyone else to speak at the Public Hearing. There was no one to speak. Chairman Best closed the Public Hearing.

## **REGULAR MEETING**

### Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Wolfe to approve the minutes for April 18, 2024. The motion was unanimously approved.

### New Business

Chairman Best stated, “Under New Business to consider a zoning district map change from A-1, Residential, Single-Unit District to O-I, Office-Institutional-Residential District for the following

property, 1132 Boulevard Street, NE, TMS# 0173-05-06-002.000. Mrs. Williams would you like to address the Commission?"

Assistant City Administrator, Theresa Williams stated, "Yes, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Mohammed submitted all his required documents for approval and has met all the criteria."

Chairman Best asked the Commission, "Does anyone have any questions for Mrs. Williams?"

No questions were asked.

A motion was made by Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Payton to deny the request. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Best stated, "Consideration for Conditional Use of a Land Development other than a subdivision located at 761 Russell Street, TMS# 0152-20-01-005.000, TMS# 0152-20-01-007.000, a portion TMS# 0152-20-01-002.000, a portion TMS# 0152-20-01-006.000. Mrs. Williams would you like to address the Commission?"

Mrs. Williams stated, "Ms. Niemann with the development company submitted an application for conditional use and has met the criteria for approval. Ms. Niemann is here today, and I would like to yield the floor to her, if she would like to speak."

Sarah Niemann, (property developer 322 Tattersall Court, Sugar Hill, GA) addressed the Planning Commission. She stated, "I was here last month when we talked about B-1 to B-2 rezoning but tonight I am here to talk about the Land Development project other than a Subdivision. I am here to answer any questions you may have regarding the project design criteria. Since my last visit, it was previously a lot larger but has now reduced to 40 units which complies with the B-1 zoning for 16 units an acre."

Commissioner Payton asked, "Is this what the apartments would look like from what is shown on the renderings?"

Sarah Niemann stated, "It is an idea of what to expect. Eventually we will have to go in front of site plan review to get approval. I have been communicating with the City internally on what kind of style they would like to see, but this rendering just gives you a feel of what a style could look like"

Vice-Chairperson Jenkins asked, "The style that you are considering, would it brick or wood?"

Sarah Niemann stated, "It will be a mix of hardy plank, brick, and or stone. A brick style building would incorporate the style of downtown as you go down Russell Street. There will be no vinyl siding. Everything would be either a combination of brick, hardy plank and or stone."

Commissioner Edwards asked, "Do you know if there will be fire sprinklers system in the buildings?"

Sarah Niemann stated, "I think I am required. We are proposing a three-story building and I believe after a certain height you are required. Whichever code it falls under, if required, yes, a fire sprinkler system will be installed."

Commissioner Payton asked, "When it comes to the maintenance of other properties you own, how often are they maintenance?"

Sarah Niemann stated, "We hire a full-time maintenance person that will be on-site on a daily basis. They will handle anything that arises such as ground clean up and minor repairs that are needed inside the buildings. We will have two personnel full-time leasing agents. Our independent management company manages all our properties, they come to make sure we are in compliance. They will serve as other eyes and ears for us. For example, me not being here daily. As far as maintenance issues, the tenants would report it to the staff and the staff would take care of it."

Commissioner Payton stated, "Is that including ground maintenance?"

Sarah Niemann stated, "Yes, we will also hire a landscaping firm to do any edging, mowing and weeding that pertains to the property."

Commissioner Payton stated, "The reason I asked, I want to make sure it complements the location near the Edisto Gardens."

Sarah Niemann stated, "One hundred percent, I have spoken with several residents, and we discussed placing a landscape buffer which will go along the edge of the property with assorted flowers."

Commissioner Pendarvis stated, "I believe the parking area is adjacent to Seaboard Street is that correct?"

Sarah Niemann stated, "Correct."

Commissioner Pendarvis stated, "Is the common area facing Seaboard Street also?"

Sarah Niemann stated, "It will be an L-shaped building. So how you would enter and exit the property would be inside the L, so vehicles would come in off Seaboard Street."

Commissioner Pendarvis stated, "Where would the parking be located?"

Sarah Niemann stated, "The building would run down Russell Street and perpendicular to Riverside Drive. The parking lot would then be on the backside. So, as you are traveling on Russell Street you will not see any parking. All parking spaces will be housed on site, we do not require any off-site parking."

Commissioner Pendarvis stated, "Will each resident have at least two parking spaces?"

Sarah Niemann stated, "It is a mixture of 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom Units. Most will be 1- and 2-bedroom Units. So, we would average 1.5 parking spaces per unit. Not everyone in an apartment community typically owns two vehicles. One vehicle is typically sufficient, but we will have extra parking, that is the minimum requirement, and we will exceed that."

Chairman Best asked the Commission, "Are there any more questions for Ms. Niemann?"

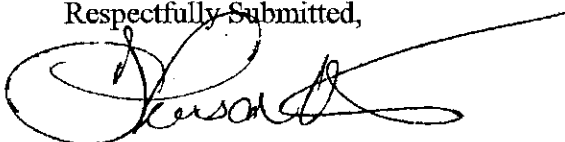
No questions were asked.

A motion was made by Commissioner Payton, seconded by Commissioner Edwards to approve the request. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Chairman Best, seconded by Commissioner Edwards to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Theresa Williams", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Theresa Williams  
Assistant City Administrator