

Planning Commission  
Minutes - April 7, 2025

1. Call to Order: Chairman Mehserle called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.
2. Roll Call: Chairman Mehserle; Commissioners Hayes, Guidry, Ross, Wharton and Williams were present. Commissioner Jefferson was absent.

Staff: Emily Carson – Community Planner and Christine Sewell – Recording Clerk

Guests: Chad Bryant, Dustine Knowles, Joydi Ovalle, Matt Widner, Amy Harrelson, Robert Epstein, Cynthia Green, Geroqe Falldine, Aaron Wood, Dr. Felix Smith, Tyler Lawhorn, and Dr. Sandanspan

3. Invocation- was given by Commissioner Hayes
4. Approval of Minutes from March 10, 2025, regular meeting and March 24, 2025, work session  
Commissioner Guidry motioned to approve as submitted; Commissioner Hayes seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.
5. Announcements - Chairman Mehserle referred to the notices as listed.
  - Per O.C.G.A. 36-67A-3 if any opponent of a rezoning or annexation application has made campaign contributions and/or provided gifts totaling \$250 or more within the past two years to a local government official who will consider the application, the opponent must file a disclosure statement.
  - Policies and Procedures for Conducting Zoning Hearings are available at the entrance.
  - Please place phones in silent mode.
6. Citizens with Input – None
7. New Business
  - A. Public Hearing (Planning Commission decision)

1. **VAR-0024-2025**. Variance for reduction in setback requirements for property located at 115 Perimeter Road. The applicant is Chad Bryant, Bryant Engineering, LLC

Ms. Carson read the applicants' request which was for a variance to reduce the front setback by 20 feet and the rear setback by 6 feet. The applicant has designed the development to accommodate the additional right-of-way necessary for the future widening of Perimeter Road. The design also aligns with setback standards in the forthcoming modifications to commercial design standards. Providing the variance will allow for a more walkable development with pedestrian pathways and the required 10-foot landscaping buffer at the front of the development and adequate parking in the rear. Based on the analysis stated and the site plan presented by the applicant, staff recommends approval of the variance request due to the constraints created by the shape of the parcel and future widening of Perimeter Road.

Chairman Mehserle opened the public hearing at 6:09pm and called for anyone in favor of the application. Mr. Chad Bryant, Bryant Engineering advised the development has been designed following the current standards and the layout will have the parking in the rear and through the process discovered the water line location, which the request will accommodate avoidance of. Chairman Mehserle called for anyone opposed; there being none the public hearing was closed at 6:12pm.

Commissioner Ross motioned to approve as submitted; Commissioner Wharton seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

**2.PLAT-0031-2025.** Preliminary plat for The Cottages at Courtney Hodges for property located at 319/341 Gen. Courtney Hodges Blvd. The applicant is Chad Bryant, Bryant Engineering.

Ms. Carson advised the applicant is requesting approval of the entire 34-lot subdivision. Four-foot sidewalks run throughout the subdivision coupled with common courtyard spaces, affording opportunities for residents to connect during daily activities or courtyard events. The entire subdivision meets the NMU minimum standards for cottage courts. Staff recommends approval of the proposed preliminary plat with the following conditions: The developer shall submit proof of coordination with Houston County 911 prior to staff signing the preliminary plat.

Chairman Mehserle opened the public hearing at 6:16pm and called for anyone in favor of the request. The applicant, Mr. Chad Bryant reiterated the request but advised there would be no internal streets so no names would be required; Ms. Carson confirmed and agreed. Chairman Mehserle inquired on the layout and parking structures. Mr. Bryant advised the garages will be 2-car detached with 2 parking spaces which encourages the interaction of the community and there will be visitors parking, and the dwellings are placed in a reasonable walking distance from the garages. A ribbon driveway is provided for emergency access. Mr. Bryant noted the development is similar to R-3 but with no roads.

Chairman Mehserle called for anyone opposed; there being none the public hearing was closed at 6:23pm.

Commissioner Hayes asked if they will be rental or home ownership; Mr. Bryant advised privately owned and the development will be under a Homeowners Association that will take care of everything on the exterior. Mr. Bryant further advised there will be abundant areas of lawn, dense shrubbery and trees and a screening wall facing Courtney Hodges Blvd.

Commissioner Hayes motioned to approve as submitted; Commissioner Ross seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

B. Informational Hearing (Planning Commission recommendation – Scheduled for public hearing before City Council on May 6, 2025)

**1. SUSE-0025-2025.** Special exception for short-term rental for property located at 1100 Kenwood Drive. The applicant is Cheryl Gillen, Southern Valley Homes, Inc.

Ms. Carson advised the owner proposes to offer the entire 3-bedrooms/2-bath house for short-term rental for a maximum of 8 occupants. The premises were inspected for compliance with minimum health and safety requirements for use and occupancy (per Section 2-3.6) and passed. Property is currently a permitted STR but is undergoing a change in ownership, which requires a new STR permit.

Chairman Mehserle opened the public hearing at 6:32pm and called for anyone in favor of the request. Mr. Dustin Knowle 316 Perth Court, on behalf of the applicant who are his relatives, supported the request and advised they will be seasonal residents and when not occupying will do the short-term rental. Chairman Mehserle called for anyone opposed; there being none the public hearing was closed at 6:34pm.

Commissioner Ross motioned to recommend approval of the application as submitted to Mayor and Council; Commissioner Wharton seconded; all in favor and was unanimously recommended for approval.

**2.SUSE-0033-2025.** Special exception for short-term rental for property located at 816 Forest Avenue. The applicant is Joydi Ovalle, Summer Fund, LLC

Ms. Carson advised the property owner to offer the entire 3-bedrooms/2-bath house for short-term rental for a maximum of 8 occupants. The premises were inspected for compliance with minimum health and safety requirements for use and occupancy (per Section 2-3.6) and passed, along with staff responses.

Chairman Mehserle opened the public hearing at 6:36pm and called for anyone in favor; there being none called for anyone opposed; there being none the public hearing was closed at 6:37pm.

Commissioner Guidry inquired if the applicant was present; Ms. Joydi Ovalle, 104 Van Drive, was present and Commissioner Guidry asked what mid-term rental was for the property. Ms. Ovalle advised the home is rented long term (over 30 days) on occasions, and when not, would like the opportunity of a short-term rental.

Commissioner Wharton motioned to recommend approval of the application as submitted to Mayor and Council; Commissioner Hayes seconded; all in favor and was unanimously recommended for approval.

**3.ANNX-0040-2025.** Annex and rezone property on Airport Road Parcel No. 000310 033000 from Houston County R-AG to City of Perry, R-TH Residential Townhouse District. The applicant is Matt Widner, Widner & Associates, Inc.

Ms. Carson read the applicants' request, along with staff responses to annex the entirety of the parcel into the City of Perry. It will be developed into a townhouse subdivision, if approved. The lot is proposed to be zoned R-TH, Townhouse Residential, and a portion of the lot is going to the residence south of this parcel. There are no known covenants or restrictions on the property which would preclude the uses permitted in the proposed zoning district. It was further advised sewer capacity is limited but there is a 12" line that exists adjacent to the parcel that does have the capacity, but a study is near completion, which should be done by the end of the week if not sooner to confirm. The wetlands delineations will be required along with possible traffic improvements per GDOT, but these requirements are governed under the site plan review, whereas the request before the Commission is the zoning only.

Commissioners Williams requested confirmation if the 12" line would be used and Commissioner Hayes on the capacity currently available. Chairman Mehserle noted the area is part of the comprehensive plan – suburban residential character and the commercial uses adjacent for the community and housing types at different price ranges.

Chairman Mehserle opened the public hearing at 6:46pm and called for anyone in favor of the request.

Mr. Matt Widner, Winder & Associates 793 Poplar Street – advised he has worked with staff on a use for the best possible opportunity for a unique development that will fit well and compliant the surrounding area. Commissioner Wharton inquired if a number of units was known; Mr. Widner advised the request was for the zoning first, which if approved, will then proceed to the next steps, as there will be wetland delineations required, buffer requirements, conferring with an environmental specialist, and once those requirements are known can begin the process of a site development plan. Commissioner Wharton asked why the R-TH zone; Mr. Widner advised there is more density in R-TH designation. Commissioner Hayes asked how the proposed development will align with the existing

area; Mr. Widner advised it will adhere to all the city requirements and will include green space and walkability, and the commercial component will be light in nature for something such as a sandwich shop or eatery, or dry cleaners.

Chairman Mehserle called for anyone opposed.

Amy Harrellson – 101 Fairway Oaks Drive – manager of Houston Springs – concerned with the sewer availability as that is what hinders the continued development of Houston Springs and there are currently sewer issues on their property. Concerned with the walkability portion and that the development may want residents to walk in Houston Springs and what type of housing will be built. Mr. Widner addressed the walkability question – there will be sidewalks in the development itself and on Sam Nunn Blvd to the commercial development; no intention of residents walking in Houston Springs.

Robert Epstein – 202 S. Houston Springs Blvd. – concern with traffic as it will increase with this development and when Jack Link's is operational and when will sewer be increased

Cynthia Green – 365 Spyglass Lane – will the development accomplish what the owner wants with regard to the expense and amount of acreage

George Falldine – 111 Fairway Oaks Drive – is the number of units known, concerned with the availability of utilities, impact on Houston Springs while being developed, will increase the population, does not want walkability into Houston Springs, there are a lot of uncertainties

Aaron Wood – 104 Quail Ridge Lane – there is a city park adjacent and buffer requirements and traffic increase when there are events at the city park

Dr. Felix Smith – 206 Airport Rd. Ext. – too many unknowns, concern with sewer capacity and buffers

Tyler Lawhorn – 113 Airport Rd. Ext. – concerned with the population density increase and would like additional information on the comprehensive plan and goals of the city; to the north is medium density residential; traffic concerns and ecological impact on creek bed.

There being no further comments Chairman Mehserle closed the public hearing at 7:12pm.

Commissioner Wharton asked about the buffers/foilage/berm barriers; Mr. Widner advised there would be as required by the ordinance. Commissioner Hayes noted it was important to remember the request presented was for the zoning classification and there were many more steps required before the applicant could begin site development. Mr. Widner advised all requirements will be adhered with regard to traffic, engineering and environmental compliance, with hydrology and topography requirements; the request this evening is for the zoning classification.

Commissioner Hayes motioned to recommend approval of the application as submitted to Mayor and Council. Motion died due to a lack of a second.

Commissioner Hayes expressed concern in tabling when the request was for the zoning classification; Commissioners Ross, Wharton and Williams felt additional information from the applicant should be provided with regard to the sewer capacity and the study results.

Commissioner Ross motioned to table the application due to the uncertainties; Commissioner Williams seconded; all in favor with Chairman Mehserle and Commissioner Hayes opposed; resulting vote was 4-2 to table until the May meeting.

**4.ANNX-0041-2025.** Annex and rezone property on Airport Road Parcel Nos. 00310 032000, 000310 036000, and portion 000310 033000 from Houston County R-1 & R-AG to City of Perry C-2, General Commercial District. The applicant is Matt Widner, Widner & Associates, Inc.

Ms. Carson read the applicants' request which was to annex 3.15 acres of land into the City of Perry for proposed neighborhood commercial development with a zoning of C-2, General Commercial District, along with staff responses.

Chairman Mehserle opened the public hearing at 7:28pm and called for anyone in favor of the request.

Mr. Matt Winder advised the commercial would be low density light commercial retail and would support the neighborhood with possible uses such as a sandwich or ice cream shop. Dr. Sandanspan the use would be for light commercial, perhaps a small medical office.

Chairman Mehserle called for anyone opposed; there being none the public hearing was closed at 7:30pm.

Commissioner Wharton asked staff if sewer capacity was a concern for the parcel; Ms. Carson advised it was not.

Commissioner Ross motioned to recommend approval to Mayor and Council of the application as submitted; Commissioner Wharton seconded; all in favor and was unanimously recommended for approval.

**5.RZNE-0042-2025.** Rezone property at 2009 Sam Nunn Blvd from R-1 to C-2. The applicant is Matt Widner, Widner & Associates, Inc.

Ms. Carson read the applicants' request which was to rezone the entire 2.43-acre parcel from R-1 to C-2, General Commercial, along with staff responses. The applicant plans to develop the parcel into a commercial use that supports the surrounding residential areas, creating neighborhood-level commercial services where there currently are none.

Chairman Mehserle opened the public hearing at 7:36pm and called for anyone in favor of the request.

Mr. Matt Widner reiterated the request and advised it would be developed as light commercial complementing the surrounding area. Commissioner Wharton asked if all the parcels would be developed as one; Mr. Widner advised they would be.

Chairman Mehserle called for anyone opposed; there being none the public hearing was closed at 7:39pm.

Commissioner Williams motioned to recommend approval to Mayor and Council of the application as submitted; Commissioner Wharton seconded; all in favor and was unanimously recommended for approval

8. Other Business – None

9. Commission questions or comments- None

10. Adjournment: there being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting was adjourned at 7:41pm.