Minutes of the Town of Huntersville Planning Board

The Town of Huntersville Planning Board met at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 28, 2023.

Call to Order/Roll Call
Chairman Sny called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.
Present: J. Sny, F. Gammon, S. Swanick, C. Boyd, J. Wright, T. Loomis, G. Baber (arrived at 6:32 p.m.), S. Hensley & J. Henson

Approval of Minutes
Item 2A. Consider approval of the February 28, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes
Motion: S. Swanick made a Motion to Approve the amended February 28, 2023, minutes. J. Henson seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion passed (8-0-1) with S. Hensley abstaining as he was not present at the February 28, 2023, meeting.

Public Comments
No comments

Action Agenda

F. Gammon asked J. Glass, Town Attorney for clarification on what the Town Board may consider for Charter Caldwell Station Subdivision Sketch Plan recommendation from the Planning Board. J. Glass confirmed that the Planning Board motion will be included in the staff report presented to Town Board for this item.

Item 4A: Consider Recommendation for Charter Caldwell Station Subdivision Sketch Plan, a request by Charter Properties, Inc. to subdivide 5.51-acres located at 17223 Old Statesville Road (NC 115) (Parcel #s 005-44-317, 005-44-318, 005-44-319 & 005-44-331) for a 39-unit rental townhome development.
D. Peete, Principal Planner entered his staff report into the record, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference. Staff reviewed the request and requested block length modification.

J. Henson asked if the application was submitted prior to the amendment to the zoning ordinance related to transit attached housing. Staff confirmed that is correct, this application predates those amendments so 100% attached housing is permitted and the hearing will be quasi-judicial.

The applicant Eric Williams, Charter Properties, 1520 South Blvd, Suite 215 Charlotte, NC commented that they have worked with staff to comply and would be available to answer questions.

C. Boyd asked for confirmation that the trash collection access has been confirmed as workable in the proposed alleys, and if the apartments amenity center will be accessible to these residents as well. Staff confirmed that they are designed per standard for trash collection. The applicant confirmed that the amenities will be available to these residents which is in keeping with current development practices and has worked well on other properties that they have developed.

J. Sny asked the applicant if they had any concerns or disagreed with any of the outstanding requirements as indicated by staff. The applicant stated they do not have any concerns and the Charlotte Water willingness to serve letter has already been provided.

F. Gammon asked staff to confirm that there is no commuter train and the only reason the applicant can achieve this density is because the application predates the amendment to the zoning ordinance which addresses density within quarter mile of proposed transit stations. Staff confirmed the application does predate the amended ordinance.

Motion: F. Gammon made the Motion to Approve, in considering the Charter Caldwell Station Subdivision Sketch Plan, the Planning Board finds: The application is complete; The Charter Caldwell Station Subdivision Sketch Plan is consistent with adopted public plans and polices and complies with all applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, and the Huntersville 2040 Community Plan as stated within the finding of facts in Parts 2 - 4 of the staff report. The proposed Charter Caldwell Station Subdivision lies completely within the 2040 Community Plan Town Core Future Land Use Character Area, and is supported by Polices: EOS 8.3, EOS 10, LU 2.1, LU 5.3, LU 7.1, LU 8.3, LU 9.1, LU 10.1, and T 5.1.

The Planning Board recommends approval of the Charter Caldwell Station Subdivision Sketch Plan, and the requested block length modification for the NC 115 block, not to exceed 775 feet. The recommendations for approval are contingent upon the applicant working with Staff to resolve: The administrative amendment to Caldwell Station Apartments Phase 2 must be approved in order for the subdivision to be approved; townhome elevations are too similar, provide greater variation between building elevations for review; add a note regarding storm system by-pass through Caldwell Station Apartments - Phase 2 required for Charter Caldwell Townhomes; town Transportation comments must be addressed; water quality concept plan must be approved by Staff; and address any remaining redline comments with staff.

J. Henson seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Other Business

Item 5A: Discussion: Overview and Update on Mobility Plan

H. Maloney, Senior Transportation Planner provided an update on the Mobility Plan as included in the agenda packet.

S. Hensley asked if there was a plan to create an app or something more public facing to utilize the GIS layer. H. Maloney commented that is something that could come out of this and creating the GIS layer is the first step. There was discussion regarding updating Google maps to include the walking and biking layers.

F. Gammon asked if the Greenway Trails and Bikeways Commission is involved in the Mobility Plan, and who will be the user of the Mobility Plan. H. Maloney commented she is attending and updating the Greenway Trails and Bikeways Commission on the Mobility Plan as well. This Plan is really a technical project to internally synthesize all the plans and get them up to date. The outcome will result in a public

facing map and formal report. J. Simoneau shared that the findings will affect anyone who does a project in Huntersville to identify what is planned for the public right of way. H. Maloney also commented that this will be used for funding requests to establish priority, which will be shaped by public input.

Item 5B: Discussion on townhomes as an allowable use in the Town Center (TC) and Neighborhood Residential (NR) zoning districts

B. Richards, Assistant Planning Director commented that the 2040 Community Plan identified a variety of housing types that are encouraged including townhomes. A variety of 100% attached townhome projects from other regions were presented to highlight the variety of housing stock options that are being developed. Currently staff receives numerous phone calls asking where this product type would be permitted.

J. Henson commented that he also receives numerous calls regarding townhome developments. Additionally, townhomes provide more flexibility in range of pricing with affordability to luxury being an option.

S. Swanick asked if one building one lot is currently allowed and staff confirmed that is correct. Currently that means only apartments or single-family are an allowed option for infill development. Townhomes could encourage ownership for infill development. Research to determine how to creatively structure the ordinance to not encourage large townhome communities versus true infill development would be important.

F. Gammon asked why 100% attached townhomes are not currently allowed. Staff reviewed the current methods that 100% attached can be achieved under the zoning ordinances. Applicants have the option to seek rezoning to Transit Neighborhood Development (TND) which allows 100% attached. Previously the ordinance was in place to allow the 100% attached within a quarter mile of the transit stations to create some flexibility where it made sense, then that was amended and removed based on the transit not coming any time soon. Additionally, you can currently have one building on one lot of multiple townhomes, but you cannot have multiple buildings. This research would be to identify new ways to possibly allow 100% attached and what caps to possibly place on that.

F. Gammon stated he does not have a problem with a discussion moving forward and looking at if three needs to be a change. He asked if we are ready to move away from single-family to multi-family homes and would that depend on the zoning. Staff stated that the discussion would include those questions and the many ways that this could be approached.

S. Swanick commented that the discussion will likely continue beyond the expiration of his term with the Board so he will share his comments now. He thinks this should be discussed and staying within Town Center for now makes sense to control the effects of the experiment. What is permitted in neighboring and nearby municipalities should be researched and identifying what lots could even potentially be built upon to identify potential impact and to include in the possible future amendment.

F. Gammon recommended not eliminating other zoning districts until there is discussion because the research may show this would be well suited for another district as well. S. Swanick concurred.

G. Baber commented that he would be in support of the discussion and research. He commented on a recent article regarding Cornelius position on townhomes in their downtown area and encouraged that be included in the research and discussion.

J. Henson commented that the one building on one lot can be placed in several zoning districts which equates to three story apartment buildings and likely greater density versus a townhome community that would be a major subdivision and likely trigger other possible improvement requirements.

F. Gammon commented that it all depends on the piece of land.

J. Simoneau shared the recently approved text amendment which increases the setbacks for apartments when adjacent to existing single-family developments. The Town has not been overrun with apartments because the ordinance only allows one building on one lot but now is the time for discussion on it because we are getting more conversations regarding this.

J. Sny asked the Board via straw poll of their interest in staff leading discussion and research on this topic. The straw poll was unanimous (9-0) in support of discussion and research. Staff will begin the research and return to the Planning Board for discussion.

Adjourn
Motion: C. Boyd made a Motion to Adjourn. T. Loomis seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Approved this 25 day of APRIL 2023.

Chairman or Vice Chairman

Board Secretary