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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

TO: North Merritt Island Dependent Special District Board Members

FROM: Cindy Fox, Planning & Zoning Manager

SUBJ: Planning and Zoning Staff Comments
October 13, 2016

DATE: September 13, 2016

The following comments are compiled by the Planning and Zoning staff and are reflections of a combination of technical reviews. These are presented to the North Merritt Island Dependent Special District Board and the Board of County Commissioners as a collection of known facts surrounding each proposal and their relationship to the policies of the Comprehensive Plan. It is hoped that these known facts and policy statements will assist each member in their individual decision-making efforts as additional information is received through the public hearing process. The material contained in these comments will be provided to the Commissioners in staff briefings. Any matter discussed in staff briefings not contained in this review will be disclosed at the Board of County Commissioners meeting.

STAFF COMMENTS PREPARED BY:

Planning & Zoning Office
NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

Legend of Terms:

FLU Map - Future Land Use Map of Comprehensive Plan
FLUE - Future Land Use Element

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES OF THE FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT

Administrative Policies in the Future Land Use Element establish the expertise of staff with regard to zoning and land use issues and set forth criteria when considering a rezoning action or request for Conditional Use Permit, as follows:

Administrative Policy 1

The Brevard County zoning official, planners and the director of the planning and zoning staff, however designated, are recognized as expert witnesses for the purposes of Comprehensive Plan amendments as well as zoning, conditional use, special exception and variance applications.

Administrative Policy 2

Upon Board request, members of the Brevard County planning and zoning staff shall be required to present written analysis and a recommendation, which shall constitute an expert opinion, on all applications for zoning, conditional uses, comprehensive plan appeals, vested rights or other applications for development approval that come before the Board of County Commissioners for quasi-judicial review and action. The Board may table an item if additional time is required to obtain the analysis requested or to hire an expert witness if the Board deems such action appropriate. Staff input may include the following:

Criteria:

- A. Staff shall analyze an application for consistency or compliance with comprehensive plan policies, zoning approval criteria and other applicable written standards.
- B. Staff shall conduct site visits of property which are the subject of analysis and recommendation. As part of the site visit, the staff shall take a videotape or photographs where helpful to the analysis and conduct an inventory of surrounding existing uses. Aerial photographs shall also be used where they would aid in an understanding of the issues of the case.
- C. In cases where staff analysis is required, both the applicant and the staff shall present proposed findings of fact for consideration by the Board.
- D. For re-zoning applications where a specific use has not been proposed, the worst case adverse impacts of potential uses available under the applicable land use classification shall be evaluated by the staff.

Administrative Policy 3

Compatibility with existing or proposed land uses shall be a factor in determining where a rezoning or any application involving a specific proposed use is being considered. Compatibility shall be evaluated by considering the following factors, at a minimum:

Criteria:

- A. Whether the proposed use(s) would have hours of operation, lighting, odor, noise levels, traffic, or site activity that would significantly diminish the enjoyment of, safety or quality of life in existing neighborhoods within the area which could foreseeably be affected by the proposed use;

- B. Whether the proposed use(s) would cause a material reduction (five per cent or more) in the value of existing abutting lands or approved development.
- C. Whether the proposed use(s) is/are consistent with an emerging or existing pattern of surrounding development as determined through an analysis of:
 - 1. historical land use patterns;
 - 2. actual development over the immediately preceding three years; and
 - 3. development approved within the past three years but not yet constructed.
- D. Whether the proposed use(s) would result in a material violation of relevant policies in any elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

Administrative Policy 4

Character of a neighborhood or area shall be a factor for consideration whenever a rezoning or any application involving a specific proposed use is reviewed. The character of the area must not be materially or adversely affected by the proposed rezoning or land use application. In evaluating the character of an area, the following factors shall be considered:

Criteria:

- A. The proposed use must not materially and adversely impact an established residential neighborhood by introducing types or intensity of traffic (including but not limited to volume, time of day of traffic activity, type of vehicles, etc.), parking, trip generation, commercial activity or industrial activity that is not already present within the identified boundaries of the neighborhood.
- B. In determining whether an established residential neighborhood exists, the following factors must be present:
 - 1. The area must have clearly established boundaries, such as roads, open spaces, rivers, lakes, lagoons, or similar features.
 - 2. Sporadic or occasional neighborhood commercial uses shall not preclude the existence of an existing residential neighborhood, particularly if the commercial use is non-conforming or pre-dates the surrounding residential use.
 - 3. An area shall be presumed not to be primarily residential but shall be deemed transitional where multiple commercial, industrial or other non-residential uses have been applied for and approved during the previous five (5) years.

Administrative Policy 5

In addition to the factors specified in Administrative Policies 2, 3, and 4, in reviewing a rezoning, conditional use permit or other application for development approval, the impact of the proposed use or uses on transportation facilities either serving the site or impacted by the use(s) shall be considered. In evaluating whether substantial and adverse transportation impacts are likely to result if an application is approved, the staff shall consider the following criteria:

Criteria:

- A. Whether adopted levels of service will be compromised;
- B. Whether the physical quality of the existing road system that will serve the proposed use(s) is sufficient to support the use(s) without significant deterioration;
- C. Whether the surrounding existing road system is of sufficient width and construction quality to serve the proposed use(s) without the need for substantial public improvements;
- D. Whether the surrounding existing road system is of such width and construction quality that the proposed use(s) would realistically pose a potential for material danger to public safety in the surrounding area;
- E. Whether the proposed use(s) would be likely to result in such a material and adverse change in traffic capacity of a road or roads in the surrounding area such that either design capacities would be significantly exceeded or a de facto change in functional classification would result;
- F. Whether the proposed use(s) would cause such material and adverse changes in the types of traffic that would be generated on the surrounding road system, that physical deterioration of the surrounding road system would be likely;
- G. Whether projected traffic impacts of the proposed use(s) would materially and adversely impact the safety or welfare of residents in existing residential neighborhoods.

Administrative Policy 6

The use(s) proposed under the rezoning, conditional use or other application for development approval must be consistent with (a) all written land development policies set forth in these administrative policies; and (b) the future land use element, coastal management element, conservation element, potable water element, sanitary sewer element, solid waste management element, capital improvements element, recreation and open space element, surface water element and transportation elements of the comprehensive plan.

Administrative Policy 7

Proposed use(s) shall not cause or substantially aggravate any (a) substantial drainage problem on surrounding properties; or (b) significant, adverse and unmitigatable impact on significant natural wetlands, water bodies or habitat for listed species.

Administrative Policy 8

These policies, the staff analysis based upon these policies and the applicant's written analysis, if any, shall be incorporated into the record of every quasi-judicial review application for development approval presented to the Board including rezoning, conditional use permits and vested rights determinations."

Section 62-1151 (c) of the Code of Ordinances of Brevard County directs "The planning and zoning board shall recommend to the board of county commissioners the denial or approval of each application for amendment to the official zoning maps based upon a consideration of the following factors:

- (1) The character of the land use of the property surrounding the property being considered.
- (2) The change in conditions of the land use of the property being considered and the surrounding property since the establishment of the current applicable zoning classification, special use or conditional use.
- (3) The impact of the proposed zoning classification or conditional use on available and projected traffic patterns, water and sewer systems, other public facilities and utilities and the established character of the surrounding property.
- (4) The compatibility of the proposed zoning classification or conditional use with existing land use plans for the affected area.
- (5) The appropriateness of the proposed zoning classification or conditional use based upon a consideration of the applicable provisions and conditions contained in this article and other applicable laws, ordinances and regulations relating to zoning and land use regulations and based upon a consideration of the public health, safety and welfare.

The minutes of the planning and zoning board shall specify the reasons for the recommendation of approval or denial of each application."

CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS (CUPs)

In addition to the specific requirements for each Conditional Use Permit (CUP), Section 62-1901 provides that the following approval procedure and general standards of review are to be applied to all CUP requests, as applicable.

- (b) *Approval procedure.* An application for a specific conditional use within the applicable zoning classification shall be submitted and considered in the same manner and according to the same procedure as an amendment to the official zoning map as specified in section 62-1151. The approval of a conditional use shall authorize an additional use for the affected parcel of real property in addition to those permitted in the applicable zoning classification. The initial burden is on the applicant to demonstrate that all applicable standards and criteria are met. Applications which do not satisfy this burden cannot be approved. If the applicant meets its initial burden, then the Board has the burden to show, by substantial and competent evidence, that the applicant has failed to meet such standards and the request is adverse to the public interest. As part of the approval of the conditional use permit, the Board may prescribe appropriate and reasonable conditions and safeguards to reduce the impact of the proposed use on adjacent and nearby properties or the neighborhood. A nearby property, for the purpose of this section, is defined as any property which, because of the character of the proposed use, lies within the area which may be substantially and adversely impacted by such use...

...In stating grounds in support of an application for a conditional use permit, it is necessary to show how the request fulfills both the general and specific standards for review. The applicant must show the effect the granting of the conditional use permit will have on adjacent and nearby properties, including, but not limited to traffic and pedestrian flow and safety, curb-cuts, off-street loading and parking, off-street pickup of passengers, odor, glare and noise, particulates, smoke, fumes and other emissions, refuse and service areas, drainage, screening and buffering for protection of adjacent and nearby properties, and open space and economic impact on nearby properties. The applicant, at his discretion, may choose to present expert testimony where necessary to show the effect of granting the conditional use permit.

(c) *General standards of review.*

- (1) The planning and zoning board and the board of county commissioners shall base the denial or approval of each application for a conditional use based upon a consideration of the factors specified in section 62-1151(c) plus a determination that the following general standards are satisfied. The Board shall make the determination whether an application meets the intent of this section.
- a. The proposed conditional use will not result in a substantial and adverse impact on adjacent and nearby properties due to: (1) the number of persons anticipated to be using, residing or working under the conditional use; (2) noise, odor, particulates, smoke, fumes and other emissions, or other nuisance activities generated by the conditional use; or (3) the increase of traffic within the vicinity caused by the proposed conditional use.
 - b. The proposed use will be compatible with the character of adjacent and nearby properties with regard to use, function, operation, hours of operation, type and amount of traffic generated, building size and setback, and parking availability.

- c. The proposed use will not cause a substantial diminution in value of abutting residential property. A substantial diminution shall be irrebuttably presumed to have occurred if abutting property suffers a 15% reduction in value as a result of the proposed conditional use. A reduction of 10% of the value of abutting property shall create a rebuttable presumption that a substantial diminution has occurred. The Board of County Commissioners carries the burden to show, as evidenced by either testimony from or an appraisal conducted by an MAI certified appraiser, that a substantial diminution in value would occur. The applicant may rebut the findings with his own expert witnesses.
- (2) The following specific standards shall be considered, when applicable, in making a determination that the general standards specified in subsection (1) of this section are satisfied:
- a. Ingress and egress to the property and proposed structures thereon, with particular reference to automotive and pedestrian safety and convenience, traffic flow and control, and access in case of fire and catastrophe, shall be: (1) adequate to serve the proposed use without burdening adjacent and nearby uses, and (2) built to applicable county standards, if any. Burdening adjacent and nearby uses means increasing existing traffic on the closest collector or arterial road by more than 20%, or 10% if the new traffic is primarily comprised of heavy vehicles, except where the affected road is at Level of Service A or B. New traffic generated by the proposed use shall not cause the adopted level of service for transportation on applicable roadways, as determined by applicable Brevard County standards, to be exceeded. Where the design of a public road to be used by the proposed use is physically inadequate to handle the numbers, types or weights of vehicles expected to be generated by the proposed use without damage to the road, the conditional use permit cannot be approved without a commitment to improve the road to a standard adequate to handle the proposed traffic, or to maintain the road through a maintenance bond or other means as required by the Board of County Commissioners.
 - b. The noise, glare, odor, particulates, smoke, fumes or other emissions from the conditional use shall not substantially interfere with the use or enjoyment of the adjacent and nearby property.
 - c. Noise levels for a conditional use are governed by section 62-2271.
 - d. The proposed conditional use shall not cause the adopted level of service for solid waste disposal applicable to the property or area covered by such level of service, to be exceeded.
 - e. The proposed conditional use shall not cause the adopted level of service for potable water or wastewater applicable to the property or the area covered by such level of service, to be exceeded by the proposed use.
 - f. The proposed conditional use must have existing or proposed screening or buffering, with reference to type, dimensions and character to eliminate or reduce substantial, adverse nuisance, sight, or noise impacts on adjacent and nearby properties containing less intensive uses.

- g. Proposed signs and exterior lighting shall not cause unreasonable glare or hazard to traffic safety, or interference with the use or enjoyment of adjacent and nearby properties.
- h. Hours of operation of the proposed use shall be consistent with the use and enjoyment of the properties in the surrounding residential community, if any. For commercial and industrial uses adjacent to or near residential uses, the hours of operation shall not adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the residential character of the area.
- i. The height of the proposed use shall be compatible with the character of the area, and the maximum height of any habitable structure shall be not more than thirty-five (35) feet higher than the highest residence within 1000 feet of the property line.
- j. Off-street parking and loading areas, where required, shall not be created or maintained in a manner which adversely impacts or impairs the use and enjoyment of adjacent and nearby properties. For existing structures, the applicant shall provide competent, substantial evidence to demonstrate that actual or anticipated parking shall not be greater than that which is approved as part of the site plan under applicable county standards.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER FOR A REZONING REQUEST

Section 62-1151(c) sets forth factors to consider in connection with a rezoning request, as follows:

“...The planning and zoning board shall recommend to the board of county commissioners the denial or approval of each application for amendment to the official zoning maps based upon a consideration of the following factors:

- (1) The character of the land use of the property surrounding the property being considered.
- (2) The change in conditions of the land use of the property being considered and the surrounding property since the establishment of the current applicable zoning classification, special use or conditional use.
- (3) The impact of the proposed zoning classification or conditional use on available and projected traffic patterns, water and sewer systems, other public facilities and utilities and the established character of the surrounding property.
- (4) The compatibility of the proposed zoning classification or conditional use with existing land use plans for the affected area.
- (5) The appropriateness of the proposed zoning classification or conditional use based upon a consideration of the applicable provisions and conditions contained in this article and other applicable laws, ordinances and regulations relating to zoning and land use regulations and based upon a consideration of the public health, safety and welfare...”

These staff comments contain references to zoning classifications found in the Brevard County Zoning Regulations, Chapter 62, Article VI, Code of Ordinances of Brevard County. These references include brief summaries of some of the characteristics of that zoning classification. Reference to each zoning classification shall be deemed to incorporate the full text of the section or sections defining and regulating that classification into the Zoning file and Public Record for that item.

These staff comments contain references to sections of the Code of Ordinances of Brevard County. Reference to each code section shall be deemed to incorporate the section into the Zoning file and Public Record for that item.

These staff comments contain references to Policies of the Brevard County Brevard County Comprehensive Plan. Reference to each Policy shall be deemed to incorporate the entire Policy into the Zoning file and Public Record for that item.

These staff comments refer to previous zoning actions which are part of the Public Records of Brevard County, Florida. These records will be referred to by reference to the file number. Reference to zoning files are intended to make the entire contents of the cited file a part of the Zoning file and Public Record for that item.

DEFINITIONS OF CONCURRENCY TERMS

Maximum Acceptable Volume (MAV): Maximum acceptable daily volume that a roadway can carry at the adopted Level of Service (LOS).

Current Volume: Building permit related trips added to the latest MPO traffic counts.

Volume with Development (VOL W/DEV.): Equals Current Volume plus trip generation projected for the proposed development.

Volume/Maximum Acceptable Volume (VOL/MAV): Equals the ratio of current traffic volume to the maximum acceptable roadway volume.

Volume/Maximum Acceptable Volume with Development (VOL/MAV W/DEV): Ratio of volume with development to the Maximum Acceptable Volume.

Acceptable Level of Service (ALOS): Acceptable Level of Service currently adopted by the County.

Current Level of Service (CURRENT LOS): The Level of Service at which a roadway is currently operating.

Level of Service with Development (LOS W/DEV): The LOS that a proposed development may generate on a roadway.