

Doug McDowell

From: James Aberson <j.e.aberson@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 16, 2021 10:30 AM
To: Doug McDowell
Subject: Re: Agenda for the November 16, 2021 Planning & Zoning Board (Updated) DO NOT REPLY ALL

Doug,
Could you distribute this to the Zoning Board members please?

Dear Board Members,

My sister, Amy Beverly, and I own the property at 4820 First Coast Hwy. Please let me explain what's going on with the rezoning request. My family has been on the island since the mid 50s when my great-grandparents purchased the property at 3146 South Fetcher. My grandparents then purchased our property in 1964 to be near my great-grandfather because of failing health. My Grandfather was a retired WWII veteran of the Merchant Marines. In fact, my great-grandparents discovered the island while picking him up in Mayport on multiple occasions. My grandmother taught at Emma Love Elementary school. My father worked multiple shut-downs of Rayonier. My uncle retired from Container Corporation. I have lived in that house for varying periods of time since I was four years old. My sister has all of her life. I spent a week one summer rebuilding a car engine with my father and uncle. I rode dirt bikes on the property before it was divided. I explored in the woods as a boy. I've weathered tropical storms and hurricanes there.

We are a working class family with roots on this island and our tax dollars helped pay for the roads, water, sewer, schools and all of the programs and services of the county for seventy years. My father inherited the front half of the property when my grandparents died, his brother got the other half. After my mother's death in 1991 my father moved into the house. My sister and I inherited the property in 1993 after his death. We both grew up spending holidays and extended vacations on the island. For several years my wife and I spent two or three weekends a month here. We love this property.

We have held out selling our property for fifty years while we have watched land develop all around us, but we can't hold out any longer. We made the decision to sell over three years ago, not because of the current Real Estate BOOM. For several reasons, we have to sell the property. Like I said we are working class folks. We don't have large bank accounts or trust funds. I have been in a wheelchair for forty years. I have worked, when I wasn't in school, all of those forty years. But now my body is failing and I can't continue to work. I've paid all of the taxes and upkeep on the property myself. And it's been a struggle. As you know taxes continue to rise every year. My sister can't help. She is in financial straits because of a deadbeat ex-husband. After I retire my income will be half of what it is now. The taxes alone on the property will be more than ten percent of my Social Security payment. We HAVE to sell the property. And we aren't making a killing by selling it either. Remember the proceeds will be split between us. And that has to last the rest of our lives. My wife and I had hoped to use our proceeds from the sale to purchase a home on the island and retire here. But we can't even find a reasonable property that we could afford with half of the sale price. We just can't afford to live here.

When I looked into selling the property, the Future Land Use Map indicated High Density Multi-Family so that's what we listed it as. That is what the Planning Commission decided was the appropriate zoning for controlled, reasonable growth for that area. As you may recall, in 2010 the Nassau County Future Land Use Map was updated. Stakeholders, Steering Committees, Nassau County Planning & Zoning and other local experts deemed this property to be on the FLUM as "High Density". The property is currently zoned RS-1 which the Land Development Code for Nassau County interprets as low density. A zoning change to RG-1 is consistent with the existing FLUM and adjacent property "The Colony", which is

also zoned RG-1. Further, a zoning change would also provide a transition with the adjacent commercially zoned properties.

As for the trees. I know every inch of that property and every tree on it. I grew up with them. There are beautiful old oaks on that property that I climbed on as a kid. I don't want them cut down, and they won't be. They are protected by law. I have spoken with the developer. We have done a tree survey and I promise you he isn't going to clear-cut the property and throw up apartments. His plan is to build tasteful high end townhomes disturbing as few trees as possible and in accord with other buildings in the area. In addition, rezoning is not really the time to address trees anyway. That will come at the site plan approval. As will a traffic study if requested. That's the appropriate time to have input on those things.

I'm sure you have sold a house in the past. You may have repainted, spruced up the landscaping, or made a few repairs so that you could get as much for your property as possible. My house is a cinder block structure built in the forties. Some of the docks or garages built on the island are worth more than my house. The only way I can get the maximum amount for my property is to have it zoned to match the property surrounding it. I have commercial property to the right and left of me, and multi-family behind me. My property is an island of single family zoning.

As I said before, we have to sell this property. We just can't afford to keep it. And that breaks my heart. As I said, I've spent my whole life on this island.

As a person with a disability I've never asked for special treatment and I'm not asking for that now. I just want the property to match what's around it. With this rezoning my sister and I can sell the property as planned. I'm not exaggerating when I say this is an existential issue for us. I just can't tell what selling this property means to my family. Thank you.

James Aberson

Amy Beverly

On Mon, Nov 15, 2021 at 12:59 PM Doug McDowell <dmcdowell@nassaucountyfl.com> wrote:

DO NOT REPLY ALL TO THIS MESSAGE

Good Afternoon. Updated information has been added to this agenda. Link to the updated agenda for the November 16, 2021 regular meeting of the Planning & Zoning Board is here:

<https://nassaucounty.novusagenda.com/AgendaPublic/MeetingView.aspx?MeetingID=995&MinutesMeetingID=-1&doctype=Agenda>

The following have been updated:

- Corrected draft minutes for the November 2, 2021 meeting (*Note: Board member Morris erroneously listed twice under members present*)
- Additional letters in opposition to application R21-002 (Tab C) received as of 12pm today.

Also, please welcome our newest Board Member, Mr. Philip Griffin, representing District 1-At Large.

PDF of agenda is attached.

This agenda includes items affecting properties in Commission Districts 2.

Those wishing to provide input can do so by following instructions under Tab “A” of the agendas.

APPLICANTS:

- Please find the staff reports for your applications included as an attachment to the items. Please review the reports and staff’s recommendations prior to the meeting.
- Please make sure you or your authorized agent is present at the meeting beginning at 6:00pm. The meeting will be held in the Commission Chambers located in the James S. Page Governmental Complex located at 96135 Nassau Place, Yulee, FL 32097
- Please contact the Planning Department (904) 530-6300 if you have any questions or concerns.

BOARD MEMBERS:

Pursuant to Executive Order 20-246 from the Office of the Governor, As of November 1, 2020 all local government bodies must resume meeting in person, and a quorum must be present in person (6 members) to conduct business.

Board members may only attend remotely if they qualify under the following conditions:

1. You have a medical issue which prevents you from attending.
2. You have been placed in quarantine
3. You have tested positive for COVID-19
4. You feel ‘at risk’ due to the # of area COVID-19 cases

If you qualify for any of the above, and wish to attend remotely please contact us as soon as possible so we may arrange for remote attendance to the meeting.

Doug McDowell, AICP | Senior Planner

Nassau County | Planning and Economic Opportunity

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PLANNING DEPARTMENT
NASSAU COUNTY, FLORIDA

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"Our Constitution was made for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other." --
John Adams