CITY OF WINTER PARK
Planning & Zoning Board

Regular Meeting
Welcome Center

MINUTES

January 10, 2012
7:00 p.m.

Mr. Krecicki called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Welcome Center. Present: Chairman Drew Krecicki, Sarah Whiting, George Livingston, James Johnston, Randall Slocum, Tom Sacha, Peter Gottfried and Robert Hahn (alternate). Staff: Planning Director Jeffrey Briggs, and Recording Secretary Lisa Smith.

Approval of minutes – December 6, 2011

Motion made by Mr. Sacha, seconded by Mr. Livingston to approve the December 6, 2011, meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

REQUEST OF ROLLINS COLLEGE FOR: CONDITIONAL USE APPROVAL TO REBUILD STRONG HALL LOCATED AT THE CORNER OF HOLT AVENUE AND HANNA WAY ON THE CAMPUS OF ROLLINS COLLEGE, ZONED PQP.

Planning Director Jeffrey Briggs explained that Rollins College plans a major redevelopment of the Strong Hall dormitory building on campus adjacent to the corner of Holt Avenue and Hanna Way. He noted that as a building over 10,000 square feet, this project requires Planning Board and City Commission conditional use approval. He provided a detailed overview of the scope of the project. Due to the age (72 yrs. old) and condition of Strong Hall, there is a need to demolish and rebuild the structure and that the redevelopment is to happen in two phases. He added that the layout and scale of the project is sensitive to and respectful of the adjacent College Quarter neighborhood across French Avenue. Those portions of Strong Hall facing the neighborhood are two stories in scale and the second floor is terraced back from the first floor to provide articulation to the scale. The architectural character and detail is consistent with the quality throughout the Rollins College campus. The three story component (Pod #4) is facing Holt Avenue and away from the adjacent neighborhood. The staff believes that these plans will be an improvement both to the Rollins College campus as well as the public’s visual perspective from French and Holt Avenues. He noted that prior to the Planning Board meeting; Rollins College hosted neighborhood meetings that invited the neighbors to come see these proposed plans. Staff understands that the neighborhood reaction has been very favorable. Staff recommended approval. Mr. Briggs responded to Board member questions and concerns.

Director of Facilities at Rollins College, Scott Bitikofer and David Lamm, Contractor, were present to address Board member questions and concerns. They concurred with the comments made by staff. No one wished to speak in favor of or in opposition to the request. Public Hearing closed.

The Commission complimented the plans and presented questions to the applicant. The street front setback on Holt Avenue was discussed and consensus was to insure that it lined up with the adjacent Cross Hall.

Motion made by Mr. Krecicki, seconded by Mr. Gottfried to approve the request with the condition that the same setback or greater as Cross Hall be observed. Motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.
REQUEST OF PERTH LANE PROPERTIES, LLC FOR: CONDITIONAL USE APPROVAL TO BUILD A NEW TWO STORY, 22,090 SQUARE FOOT MEDICAL OFFICE BUILDING AT 100 PERTH LANE, ZONED OFFICE (O-2).

Planning Director Jeffrey Briggs explained that Perth Lane Properties LLC (Dr. Bruce Breit – Women’s Care Florida) plans to demolish their existing, one story 7,300 sq. ft. medical ob-gyn building and rebuild a new two story, 22,090 sq. ft. medical building on an expanded property at 100 Perth Lane. He noted that as a building over 10,000 square feet, this project requires Planning Board and City Commission conditional use approval. He provided a detailed overview of the scope of the project. The existing medical office is functionally obsolete and they have outgrown the space. When that new medical office building project is complete, the existing building will be demolished and that land used for the remainder of the required parking. He also reviewed parking requirements, tree preservation and architectural articulations. He said that everything on this project meets code and is very well thought out and designed. He discussed the major design effort was to make the “rear” of the building look more like the “front” of the building along Loch Lomond Drive. To that end small entry columns intrude into the setback at six feet in lieu of ten feet and that minor variance is part of the approval sought. All other aspects of this project meet code and further the Planning staff believes that these plans will be an improvement both to the Hospital campus environment as well as the public’s visual perspective of this property. Staff recommended approval.

Dr. Bruce Breit and David Lamm, contractor, were present to address concerns of the Board. They were in agreement with the comments made in the staff report. No one wished to speak in favor of or in opposition to the request. Public Hearing closed.

The Board posed several questions to the applicant regarding design features of the project and the timing and coordination of the project. The Board members agreed that this was a well designed and welcome improvement for the Hospital campus environment.

Motion made by Mr. Johnston, seconded by Mr. Krecicki to approve the request subject to the applicant erecting a minimum 6-8 foot wall/monument sign to screen the back-flow preventer from the street view. Motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

REQUEST OF DENNING PARTNERS, LTD. TO: AMEND THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP TO CHANGE THE EXISTING DESIGNATION OF SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL TO HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL ON THE PROPERTY AT 861 W. CANTON AVENUE.

REQUEST OF DENNING PARTNERS LTD. TO: AMEND THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP SO AS CHANGE THE EXISTING ZONING DESIGNATION OF SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-1A) DISTRICT TO MULTI-FAMILY (HIGH DENSITY R-4) DISTRICT ON THE PROPERTY AT 861 W. CANTON AVENUE.

Planning Director Jeffrey Briggs stated that Denning Partners, Ltd. (Dan Bellows) has under contract for purchase, the property at 861 W. Canton Avenue, which is immediately east of and adjacent to the Denning Drive apartment project at 550 N. Denning Drive. That project was approved in January 23, 2006. He said that this is a request for the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning change from the existing single family designations (R-1A) to high density residential (R-4) on the property which is 75 feet wide by 250 feet deep (18,750 sq. ft.). Mr. Briggs reviewed current zoning regulations for both the R-1A and R-4 zoning districts.

Mr. Briggs indicated that while the future development plans of the applicant are not firm at this time, one of the requirements for a rezoning submission is to “include prospective plans indicating the desired development scenario proposed as a result of an approval”. So in keeping with that requirement, the applicant has presented the his desired development option for the property as an addition to the Denning Drive apartments. That property, at this time is under contract to Eastwind LLC, who is trying to be selected as part of the State’s tax credit program to convert that Denning Drive apartment project to elderly affordable apartments. It is
unknown at this time if they will be selected and proceed with that project. However, when the Denning Drive Apts. are built (either as senior affordable or market rate apts.), this rezoning and expansion could be a very good decision because it allows “front door” faces on both sides of the building. The other beneficial outcome is that since the applicant’s plans show six apt. units per floor (18 units) and the maximum is 10 units; then either the building will be downsized to two stories on this property or hopefully this entire wing of the project will be reoriented to pull it back further from Canton Avenue. Unfortunately the approved plans approved in 2006 call for a 50 foot tall stair tower sitting 20 feet from Canton Avenue across the street from single family homes. In either case, the contract arrangement between Denning Partners Ltd. and Eastwind LLC provides for access from this property to the surplus parking in the parking garage and also access to the common storm water retention system. He provided further insight to staff concerns.

Mr. Briggs expressed that this lot; 75 feet by 250 feet deep is not a typical single family residential environment sitting next to an R-4 development that will be three stories and 42 feet tall. He said that some rezoning is warranted and appropriate in terms of transition, but staff questioned whether R-2 or R-3 is a better choice. This is a very difficult decision to make when you are only asked to decide on the rezoning (not the plans) and you don’t have any idea what the fate of the Denning Drive apartments will be. Once this property is rezoned to R-4, it is never going to be rezoned back to anything lesser in intensity (R-3 or R-2) given the Bert Harris property rights statutes. In either event since R-4 zoning allows 55 feet and five stories of building height, any approval should be restricted to match the scale of the Denning Drive apts. Staff recommendation is for approval with the condition that future development is limited to no more than three stories and 42 feet of building height. Mr. Briggs responded to Board member questions and concerns.

Dan Bellows, applicant, stated that he was in agreement staff report. He outlined the plans presented and the opportunities it gives to improve the exterior façade appearance of the project, improve storm water drainage for these properties, and potentially increase the setback of the building to Canton Avenue. He responded to Board member questions and concerns.

Lurline Fletcher, 790 Lyman Avenue and Linda Washington, 321 North Capen Avenue, spoke in opposition to the property going to high density residential. They expressed their desire to have the property remain as single family residential. No one else wished to speak concerning the request. Public Hearing closed.

The Board members discussed the request. The Board members recognized that the decision for this one property was likely to be precedent setting for the other similar narrow and deep (R-1A) properties to the east on Canton Avenue. Mr. Gottfried expressed that this is a situation where the Planning Board needs to be proactive and study this block to determine that proper zoning and transition in density and building height that should occur in this area. (Mr. Briggs explained that that effort had been done before by the Comp. Plan Task Force but no consensus was reached. He agreed to bring back this issue to P&Z for review.)

Mr. Johnston expressed his recognition that the density and height increases were significant from R-1A to R-4 and that this was a significant change but he felt that given the location and dimensions of this lot it is not a desirable location for a single family home. Thus, the best outcome for the property would be as an addition to the Denning Drive Apt. project because it would result in a better project both functionally and visually. There was general agreement on that point by other Board members but discussion ensued whether the transition to R-3 or R-2 should start on this property to lower heights/densities or whether it starts further east. Mr. Krecicki and Mrs. Whiting expressed that they would prefer a rezoning only up to R-3 to start that transition on this property. Mr. Livingston indicated that the Board still has to approve any building project (via conditional use) on this project and we could use that approval to institute the transition.

Motion made by Mr. Gottfried, seconded Mr. Johnston to approve the comprehensive plan amendment single family residential to high density residential. Motion carried unanimously by a 5-2 vote (Mr. Krecicki and Mrs. Whiting dissenting)

Motion made by Mr. Gottfried, seconded by Mr. Livingston to approve the rezoning from single family residential (R-1A) district to multi-family (high density R-4) with the caveat that staff study the entire
block and bring their findings back to the Board. Motion carried with a 5-2 vote. (Mr. Krecicki and Mrs. Whiting voted against the motion.

REQUEST OF WINTER PARK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY LTD FOR; TO CONSTRUCT A 470 SQUARE FOOT, SECOND FLOOR ADDITION ONTO THE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED RESTAURANT PAVILION BUILDING ON THE PROPERTY AT 400 WEST NEW ENGLAND AVENUE, ZONED C-2.

Planning Director Jeffrey Briggs indicated that on May 23, 2011, the City Commission approved a rezoning of the property at 400 W. New England to C-2 and also approved a conditional use to construct a one story, 470 square foot “restaurant” pavilion building with outdoor patio seating. He said that this request is to amend that conditional use approval to add a second story to that 470 square foot building. It is a “significant change” per the Code to add an additional floor to any conditional use building project unless subsequently approved by the City Commission. He pointed that that the second floor is substantially completed. The applicant (who is the property owner and contractor) decided while it was being built to add the second floor. He was under the impression that the recent rule change making the threshold for a “significant change” something larger than 500 sq. ft exempted them. However, a “significant change is also adding an additional story to a building so this approval is required. So the job was stopped and thus this (after-the-fact) request. On the plus side, at least we know what it is going to look like, scale-wise. Staff explained that the rationale for the change in plans from the applicant is to maintain the symmetry of this new two story building adjacent to the existing two story building. To the staff, while we wish the process had been followed of permission first; rather than forgiveness; the scale of the two stories is compatible with this location. Staff recommended approval. Mr. Briggs responded to Board member questions and concerns.

Dan Bellows, the applicant, was present. He noted that the statements made in the staff report are correct. He said that as the change was vertical and not horizontal, he thought the changes were not going to be an issue. He apologized to the Board for the sequence of this approval and responded to Board member questions and concerns.

Lurline Fletcher, 790 Lyman Avenue, spoke in opposition to the request. No one else wished to speak in favor of or in opposition to the request. Public Hearing closed.

Several Board members indicated that they had visited the site and agreed that while the change is significant in adding another floor, the size of this small building and the scale is compatible with the setting.

Motion made by Mr. Krecicki, seconded by Mrs. Whiting to approve the request. Motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

REQUEST OF THE CITY COMMISSION FOR: A RECOMMENDATION ON A PROPOSED RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH AN EXPEDITED APPROVAL PROCESS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECTS WITHIN THE CITY.

Planning Director Jeffrey Briggs explained that at the City Commission meeting on November 26, 2011, the Commission discussed a proposed Resolution, requested by Eastwind LLC, to assist the development of the existing Denning Drive apartment project at 550 N. Denning Drive, as a senior affordable housing project. Eastwind LLC is proposing to buy the project and is applying for State affordable housing tax credits. Having a Resolution adopted an expedited review process for affordable housing would help their application. He said that after much discussion, the City Commission directed staff to have the EDAB and the Planning and Zoning Board review the resolution before additional action was taken by the Commission.

The issues highlighted in the resolution are twofold:

- Expedited permitting – affordable housing projects will receive an expedited review process by staff, the P&Z Board and the City Commission
• Policy review of costs to affordable housing – Proposed policies, ordinances, resolutions or plans that affect housing will be reviewed for the impact on the cost of affordable housing projects.

The Housing Element includes the need for expedited permitting for affordable housing projects as follows: **Policy 3-1.2.4. Within one year from the effective date of the Winter Park Comprehensive Plan, the City shall establish a streamlined development review and permitting process for affordable housing developments and redevelopment.**

Mr. Briggs said that the Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) discussed this issue and resolution at their December 13th meeting. They were in agreement that there is no downside to expediting the occasional affordable housing project that may come in. The Resolution does not say affordable housing projects must be approved or given any special consideration. If it is a good project and gets an approval from P&Z/City Commission then assisting with a timely review is warranted for the social good that these projects can bring. It also represents economic development that is good for the City to encourage at this time. As a result, EDAB voted unanimously to support the attached Resolution. Staff recommends that P&Z support the resolution as recommended by EDAB. If not, then the City needs to remove that Policy 3-1.2.4 from the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Briggs responded to Board member questions and concerns.

The Board suggested two minor modifications to the text. One was to delete the “notice” text from the paragraph involving the Development Review Committee since no notice requirement exists. The second was to add “the option” of a density bonus to the first ‘whereas’ clause. No one wished to speak concerning the request. Public Hearing closed.

**Motion made by Mrs. Whiting, seconded by Mr. Livingston to approve the resolution with the modifications discussed. Motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.**

There was no further business. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa M. Smith,  
Recording Secretary