



Planning & Zoning Board Work Session Minutes

May 27, 2025 at 12:00 PM

Chapman Room
401 S. Park Avenue

Present

Alex Stringfellow, David Bornstein, Jason Johnson, Charles Steinberg, Michael Dick, Vashon Sarkisian

Absent

Bill Segal

Staff Present

Director of Planning and Zoning Allison McGillis, Asst. Director/Zoning Official John Harbilas, Planner II Nicholas Lewis, Planner I Corinna Lundgren, Administrative Coordinator Mary Bush, Urban Design Advisors Alex Stringfellow and Taylor Brock

1. Meeting Called to Order

Chairman Bornstein called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

2. Discussion Item (s)

a.

- Updated Design Standards for the Central Business District/Morse Boulevard/Orange Avenue Overlay (attached)
- Upcoming agenda items (if time permits) - Rezone/lot split at 2260 Hawick Lane, lakefront site plans, annexation at 874 Jackson Ave, FLU/Zoning amendment at 1101 Lewis Drive

Mrs. McGillis provided a summary of the agenda items for the upcoming June regular meeting. The first item focused on 2260 Hawick Lane, a larger lot north of Cady Way. The applicant is requesting a rezoning to R-2, which aligns with the property's existing office future land use designation and the zoning already established for much of the block. The plan involves demolishing an existing home, splitting the lot into three R-2 parcels, each meeting minimum lot width requirements, and constructing three single-family homes. The city's Urban Forestry department recommended preserving several mature trees on the site, with the condition that one damaged tree could be removed following proper permits. The tree preservation would require adjustments to building setbacks during permitting to accommodate root zones. Although a community meeting

was held for the application, no attendees showed up, and only minimal inquiries were received, mostly about septic tanks, which will be replaced with city sewer connections. The applicant initially proposed one lift station, but coordination with the city's Water and Wastewater department led to a recommendation for three separate lift stations as a condition of approval. While conceptual elevations were provided, no final designs are yet available. Additionally, a suggestion was made to require front porches to be between five and seven feet deep or allow for side entries to enhance the streetscape design.

The second hearing item discussed addressed the annexation of 874 Jackson Avenue into the city. This property, currently used as a parking lot and zoned commercially in the county, will receive consistent commercial zoning and future land use once annexed. There are no immediate redevelopment plans, but future improvements to West Fairbanks Avenue are hoped for.

The third hearing item involved 1101 Lewis Drive; a small lot proposed for inclusion in the Ravaudage Planned Development area. The applicant received approval from the city's Development Review Committee to proceed. The Planning and Zoning Board will be asked to recommend changing the zoning and future land use to match the Orange County Planned Development classification consistent with the rest of Ravaudage. Final approval will come from the City Commission. This addition will allow two new residential units and over 6,000 square feet of commercial space.

Lastly, two smaller lakefront items were briefly noted. One involved a pergola that had already been constructed and requires retroactive approval from the Board for permitting. The other concerned a fence project. Both items have no reported opposition and are expected to proceed smoothly.

Mrs. McGillis then began discussion on the updated design standards for the Central Business District (CBD), Morse Boulevard, and the Orange Avenue Overlay (OAO). She explained that the Design Guidelines Ad Hoc Committee met over a span of about eight months to go over updating the city's design standards for the Central Business District, the city's downtown, a little bit of Hannibal Square, and Morse Boulevard, as well as the Orange Avenue Overlay. She added that the city had put out a request for an urban design advisor and had chosen a planning firm called Stringfellow Planning and Design. Alex Stringfellow, who is one of the Planning and Zoning Board members, owns the firm and he and his team met with the Design Guidelines Ad Hoc Committee during the eight months to assist with the update.

Mr. Stringfellow then continued discussion and provided a summary of the recommended revisions and additions to the city's design standards by the Design Guidelines Ad Hoc Committee. The discussion primarily focused on the integration and implications of contemporary architecture within the design guidelines for Winter Park,

with particular attention to the Orange Avenue Overlay (OAO) district. It was acknowledged that contemporary architecture is inherently dynamic and subject to ongoing evolution, presenting both opportunities for innovation and challenges in establishing enduring design standards. In contrast to more traditional and historic architectural styles, which offer clearer frameworks, contemporary architecture encompasses a broad and variable range of expressions, complicating efforts to define precise and lasting guidelines.

Concerns were raised regarding the potential for contemporary buildings to disrupt the established architectural character of Winter Park, especially if such structures appear incongruous or overly distinct within the streetscape. The Edith Bush building was frequently cited as an illustrative example of a contemporary design that achieves compatibility through thoughtful use of materials, glazing, and proportions, albeit as a relatively unique instance within the city. The key challenge identified is to balance creative freedom with the need for architectural coherence, particularly along Orange Avenue, where substantial land ownership could significantly influence the district's aesthetic and character.

There was general agreement that while the guidelines should permit flexibility to accommodate architectural innovation, they must also incorporate clear criteria to ensure that contemporary designs exhibit compatibility with the surrounding context. This includes adherence to traditional proportions, material diversity, façade articulation, and scale, thereby empowering the Planning and Zoning Board and related review entities to reject proposals that fail to harmonize with the existing built environment. The concept of compatibility emerged as a central tenet, enabling the preservation of neighborhood character without stifling design evolution.

The utilization of tools such as mood boards was highlighted as beneficial for applicants to effectively communicate design intent, facilitating alignment between innovative architectural concepts and community expectations. The Board also addressed building articulation standards, noting a revision from a 50-foot to a 36-foot interval for façade breaks, which promotes human-scaled, visually engaging development. Additionally, it was observed that certain projects—such as a proposed coffee shop on Morse Boulevard—may require variances that circumvent standard design review processes, underscoring the importance of early engagement and design iteration to ensure compliance with overarching guidelines.

The discussion acknowledged the possibility of legal challenges stemming from the inherent openness of the “contemporary” category and emphasized the necessity of embedding explicit statements regarding compatibility and contextual responsiveness within the guidelines. This approach is intended to guide design review judiciously and safeguard the city's architectural character.

In conclusion, the dialogue reflected a measured and balanced perspective, recognizing the imperative to preserve Winter Park's historic and traditional architectural identity while simultaneously fostering diversity and innovation in design. The forthcoming June Planning and Zoning Board meeting was identified as a critical forum for further deliberation and decision-making aimed at achieving these objectives.

3. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m.

ATTEST:

/s/ Mary Bush, Recording Secretary