

Sumter City-County Planning Commission

April 27, 2011

PD-04-04 (R-1) Reserve at Mill Run (City)

I. THE REQUEST

Applicant: Robert M. Dixon et al

Status of the Applicant: Owner

Request: Request amended Planned Development Ordinance to remove requirement for sidewalks

Location: Reserve at Mill Run subdivision

Present Use/Zoning: Vacant/ Residential Planned Development (PD)

Tax Map Reference: 205-14-02-001
205-14-02-002
205-14-02-018

Adjacent Property Land Use and Zoning: North – Second Mill Pond/ R-15
South – Bi-Lo Shopping Center, Loring Mill Rd / PD
East – Second Mill Pond / R-15
West – Pumpkin Lane/ R-15

II. BACKGROUND

The Reserve at Mill Run is a small residential planned development (PD) that currently consists of 15 lots, two of which have been built to date. The original Ordinance for this PD, titled “**Ordinance PD-04-04 To amend the zoning map of the City of Sumter, South Carolina by rezoning 29.87 acres between Pumpkin Lane and Mill Run Court, Owned by Raymond Capers Dixon et al, from Residential-15 to Planned Development (PD)**”, states as follows:

- I. The Planned Development rezoning shall be with the following conditions:
 1. Gated community with a private drive to be maintained by the owner/developer.
 2. **Sidewalks on at least one side of the street. To be installed at construction of each home or by the developer within 24-months after completing first home construction.**
 3. Parking and traffic as shown on the development plan.
 4. Three common areas and lake area for use as passive recreation.
 5. Entrance sign on both ends; developer to install all traffic control signs.
 6. Single drainage plan as approved through Sumter Soil & Water Conservation District.

The applicant submitted a letter explaining the reason for requesting removal of the sidewalk requirement; please see the attached letter in the packet.



Above: The entrance to The Reserve at Mill Run

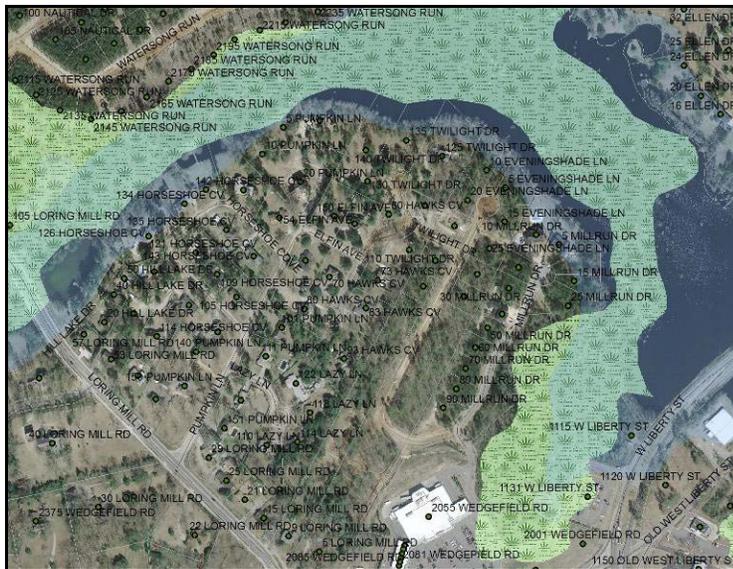


Left and below: The two homes that are currently constructed within the Reserve at Mill Run. The streets are wide and the houses are located on large parcels in a very natural setting. Neighboring subdivisions do not have sidewalks at this time, either, so a sidewalk would not provide connectivity beyond this particular development.

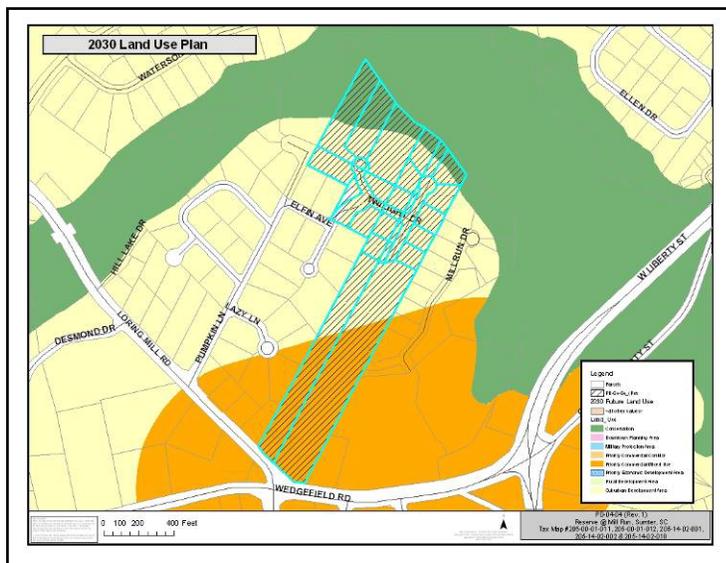


Analysis

Planning for walkable, livable neighborhoods includes the use of sidewalks to facilitate a sense of community and provide safe connectivity for pedestrians. However, there are several reasons why in this particular case, sidewalks are not necessary and are even in some respects detrimental to the overall quality of the area. The Reserve at Mill Run is surrounded by wetland and floodplain conditions. Adding more impervious surface areas, such as sidewalks, can have a negative impact on these environmental conditions. (See map, **below**, showing surrounding wetland and floodplain areas in hatched green and blue, respectively.) Also, since the subdivision was initially approved, only two homes have been constructed. The streets are wide and the houses are located on large parcels (between 15,000 and 36,000 square feet) in a very natural setting. Neighboring subdivisions do not have sidewalks at this time, either, so a sidewalk would not provide connectivity beyond this particular development. With the classification of streets in this neighborhood and the size of the lots, the ordinance would not require sidewalks.



III. COMPATIBILITY WITH 2030 COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN



The Reserve at Mill Run is located for the most part within the Suburban Development (SD) Planning Area, but is surrounded by a Conservation Area, shown in green. Because this is a very sensitive environmental area, eliminating additional impervious surfaces in the nearby development will reduce impact to the wetlands and floodplain. Therefore removing the sidewalk requirement is compatible with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

IV. TRAFFIC REVIEW

The requirement to install sidewalks or the removal of this requirement will not have an impact on traffic considerations within this development.

V. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Soils are Lucy Sand (LuB), and Goldsboro Loamy Sand (Go), which do not appear on the hydric soils list for Sumter County. These sandy soils are very well drained with low humus content, and are generally considered good for development, having few constraints for buildings and road construction.

There are mapped wetlands around the perimeter of the property as shown in the National Wetlands Inventory. The wetland areas do not appear to be located on any of the parcels in question.

There is mapped floodplain on some of the parcels. The area is shown on FIRM Community Panel # 45085C0292D as being in Zone AE.

VI. WATER AND SEWER AVAILABILITY

Both public water and sewer are available to this development.

VII. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Removal of the requirement for sidewalks in this planned development makes sense for two reasons: First, the environmental considerations of both wetland and floodplain conditions surrounding this area make reduction of impervious surface a good choice. Second, this neighborhood is low density, with large parcels and streets ending in cul-de-sacs. The ordinance would not have required sidewalks in this area if it had not been zoned as a Planned Development (PD). Furthermore, the applicant points out in the letter (attached) that neighboring subdivisions do not have sidewalks at this time, so a sidewalk would not provide connectivity beyond The Reserve at Mill Run.

Staff recommends approval of the request.

VIII. DRAFT MOTIONS

Motion #1:

I move that the Sumter City-County Planning Commission approve PD-04-04 (R-1) to remove the requirement for sidewalks in the development.

Motion #2:

I move that the Sumter City-County Planning Commission deny PD-04-04 (R-1) and require sidewalks in the development.

Motion #3:

I move that the Sumter City-County Planning Commission propose an alternate motion for PD-04-04 (R-1).

IX. PLANNING COMMISSION – APRIL 27, 2011

The Sumter City-County Planning Commission at its meeting on Wednesday, April 27, 2011, voted to recommend approval for this request.

X. CITY COUNCIL – MAY 17, 2011 – FIRST READING / PUBLIC HEARING