

Jefferson County
Lloyd Townhall Meeting
Meeting Minutes
September 9th, 2021

Commissioner Betsy Barfield called to order at 6:32 pm.
Sheriff Mac McNeil led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Commissioner Barfield briefly introduced those who were present: Clerk Kirk Reams, Sheriff Mac McNeil, Planning Official Shannon Metty, Planning Assistant Renee Long. Attending via Zoom was County Attorney Scott Shirley

Commissioner Barfield opened with an overview of how the meeting was to be conducted and expectations from the participants. She continued with a brief introduction of herself and her family which are also from this area.

Commissioner Barfield stated that this meeting was called to address what is going on in the area, after hearing concerns from the study which was recently published. She continued by clearly stating that as of today, there has not been a development application filed with the County. She wanted to let her district know that she is always available to discuss and listen to all concerns.

Commissioner Barfield introduced Jeff Hendry and Victor Liotta as the two who will be presenting.

Jeff Hendry, representative from North Florida Economic Development Partnership, opened by explaining the company history and goals. Their main purpose is to establish potential properties for future developments before the need arises, to do “the leg work.” He continued by stating that after vetting around 300 properties over the last few years they have established the Jamaro Property in Lloyd to be a good potential site for what he feels to be light manufacturing or distribution. He stressed the fact that he is not a developer nor is he bringing development to the area, he is just simply trying to find the best properties to provide options for future development.

Victor Liotta, representative from Strategic Sites Inventory, opened by explaining that development cannot be stopped so his goal is to find the right fit for the way the community wants to grow. His main purpose is to ensure the best interest of the County when it comes to Economic Development. He explained this is done through a series of phases and multiple factors are considered in the vetting process, most importantly looking at how it fits in the community.

Mr. Liotta reviewed sites throughout the state of Florida which have been deemed as potential sites, a few of which are located within Jefferson County. After multiple studies which began in 2017 the Jamaro Property was found to be the one site with the highest potential. He stated that Enterprise Florida has a Site Readiness Grant of \$25,000.00 which will verify the information found from the previous desktop studies.

Resident Questions and Concerns:

1. In recommending the properties, do you recommend ones which will require zoning changes?
 - a. In some cases, information is provided if they feel the potential development is a good fit, however they do not handle the rezoning process it is up to the developer.
2. The Jamaro Property borders a neighborhood, is there a specific use for this property?
 - a. Not currently but the surrounding areas play a factor in finding the right fit. This specific property would not be a heavy industry interest, he feels it would be more geared to light manufacturing and distribution. He explained that rather than tell you what can go there, I can better explain what can't.
3. Does the community have a say in what happens?
 - a. There is an opportunity during the development permitting process, but again he is not part of that.
4. As a community, we want to know what is coming and know that it is a good fit for the way we want to grow. There are already areas that are sitting vacant.
 - a. At this time there isn't a specific idea for development.
5. What about the Amazon Center? We were not notified or talked to about that project, and it will affect our area.
 - a. Generally, the Planning Department handles that and provides time for public comment. Unfortunately, Tallahassee (Leon County) isn't required to get the input from Jefferson County. But again, we are not part of that, we are here to find potential land for potential developments.
6. Our county has a significant issue with tax breaks, what kind of community return will the County get?
 - a. The direct change of the property will cause the taxes to increase, and new business will bring new jobs. Keep in mind that some counties offer incentives which drive the desire for companies to look at properties. Most incentives do include tax breaks however there are usually stipulations that come with them to ensure the best interest of the county. Impact studies are also done which are a great way to see the plan projection.
7. What about the waterflow?
 - a. One of the studies which are done is focused on stormwater runoff.
8. Who decides who can apply for development on this property? Does the County request applicants? With no notification, the public just has to deal with what is being done after the application is processed?
 - a. Again, this study is just to provide information. The County will never solicit applicants. The County has an application process which each applicant must adhere to. First, once an application and business plan has been submitted to the Planning Department the neighboring properties within a 500-foot radius are notified. Second, the Planning Commission will do a 30-day notice for their scheduled meeting. Then the Board of County Commissioners will do a 30-day notice for their scheduled meeting and make a recommendation to the BOCC.

Each meeting allows for public comment and involvement, which is highly important. The BOCC will make the final judgement about the project.

9. So, the only people who will be notified are those that are within a 500-foot radius?
 - a. The Land Development Code is the code we follow. Commissioner Barfield agrees that 500-feet is unacceptable and feels that this is something which needs to be addressed the next time the Code is updated.
10. What does the County want to see happen, bedroom community or industrial?
 - a. We don't have an active application at this time so it's hard to say what we will or won't allow. What we can say is we will find the best fit for our community and we will follow the Comp. Plan, which is what determines the way the looks.
11. Is the current owner interested in selling and developing the property?
 - a. There is and has been a known interest in selling the property.
12. What exactly would your company recommend this property be marketed for?
 - a. Light manufacturing or distribution, which again covers a wide range of businesses, but the size of the parcel is what would play a large factor in the interest.
13. Doesn't the current landowner hold all the cards and final say in what happens?
 - a. No, the Land Development Code standards along with community input at the County meetings is what decides the outcome.
14. Has there been any talk about the expansion of I-10?
 - a. Commissioner Barfield stated that she knows there is work to be done but unsure of the areas. She will look into it and keep everyone informed of any changes.
15. How does the firm get paid for all this legwork?
 - a. The City of Monticello did an initial request years ago to Enterprise Florida and they were unable to use the grant, so the County was able to take it over. So, the firm will be paid through the Enterprise Florida grant.
16. Is the current property owner present?
 - a. No, but it is known at the local level that they are interested in selling.
17. With Heritage Hills being what we consider to be a nicer subdivision, we don't want just anything coming in and ruining our way of life.
 - a. It isn't likely with the size of the property that anything like that will come through.
18. What is the number of potential jobs that will be created?
 - a. Because there is not an application currently being reviewed, it is unknown and hard to say. A practical prediction would be no more than 50 jobs.
19. The idea of growth in our community is a good for the future, we need to work together.
 - a. Thank you for your input, the more involvement we have the better.
20. The Barden property is not part of this study does that have an influence?
 - a. The development of the Barden property could impact this property, it would just depend on what occurred first. However, the Barden property is not being marketed.
21. We have heard the Barden property is going to be a recycling dump site, is this true?
 - a. We are not sure what is being done on this property, as we are not a part of that. If it were our firm, we would not recommend it being used for that.

22. Development cannot be stopped, but if we can find a way to find the right fit and come to an agreement on what can be put in there, our community can benefit from it.
 - a. Yes, that is the goal of our company, finding the right fit for the community.
23. Keep in mind that Heritage Hills is not the only ones who will be affected by this development, our entire bedroom community will be impacted.
 - a. Agreed, and we will do our best to keep everyone informed of anything that takes place.
24. Another huge concern is the waterflow and water runoff. Currently the water is absorbed by the trees and the land, if the land is cleared and developed then the Lloyd community gets flooded. Was a regional waterflow study conducted or just the neighborhood study?
 - a. Commissioner Barfield directed this resident directly to Mr. Liotta and Mr. Hendry to help with input on how to improve their study.
25. So why were we never notified about the Amazon center?
 - a. Unfortunately, the counties are not required to work with each other, and a discussion cannot legally take place until an application is filed.
26. Leon County only provided a two week notice on the Amazon Center that is not right.
 - a. Commissioner Barfield this is not Leon County, we are Jefferson County.
27. Noise is going to be a concern if that property is cleared.
 - a. That will be something to address during public comments at the time of development.
28. It is important to have good businesses here to create growth and have jobs to offer and bring people to our community.
 - a. That is why we do this, to find the best fit for the community.

Resident, also Leon County Fire Marshall employee, stated the Amazon Center plans to create 750 jobs year-round except at the holiday peak season which will bring 1200 jobs. There was a public hearing held but it was for Leon County residents.

Commissioner Barfield closed by ensuring the residents that no matter what happens, you will be informed. There will be notices and mailouts and personally, I will do my best to keep everyone informed. From what I am hearing the main concerns are the affects on the quality of life and the tax property values. Another thing to keep in mind, if you want to have a say in how our county grows, step up and be heard. The best time to speak up is when the Land Development Code gets revised, which is what controls what can or can't happen in the county.

Clerk Reams stated that once the final study of this property is completed it will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners.

Adjourned meeting at 8:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Long
Jefferson County Planning Assistant