

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 26, 2017  
REGULAR MEETING  
GREEN COVE SPRINGS PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD**



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**CALL TO ORDER**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Green Cove Springs Planning and Zoning Board was held on Thursday, January 26, 2017 in the City Council Chambers, 321 Walnut Street, Green Cove Springs, Florida.

Chairman Haddock called the meeting of the Planning and Zoning Board to order at 5:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Board Members Present:** Ed Gaw  
Robert Lewis  
Sara Spurrier  
Henrietta Francis, Vice-Chairman  
Marilyn Haddock, Chairman

**Staff Members Present:** Danielle Judd, City Manager  
L.J. Arnold, III, City Attorney  
Janis Fleet, Development Services Director  
Kimberley Farnsworth, Development Services Rep.

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Staff Members Absent:** None

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY BOARD MEMBER LEWIS TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 13, 2016 WITH CHANGES STATED BY CHAIRMAN HADDOCK. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER SPURRIER. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY THE FOLLOWING ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES – BOARD MEMBERS GAW, LEWIS, SPURRIER, VICE-CHAIRMAN FRANCIS AND CHAIRMAN HADDOCK. NAYS – NONE.**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**201700001 - A SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO ALLOW AN AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE BUSINESS WITH A BODY SHOP TO BE LOCATED AT 430 N ORANGE AVE.**

Ms. Fleet went over the procedures of a Special Exception hearing. She reviewed the history of the site in question, stating it was originally built as a car dealership, but has been out of business and vacant since 2004. The property is in the Gateway Corridor which would not allow an automotive service business without a Special Exception. The prospective business must comply with all requirements of the Gateway Corridor zoning and applicable Land Development Regulations.

The Special Exception requested is for an automotive service business with a body shop for Visual FX. The applicant proposes to renovate the existing buildings totaling approximately 18,000 square feet and have submitted a concept plan for the site.

There are nine (9) proposed conditions for the approval of the Special Exception:

- The Special Exception is for an automotive service business with a body shop.
- No outside storage shall be allowed.

- No vehicles “under construction” may be parked outside of enclosed area.
- Ingress and egress for the site shall be limited to North Orange Avenue and Park Street. No ingress and egress for the business shall be permitted off of Magnolia Avenue.
- No rollup doors or service bays shall be allowed on any building fronting Orange Avenue. Roll-up doors, including garage doors shall not be allowed facing Orange Avenue.
- The fence along Magnolia Avenue shall be an 8-ft. high masonry wall or an 8-ft. high vinyl fence with masonry columns to create a buffer of at least 85 % opacity. The landscaping shall be located outside of the wall or fence to be visible from Magnolia Avenue, further restricting visibility to the site from Magnolia Avenue. The fence or wall detail shall be approved by the Development Services Director.
- The elevations of the building shall be approved by the Development Services Director to assure compatibility with surrounding development.
- If the lot is split, the applicant shall submit a lot split application to the City.
- Any development on the site is considered a “Major Development” and will require a site plan approval from the City Council.
- The applicant shall comply with design guidelines of the Gateway Corridor

Chairman Haddock asked the Board if there was any Ex Parte Communication that needed to be shared. She said she had spoken with Mr. Kelly Hartwig, (applicant), outside of the hearing about something unrelated to this meeting.

City Attorney Arnold make comment that we don't get many issues with this much participation. He reminded the Board that their decision will be final and their decision must be based on competent and substantial evidence and not to give weight to hear-say.

**Chairman Haddock opened the public hearing.**

Mr. Kelly Hartwig, applicant, introduced the prospective business owner; Mr. Paul Holman.

Mr. Paul Holman, business owner Visual FX, spoke on his background and his business.

- He has lived in Clay County for 47 years and has been the owner of Visual FX since 2003.
- His business restores high end and exotic cars / hot rods. They do paint work and do not rebuild motors. 80% of his work is custom work and 20% is collision repairs.
- Currently he has two (2) shops in St. Augustine and Orange Park.
- Visual FX is a family owned business and is family oriented.
- Some of the cars they have worked on have been on local T.V. as well as the Discovery Channel.
- No work is done to the cars outside of the building, all work done inside.
- The business hours of operation are Monday – Friday 9:00 am to 6:00 pm. Saturday by appointment only and closed Sunday.

Ms. Spurrier inquired if Mr. Holman wants to own the property and has plans to purchase the site. Mr. Holman stated he is seeking a loan from SBA and has already received a verbal approval of the loan.

Ms. Spurrier asked if the Special Exception would be for the owners of the property. Ms. Fleet responded by saying it would be for the property.

Ms. Spurrier asked Mr. Holman if he would be selling the cars that are worked on in his shop. He answered by saying he does have a dealer's license, but has only sold a few personal vehicles since opening the business. Ms. Fleet added that this Special Exception does not include sales and the applicant would need to come back before the Board to include sales.

Ms. Francis asked about the amount of staff and how many employees his company has. Mr. Holman said this is a family based business and has about 3 to 4 employees. He said this will be their first opportunity for a stand-alone business. He is hoping phase 1 will be completed soon and the rest of the property will take around 10 months to complete.

Mr. Gaw asked about how many cars they work on per year. He also inquired as to how the vehicles arrive to be worked on. Mr. Holman stated they have an average of 10-15 a month and 1 custom job per year.

He said most of them driven in or are towed, some arrive on trailers. “Mechanical” work is not done at the site, but if a part is needed, only new parts are installed. All tuning is done off site. When parts are delivered, they are brought in by tracker trailer. Mr. Gaw stated concern for the loading and unloading of the delivery trucks and the fact they would have to use Orange Ave and Park Street. Magnolia Ave would not be allowed for commercial use. Mr. Holman assured they do not have very many tractor trailer deliveries and he is working with Mr. Hartwig to have an entrance and turn around for the large trucks off the on Park Street entrance.

Mr. Lewis asked what the plans for the existing building are. Mr. Holman stated that Building B, which is at the front of the property, will possibly be used for temporary office space, or the sale of parts. Building C, which is in the back of the property, will be used for a paint booth. Building A would be used as the showroom and work space. An electronic sign for the business will be on Orange Ave.

Ms. Haddock asked about the roll up doors and since they won't be allowed to face Orange Ave, where will they be located and how many will there be. Mr. Holman said they would be facing Magnolia so there would be access to the building and they are planning 4 to 5 roll up doors. Ms. Haddock also inquired about the entrance and its location. Mr. Hartwig said the entrance will need to be relocated closer to the center of the property, but will be on Orange Ave. There will be a side gate, secondary entrance, for the occasional tracker trailer delivery that was previously mentioned. Mr. Hartwig stated the side entrance would have 1 large 24 foot rolling gate. This will be a complete renovation of the property taking about 10 months to complete. When the buildings are complete, he would like it to look like the picture. (See Attachment Labeled Exhibit A).

Ms. Haddock expressed concern for the noise level. She asked if the buildings would be sound proof. Mr. Holman said the buildings would be insulated. Most of the work being done is restoration on the outside of the vehicle.

Mr. John Miller, 411 St. Johns Ave, has property that will be right across from the development. He has 3 concerns: traffic, aesthetics, and noise. After seeing the preliminary sketch, Mr. Miller likes what he sees and says it resembles the Supervisor of Elections building located next door. He is also glad that there is no egress or ingress on Magnolia Avenue. Mr. Miller is concerned about the noise and stated that he would like to see a masonry wall around the property that would act as a sound barrier.

Mr. Rick Beseler, 302 St. Johns Ave, came to support the applicant. He stated he has had trouble renting his property because of the property restrictions along Hwy 17. He requested the Board consider easing the property restrictions regarding the law outside displays. He presented an article to the Board (See Attachment Labeled Exhibit B).

Mr. Lewis stated this property has been vacant for too long and feels that what they are planning is very appealing. From what the applicant has said about the T.V. shows that his business has been involved in, he thinks that this business will be more of a destination site that would bring people to the city. When people come to the city they tend to like it here and want to stay.

Mr. Gaw stated concern for this prospective business being 1 block from a residential area.

In addition, Chairman Haddock recognized the following people from the community who came to the podium to speak:

- Peter Pacifico, 7800 Point Meadows Dr.; in favor of the applicant.
- Jimmy Britts, 406 Polk Ave.; in favor of the applicant.
- Gloria Sinclair, 522 Pine Forest Trail; in favor of the applicant.
- Sherry Gonyon, 929 Anna Ave.; in favor of the applicant.

**Chairman Haddock closed the public hearing.**

**Chairman Haddock re-opened the public hearing.**

Ms. Fleet read a letter written by residents Anne and John Latham of 508 N Magnolia Ave. who were unable to attend the meeting. (See Attachment Labeled Exhibit C).

**Chairman Haddock closed the public hearing.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY BOARD MEMBER LEWIS TO APPROVE 201700001, A SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO ALLOW AN AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE BUSINESS WITH A BODY SHOP AT 430 NORTH ORANGE AVENUE WITH COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONDITIONS INCLUDED IN THE STAFF RECOMMENDATION. THE REQUEST MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE SPECIAL EXCEPTION CRITERIA IN SECTION 90-281 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE. THE SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO ALLOW AN AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE ESTABLISHMENT WITH A BODY SHOP WHICH WILL CONFORM TO ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS OF THE ZONING CODE, INCLUDING THE DESIGN GUIDELINES OF THE GATEWAY CORRIDOR REGULATIONS. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY VICE-CHAIRMAN FRANCIS. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY THE FOLLOWING ROLL CALL: AYES – BOARD MEMBERS LEWIS AND SPURRIER, VICE-CHAIRMAN FRANCIS AND CHAIRMAN HADDOCK. NAYS – BOARD MEMBER GAW.**

**BOARD BUSINESS**

None

**BOARD DISCUSSION / COMMENTS**

Ms. Fleet mentioned there would be a community meeting, next Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4:00 pm, to discuss the revisions to the Landscape and Tree Ordinance.

Ms. Francis made comment about a Black History Month celebration that would take place at 433 Palmetto Ave on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. There will also be a play honoring Black History month to be held on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm, at the Junior High School.

Ms. Haddock stated that Eugene Francis would be at the public library on February 27<sup>th</sup> talking about the 200 year history of his family.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Planning and Zoning Board, this meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

City of Green Cove Springs, Florida

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Marilyn Haddock, Chairman

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Janis K. Fleet, AICP  
Development Services Director