

RICHMOND REGISTER

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Future retail center could change land use

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— The continuation of construction for a proposed outdoor retail center in Richmond will be determined by the passage of four ordinances for zone changes.

Richmond City Commission heard the first readings Tuesday at a regular meeting.

The ordinances concern four homes and one parcel of land that lie within the project's construction area.

In order to continue the development of the proposed retail center, the following properties will need to be re-zoned from agricultural use to business: 1060 Barnes Mill Road, owned by Dwight Broeman, Morris, Robert and Alycia Rozen, Lester Waldman and Andrew C., Thomas A. and Margaret A. Ruckern; 1075 Goggins Lane owned by Jerry, Tommy and Emma Reams; 1050 and 1100 Goggins Lane owned by Jerry and Sharon K. Reams; and one acre of land on the east side of Goggins Lane owned by Willie R. and Betty R. Abrams.

The commission passed the first readings of the four ordinances; however, the second readings must pass in order for the changes to come into law.

Britt Goodson of Carolina Holdings, based in Greenville, S.C., attended Tuesday's meeting to answer questions about the project. The company is serving as the contractor for the retail center.

Several of the commissioners wanted to know what businesses would be included in the center, but Goodson said he was not allowed to name them yet.

Reports circulating around Richmond in recent days have centered on Meijer, Home Depot, Kohl's and Target, but Goodson would not confirm any prospects.

However, the retail center will include "a couple of traditional department stores, a new cinema, new bookstore and about seven restaurants," he said.

The retail center, to be located between Goggins Lane and Interstate 75, Exit 87, has an estimated opening date of fall 2008.

In other business:

- The commission will conduct a special-called meeting Tuesday to discuss the newly submitted bids for a proposed Richmond aquatic center. The first round of bids came in at about \$3 million more than originally estimated, and commissioners wanted to keep the new price at or below \$5 million.

New bids were received Wednesday, Nov. 15, and the lowest was \$5.4 million, which is still more than the city wanted to spend, said Richmond City Manager David Evans.

"I think we all hoped (the bids) would come in lower, but when you do bidding you just never know," Evans said after receiving the new bids earlier this month.

Certain features were eliminated from the original design in order to get the cost down to about \$5 million.

The original design was to include a lap pool for competitive swimming, three slides, a lazy river, 49,260 square feet of beach and deck areas, 8,100 square feet of shade structures and a 1,500-square-foot sprayground.

The lazy river was the only feature to be eliminated completely, Evans said.

"It will still have an eight-lane competition pool, a slide area, a splash area for kids, handicapped accessible areas and a large deck area," he said.

Tuesday's special meeting will be the first time the entire commission has gathered to consider the new bid amounts, he said.

- The zoning classification of property owned by Robert Heyer at 25 Lori East Lane was re-zoned from mobile home housing to single-family residential.

- An ordinance was passed to shut down portions of two alleyways included in the Linden Street Recovery Area Project. The city acquired 2.145 acres of land in the project area and the alleyways adjoin with the property. According to the ordinance, the alleyways need to be closed to permit the development of the property as specified in Linden Street's revitalized design.

The owners of the properties connected to portions of the alleyways were given written notice of the city's intent and

each owner gave their written, notarized consent.

- Richmond could receive Tree City USA status if the commission passes the second reading of an ordinance at their next regular meeting Dec. 12. The ordinance's first reading was heard Tuesday and it includes the specifications for a Tree Advisory Board. This entity must be created in order to receive the special status.

The board will contain seven members who must be appointed by the mayor and approved by the commission.

The National Arbor Day Foundation sponsors the Tree City USA program in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters.

- Greg Slayton was hired as network and system administrator for the city's computer tech support/general informations system department.

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