

**GAINESVILLE PLANNING AND APPEALS BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
JANUARY 17, 2017**

CALL TO ORDER Chairman Carter at 5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Chairman Doug Carter, Vice-Chair Jane Fleming, Board Members Eddie Martin, Sr. and Ryan Thompson

Members Absent: Board Members Connie Rucker, Carmen Delgado and Lemuel Betancourt

Staff Present: Community Development Director Rusty Ligon, Planning Manager Matt Tate and Recording Secretary Judy Foster

Others Present: Council Member George Wangemann

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 13, 2016

There was a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Motion made by Board Member Martin

Motion seconded by Board Member Thompson

Vote – 4 favor, 3 absent (Rucker, Delgado, Betancourt)

OLD BUSINESS

There was a motion to remove the Code Amendment request from the table.

Motion made by Vice-Chair Fleming

Motion seconded by Board Member Martin

Vote – 4 favor, 3 absent (Rucker, Delgado, Betancourt)

A. Code Amendment Request

- 1) Request from the **City of Gainesville** to amend Article 9-18 of the Unified Land Development Code for the City of Gainesville, Georgia. The proposed amendment will repeal and replace Article 9-18 entitled "Sign Regulations" with a new Article 9-18 entitled "Signs and Advertising Devices."

Presentation: Consultant **Jerry Weitz**, 1225 Rucker Road, Alpharetta, stated the City is in the process of making major revisions to the Unified Land Development Code, noting this amendment emphasizes the sign ordinance primarily to insure content neutrality, i.e. making sure the regulations do not violate the First Amendment of the U. S. Constitution. He stated they have spent several months with about five drafts of the amendment, going through a deliberative process to come up with a product which has been looked at different ways with Administration. They reviewed the practical feasibility of the amendment and asked if we are solving problems with the current sign permitting process. He stated he was available to answer any questions about the process or the content of various articles if needed.

FAVOR: None

OPPOSE: None

Planning and Appeals Board Comments: None

There was a motion to recommend approval of the Code Amendment as presented.

Motion made by Vice-Chair Fleming

Motion seconded by Board Member Thompson

Vote – 4 favor, 3 absent (Rucker, Delgado, Betancourt)

NEW BUSINESS

A. Road Action Request

- 1) Request from **Rainmaker & Associates** to rename Touchdown Drive, located between Pearl Nix Parkway and Century Place, to Deshaun Watson Drive.

Ward Number: Five

Request: Road name change

Staff Presentation: Planning Manager Matt Tate gave the following staff presentation:

The applicant, Rainmaker & Associates, is proposing to rename Touchdown Drive. The new road name is to be called Deshaun Watson Drive in honor of former Gainesville High School graduate Deshaun Watson. Touchdown Drive is approximately 180± linear feet in length and is located between Pearl Nix Parkway and Century Place. The road serves as one of the access roads to Gainesville High School. The proposal appears to be reasonable given that the road primarily serves the Gainesville High School campus and no adjacent property owners will be impacted. Presently, there are no properties that have addresses from Touchdown Drive. In 2005, a similar request was approved to rename a short segment of nearby Rainey Street to Billy Lothridge Boulevard. There were no comments from other departments regarding this request.

Applicant Presentation: Sammy Smith, with Rainmaker & Associates, 302 Spring Street, stated he submitted the application for the road renaming on behalf of a few friends. He stated Touchdown Drive was constructed as the west bypass was completed in the late 1960s and was a two lane entrance way to Gainesville High School. He stated it was rebuilt in 2008 and changed to a four lane road to accommodate traffic for the high school and the Centennial Arts Academy. He stated the application speaks for itself and he appreciated the recommendation of staff.

FAVOR: Bruce Miller, Gainesville High School Head Football Coach, stated it's not just naming a street after a player, but to name it after somebody with the character Deshaun Watson has portrayed, noting he has made a lot of people proud and is a fine young man. He had the opportunity to visit with Deshaun over Christmas, before he had to return for the national championship run, and stated he is not a kid anymore as he is about to be a millionaire, but he had not changed from the ninth grade Deshaun Watson who is so special. He thought it would be great to have it right outside the GHS practice field to remind everyone of what you have to do to be great.

OPPOSE: None

Planning and Appeals Board Comments: None

There was a motion to recommend approval of the road renaming as presented.

Motion made by Board Member Martin

Motion seconded by Board Member Thompson

Vote – 4 favor, 3 absent (Rucker, Delgado, Betancourt)

Chairman Carter commended Coach Miller for the key role he played in Deshaun's development of character, noting he was very proud of him as well. He also thanked Mr. Smith for spearheading the acknowledgement of Deshaun's achievements.

ADJOURNMENT

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:45 p.m.

Motion made by Board Member Martin

Motion seconded by Vice-Chair Fleming

Vote – 4 favor, 3 absent (Rucker, Delgado, Betancourt)

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Carter, Chairman

Judy Foster, Recording Secretary