

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE LADY LAKE TOWN COMMISSION
LADY LAKE, FLORIDA
June 20, 2016**

The Special Meeting of the Lady Lake Town Commission was held in the Commission Chambers at Lady Lake Town Hall, 409 Fennell Blvd., Lady Lake, Florida with Mayor Ruth Kussard presiding. The meeting convened at 5:30 p.m.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Ruth Kussard
2. **ROLL CALL:** Tony Holden, Commissioner Ward 2
Dan Vincent, Commissioner Ward 3
Paul Hannan, Commissioner Ward 4
Jim Richards, Commissioner Ward 5
Ruth Kussard, Mayor/Commissioner Ward 1

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Kris Kollgaard, Town Manager/Town Clerk; Derek Schroth, Town Attorney; Thad Carroll, Growth Management Director; Wendy Then, Town Planner; C.T. Eagle, Public Works Director; Pam Winegardner, Finance Director; Julia Harris, Administrative Assistant to Town Manager; and Nancy Slaton, Deputy Town Clerk

3. **OPEN FORUM**

Mayor Kussard stated that the time for discussion on today's agenda item is normally at the site plan phase of the project. She asked for a show of hands in the audience for those in favor of the project. There were approximately 50 hands raised in favor of the proposed gun range. She then asked for those opposed. There were approximately six hands raised in opposition.

Mayor Kussard asked if anyone in the audience had any comments or questions.

- Richard Rodgers of 354 Ivanhoe Circle stated he lives in the Oak Grove Subdivision which is directly behind the proposed gun range. He passed out copies of six questions he had prepared regarding this project.

Mayor Kussard asked Growth Management Director Thad Carroll if these questions would be answered during the presentation.

Mr. Carroll replied that many of them should be answered during the course of the presentation.

Town Manager Kris Kollgaard suggested that staff go ahead with the presentation and then address any remaining questions afterward.

4. **Conceptual Presentation for Basics: Range and Gun, LLC – Proposal for a Multi-Phase, Multi-Tenant Development to Include a 24,150 Sq. Ft. Building for Phase I Featuring a 10,350 Sq. Ft. Area to Include a 20-Lane Tactical and Bull's Eye Indoor Gun Range Area, 3,600 Sq. Ft. for Gun Shop and Educational Area, and 10,200 Sq. Ft. of Retail, Sales and Services on a +/-12-Acre Parcel – Located Just North of the Lady Lake Realty**

Site, North of Griffin View Dr. and East of South Highway 27/441 (AK #1124956) (Thad Carroll)

Growth Management Director Thad Carroll gave the background summary from the agenda item cover sheet (on file in the Town Clerk's office). He stated that Franklin Dickinson is the owner and operator of Basics: Range & Gun, LLC, an indoor gun range built in Orange Park, Florida, that has been in operation approximately two and a half years and exhibits a ten-lane tactical indoor range. Mr. Dickinson would like to bring his business concept to Lady Lake, and is proposing a multi-phase, multi-tenant development. It is proposed to include a 24,150 sq. ft. building for Phase I, featuring a 10,350 sq. ft. area to include a 20-lane tactical and bull's eye indoor gun range area, 3,600 sq. ft. for gun shop and educational area, and 10,200 sq. ft. of retail sales and services on a +/-12-acre parcel located just north of the Lady Lake Realty site, north of Griffin View Drive and east of South Highway 27/441, identified by Alternate Key #1124956.

Mr. Carroll stated that the developer is securing negotiations with the current land owner representative, Daniel Brush, to acquire approximately +/-12 acres of the 16.56-acre parcel and develop it into the proposed multi-tenant development. The subject property lies in Section 21, Township 18 South, Range 24 East, Lady Lake, Florida. The property is zoned "HC" Heavy Commercial, and a Special Exception Use application is required to be granted by the Town Commission as per the provisions of Town of Lady Lake Land Development Regulations, Chapter 6, Section 6-2).g).15). to allow for the establishment of the Gun Range. The Future Land Use Map designation for the site is RET (Commercial General-Retail Sales and Services); which is compatible and consistent with the proposed land uses.

Aerial views of the site showing the zoning of the property and adjacent parcels were shown, as was a conceptual site plan, and an aerial view showing the proximity of the site to the Oak Grove Subdivision (approximately 450 ft.).

Commissioner Richards pointed out that the drawing of the conceptual site plan shows the area of wetlands, which was one of the questions by Mr. Rodgers; where the wetlands are in relation to the property.

Prior to submitting the Special Exception Use and Site Plan applications, the applicant would like to provide some background on his business project, present the site, and proposed conceptual elevations to get feedback from the Town Commission. The following information was included in the packet:

- Business Introduction/ Background
- Conceptual/Preliminary Site Plan
- Exterior Building Elevations

After the process of the Special Exception Use application is completed, if approved, then the site plan process would be next, and the applicant will be required to submit a full site plan application, traffic study, noise study, environmental assessments, geotechnical and drainage reports, etc. Town staff would conduct a comprehensive site plan review to include, parking, landscaping, commercial design standards, and signage requirements.

Mr. Carroll stated that the proposed project will be built using elements of the Spanish Mission Architectural Design Style; specifically, a design replicating the Alamo. He stated this design is

prevalent within the Town and other areas. Any landscaping waivers will be brought before the Parks, Recreation, and Tree Advisory Committee, and any commercial landscaping waivers will be brought before the Town Commission for final consideration.

Photos of the property in its existing condition were shown.

Mr. Carroll switched to a video presentation provided by Mr. Dickinson which showed the owner's Orange Park Basics: Range and Gun, LLC business, and the noise level generated by the gun range and the safety measures put in place such as thick walls with heavy insulation. In the video, Mr. Dickinson states that he has never received any complaints from neighbors, and tenants nearby see the business as an asset. He stated they allow many law enforcement agencies to either use their range for free or at cost. A video tour of the interior portion of the facility was shown.

Mr. Carroll read the questions presented by Mr. Rodgers, and attempted to answer them as follows:

- 1) Where is the proposed access road to the property? - This is not certain at this time, but should be just south of the retention pond area and does not appear to be aligned with the median; this could change.
 - a) If the access road is south of the Orange Barn entrance, what is the measurement in square feet between the Orange Barn and proposed gun range building? - Unknown, but can be provided at a later date.
- 2) What is the parking area setback measurement from the highway? - The site plan is not to scale at this time, although it will have to be set back at least 10 to 20 feet from the roadway.
 - a) During the winter months, traffic is heavy on US Highway 27/441 and this will escalate the congestion in front of the proposed building; how do you propose to handle this? - Traffic will be heavier during the winter, although the proposed highway widening project in 2019 should alleviate any traffic impacts.
- 3) What is the incursion into the wetland as shown needed for and will this require filling in this area? - Once the site plan is received, it will be circulated to the Department of Environmental Protection and St. Johns Water Management District and any regulatory permits will have to be sought and gained by the developer.
- 4) What is the "outside shooting area" as mentioned? - There will be no outside shooting; it is an indoor range only. Outside shooting is not permitted at this location.
- 5) What kind of safety barrier protection will be used to protect the residents behind the gun range in the Oak Grove Subdivision? - As seen in the video, thick concrete walls and other insulating measures will be used.
- 6) Are there any future plans concerning the present Orange Barn or the Lakeside Realty properties? - Town staff has no knowledge of any plans for these two locations.

Mr. Carroll reported that the developer is present if there are any other questions.

Commissioner Holden stated that the area between this property and the Oak Grove Subdivision is subject to periodic flooding, with the last being about 10 to 12 years ago. He stated the water comes from the intersection off the main highway and the 30" culvert on Griffin View Drive and the whole area off Ivanhoe Drive was flooded with water up to one foot deep. He stated he was told by the state engineer that they would be putting in a retention pond in the area when the highway was widened; he asked if this project would prevent this.

Mr. Carroll replied the parcel Commissioner Holden is referring to is the Alt. Key #3878627 parcel which has been secured by the Florida Department of Transportation and can be used for the retention pond just northwest of this parcel. He stated he has not seen the storm water plans for the widening project in its final form, but it may alleviate some of the flooding this area is subject to. He also stated this project would have to comply with the Town's floodplain ordinance.

Mayor Kussard commented that she reviewed the Basics: Range and Gun LLC on the internet to see what kind of operation it was, and although she is not a gun person, she liked the idea of being given a 30-day free membership with any gun purchase, the opportunity for extensive training opportunities, self-defense classes and free classes to patrons. She stated she also liked that someone could use the gun range without becoming a member. Mayor Kussard stated that the video showed there was very heavy insulation. She asked if the same measures will be used at the Lady Lake site if the Commission approves.

Franklin Dickinson of Ponte Vedra, Florida, stated he has developed many properties and will not intrude into the wetlands. He stated they will adhere to the regulations by St. Johns Water Management and DEP, and FDOT is slated to put in a large retention pond. He stated they will build this building using the same insulating measures to mitigate noise and for safety, and look forward to building here.

Mayor Kussard commented that according to the earlier show of hands, there appears to be a definite need for this type of business in Lady Lake.

Mr. Dickinson stated there are over 1.5 million concealed license holders in the state, and as a contractor, his business plan was to make it accessible to everyone at discounted prices.

- Mr. Rodgers stated that most of his questions were answered, but he is still questioning the incursion into the wetlands.

Mr. Dickinson stated he will hire an environmentalist who will flag the wetlands, and then St. Johns River Water Management District will inspect the area, and the project will stay out of the wetland area.

Commissioner Holden asked if this property was the only one the developer considered. He commented that he thought there were better places this could be put.

Mr. Dickinson stated he looked at several properties, but thought this was the best one. He stated he is under contract now for this property.

Commissioner Hannan commented that in the video, the traffic was louder than the gun noise. He stated he is in favor of the project.

Commissioner Richards stated he is in favor of this project in this commercial area, and the traffic situation is being dealt with already.

Commissioner Holden stated he is not in favor of this project in this location as he feels there are better locations around for it.

Commissioner Vincent and Mayor Kussard stated they were in favor of the project.

Mr. Carroll stated this project will come back to the Commission for formal site plan approval at a later date.

- David Hodgkins of 314 Ivanhoe Circle stated this project will be in his backyard, and commented on the previous flooding as mentioned by Commissioner Holden. He stated there is an empty parcel near the Esso station.

It was the consensus of the Commission that they were in favor of the Conceptual Presentation for Basics: Range and Gun, LLC as presented, by a 4-1 vote (Holden).

5. **ADJOURN:** There being no further discussion; the meeting was adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Kristen Kollgaard, Town Clerk

Ruth Kussard, Mayor

Minutes transcribed by Nancy Slaton, Deputy Town Clerk