

Agricultural Advisory Board Agenda

November 8, 2021



1. Call to order
2. Approval of minutes
 - October 11, 2021
3. **Public Comment Session** [3 minutes per person]
If you are not able to attend in person and you have a comment, you may submit it by contacting the Planning Department at planninginfo@oconeesc.com or 864-638-4218, so that we may receive your comment and read it into the record.
4. **Presenters** – [to include Vote and/or Action on matters brought up in discussion if required]
 - **Mandolin Bright**, Oconee County Food Council
5. **Discussions** – [to include Vote and/or Action on matters brought up in discussion if required]
 - **Road Safety and Agriculture** – discuss progress with SCDOT/Oconee County Roads & Bridges and Post Office
 - **Proposed Development Standards** – Discuss Planning Commission’s proposed ordinance as it relates to Agricultural and Forestry lands. Make recommendations for improvements/clarifications for presentation to County Council.
6. **Adjourn**

Oconee County Agricultural Advisory Board

When & Where

5:00 PM

Monday, November 8, 2021

Council Chambers

415 South Pine Street

Walhalla, SC 29691

Alternative participation

YouTube: “YourOconee”

Staff contact

846-638-4218

planninginfo@oconeesc.com

BOARD MEMBERS

Debbie Sewell, Chairman, At-Large

Tessa Moxley, Secretary, At-Large

Rex Blanton, District III

Charlie Whiten, District V

Kim Alexander, Vice-Chairman, District I

Larry Cantrell, District II

Ashley Townsend, District IV

Kerrie Roach, Ex-Officio

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



TEL (864) 638-4218 FAX (864) 638-4168

Minutes

5:00 PM, Monday October 11, 2021

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

OCONEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

Members Present

Ashley Townsend
Charlie Whiten
Kim Alexander
Kerri Roach

Rex Blanton
Debbie Sewell
Tessa Moxley

Staff Present

Laura Zimmerman

Media Present

None

1. **Call to Order** – Ms. Sewell called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM.
2. **Approval of minutes from September 13th** – Ms. Moxley made a motion to approve the minutes with changes, seconded by Mr. Whiten. Ms. Sewell called for a vote. The motion passed 4/0 with Mr. Blanton and Ms. Alexander arrived after the motion).
3. **Public Comment**
 - Mike Smith, Chair of Oconee County Planning Commission – gave an update on proposed Development Standards Ordinance. Meeting that was held on October 4th could not be considered a public hearing due to not meeting the notice requirement prior to the meeting. Commission will work on revising original document over the next two scheduled meetings and present the original and a version B at the public hearing on November 15th.
4. **Discussions**
 - **Proposed Development Standards** – discuss proposed ordinance, section by section, as it relates to Agricultural and Forestry lands and develop recommendations for improvements/clarifications to present to County Council.

Oconee County Administrative Offices

415 S. Pine Street, Walhalla, SC 29691 / 864.638.4218 / www.oconeesc.com

i. Introduction

1. Ms. Sewell proposed adding to the introductory sentence with wording as follows, “the purpose of these standards is to encourage and maintain a harmonious living and business environment between the new development and existing residential, multifamily, agricultural, or forestry uses. The following standards shall be applicable to all new developments indicated herein.”

ii. Section 1: Applicability

1. The paragraph, “Development means...” to be moved up so that it follows the paragraph, “The owner or their lawfully designated agent...”. The paragraph beginning “The buffer and screening requirements...” to be at the end of section 1.
2. Clarification requested for the classification of “Subdivisions”, as it pertains to the applicability of the Proposed Development Standards. Currently the proposal does not clarify that subdivisions are included.
3. The definitions, “Residential” and “Non-residential” need to be clarified. Currently there are no definitions for the phrases in Chapter 38-12.2 definitions.
4. Ms. Sewell proposed including a glossary at the end of the document to clarify the definitions of the phrases used in the proposal.
5. Ms. Roach proposed taking out the phrase “being developed”, as it is redundant to the sentence.
6. Ms. Alexander expressed concern with the paragraph beginning “The buffer and screening requirements...”. The concern being that once the agreement happens, it could negatively affect farming down the line.

iii. Section 2: Lighting

1. Mr. Smith suggested adding a phrase at the end of the paragraph referring the planning director to the Lighting Standards section in Appendix A, if clarification is required.

iv. Section 3: Buffering

1. Ms. Sewell asked for clarification that the phrase including “plus twenty-five percent” is referring to length not width.
2. Ms. Sewell questioned the minimum buffer widths, with the concern that they are too low, but that folks at the public hearing may see them as too high.

- a. Clarification may be needed to make it understood that the proposed standards are a county minimum. There are other standards required by DHEC, etc. that may extend the minimum buffer depending on the specifications of the development.

v. **Final Comments**

1. Ms. Alexander suggested that Mr. Smith create a bulleted list of definitions in order to clarify some of the terms in the document at the beginning of the public hearing.
5. **Adjourn** – Ms. Alexander made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:47pm, seconded by Mr. Whiten. The motion was approved 6/0.

DRAFT

From: DEBBIE SEWELL [<mailto:debbio.sewell@gmail.com>]

Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 1:33 PM

To: Mike Smith <msmithf100d@gmail.com>; Vivian Kompier <vkompier@oconeesc.com>

Subject: Nov 1st planning meeting

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you validate the sender and know the content is safe.

I will not be able to attend the Planning commission meeting tonight.

We want to again emphasize,

The Agriculture Advisory Board Supports Ordinance 2021-19 establishing Development Standards related to Lighting, screening, and buffering on new non-residential, multifamily, and mixed-use development.

We would like to address the following elements of the proposed document.

We appreciate your willingness to consider our suggestions.

Lighting

Light Standards in this Ordinance address artificial light and light pollution, when followed these standards would reduce the negative effects of lighting in New Developments on existing agriculture, forestland, and residential

These standards need to Be clear and concise in this ordinance. Strict guidelines are less important than Guidelines that actually address lighting that affects neighboring properties.

The 3 main types of light pollution are glare, light trespass, and skyglow.

Glare is produced by unshielded lighting and can be hazards on roadways and neighboring property.

Light trespass occurs when unwanted light shines into or on neighboring properties or roadways.

Skyglow is the combination of all the reflected light and upward-directed, unshielded light escaping up and into the sky, obstructing the view of the night sky.

General Guidelines clearly address these types of light pollution by making appropriate lighting choices, shielding lights properly, and using lighting only where it is needed.

Strict guidelines and elaborate lighting plans are not as important than guidelines that address these issues.

Screening and buffering:

Both Screening and Buffering Standards in this Ordinance address the critical spaces between, new Development and neighboring agriculture, forest, and residential properties.

Screening and buffers have profound benefits to both the existing property and the new development. They improve the environmental health, aesthetics, and enjoyment of both. Typically, higher property values are realized on both unique properties.

Screening

Screening requirements are sufficiently described in the existing document.

Buffers

Buffers are the spaces between neighboring properties.

When compared to other counties in SC,NC,and GA. Buffering requirements outlined in this document are minimal .

The AAB supports the original buffering requirements as a minimum, we will not support requirements that are less than what is outlined in the original document. However, we would encourage and support larger buffers between properties.

For your consideration,

Debbie Sewell

Sent from my iPhone

OCONEE FOOD COUNCIL

Founding Council Overview

The Oconee Food Council (OFC) is an independent council forming as a result of the Oconee Food Summit (OFS) events to support county residents, organizations, and leaders of Oconee County, SC with food-related needs by increasing understanding of the food environment, connecting decision makers and stakeholders to align programs and initiatives, and recommending policy, systems, and environmental changes to restore the local food system. A founding council was appointed in October 2021 for a nine-month term to complete the process of structuring the council. A county food assessment and local food system planning summit in Spring 2022 will be used to determine priority areas and inform the final design of the food council. We expect to have a fully established food council with an executive committee and representatives from each standing committee in June 2022.

OFC Mission Statement:

Our mission is to bring together a diverse representation of Oconee County residents and stakeholder groups to develop policies, systems, and environmental changes to restore our local food system. The Oconee Food Council will accomplish this by providing innovative solutions that (1) improve the economic, environmental, social, and nutritional health of the people of our county; (2) ensure equitable access to nourishing and culturally diverse food; (3) promote the rights of residents to define their own food and agricultural systems.

Founding OFC Members

Natalie Arnold	Choestoea Farm
Stephanie Blake	Our Daily Bread
Patsy Davis	Utica Community
Damaris Gomez	The Mexican
Mike Harlin	Golden Corner Food Pantry

Misty Lee	SC DHEC
Rodney Quick	SDOC Hamilton Career Center
Christian Thormose	Nature's Link
Erica Wearing	Clemson University, Agricultural Ed



Starting from Left (Back): Michael Harlin, Patsy Davis, Natalie Arnold, Rodney Quick
(Front): Christian Thormose, Stephanie Blake, Erica Wearing, Misty Lee
Not pictured: Damaris Gomez



2020 – 2021 EVENTS

2020 OCONEE FOOD SUMMIT

The inaugural Oconee Food Summit was a day-long conference organized by a county grassroots coalition to initiate conversations about local food system issues and explore solutions. The event was held on February 28, 2020 at Trinity Baptist Church in Seneca with 120 community members and stakeholders in attendance, including farmers, teachers, students, public health professionals, entrepreneurs, Clemson faculty, community representatives, and locally elected officials. Programming included a morning presentation, a Q&A panel of local food system actors, and a keynote talk by Dean Leslie Hossfeld of Clemson University. Breakfast and a lunch of locally-sourced ingredients were catered by 313 Cafe of Seneca. In the wrap-up activity for the summit, attendees heard key takeaways from each of the afternoon breakout sessions covering a different topic and voted on three priorities for our local food system work: (1) establishing a food policy council (FPC), (2) forming a farmers' market taskforce, and (3) developing a sustainable land-use initiative for the county.



2021 REGROUP ASSEMBLY

One year following the 2020 OFS, the organizers held two sessions of a virtual half-day assembly on March 26th and 27th to reorganize after receiving a SNAP-Ed grant to develop a food policy council for Oconee County. Food-related organizations and businesses featured on the inaugural summit panel were invited to return and share their experiences responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and April 2020 tornado in a presentation called the *Oconee Food Frontline Report*. The pre-recorded presentation also featured SDOC superintendent Dr. Michael Thorsland and the school district Sodexo (insert title here) April Howe providing insight on how the school district responded to provide meals for the county's students when faced with the nationwide school shutdown. Attendees engaged in break-out sessions to identify, and explore solutions for, the gaps in our local food system and discussed strategies for moving forward.



2021 FOOD SOVEREIGNTY CONVENING

This mid-June event at Chattooga Belle Farms grew out of an identified need to know about the history of the land and agriculture in our area – some of which we gratefully learned with the support of locals Jason Davis, Jon Fritz, Les McCall, Jennifer Moss, and Will Moxley. This day-long conference gave our food movement leaders an opportunity to gather for learning, organizing, and networking. All attendees provided a presentation or item for the farm-to-table breakfast / lunch or made a monetary contribution to cover the expenses of the event. The convening was concluded with a happy hour networking event for food movement leaders that featured drinks and charcuterie, all locally sourced.

