



**MINUTES**  
**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
**COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**August 20, 2019**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Mr. Paul Cain, Chairman, District III  
Mr. Julian Davis, District IV  
Mr. John Elliott, District I

The Planning & Economic Development Committee met at 4:30 PM in Council Chambers, Oconee County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all members present, County Administrator Amanda F. Brock and County Attorney David Root [Clerk to Council, Katie D. Smith, absent due to sickness].

**STAFF PRESENT:** Mr. Adam Chapman, Planning Director  
Ms. Janet Hartman, Interim Economic Alliance Director & Destination Oconee Manager

**Press:** Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [[www.oconeesc.com/council](http://www.oconeesc.com/council)]. In addition it was made available [upon request] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Members of the press present: Caitlin Herrington / Daily Journal & Jimmy Watt / WGOG.

**Call to Order:**

Mr. Cain called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 3 – 0, as a “point of order” to appoint Mr. Adam Chapman as the secretary to keep minutes for this meeting.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 3 – 0, to approve the minutes from the June 4, 2019 meeting as presented.

**Discussion Items**

Lengthy discussion followed regarding the topics indicated below, with various opinions expressed, to include but not limited to:

**Update Regarding Current Development Statistics for Oconee County**

Mr. Chapman addressed the Committee utilizing a PowerPoint presentation [copy filed with backup materials] entitled “Some Development Statistics, from January 1<sup>st</sup> through August 15<sup>th</sup>” and gave a brief presentation.

Mr. Davis thanked Mr. Chapman for compiling the report and noted it was good to see Oconee County continuing to grow, especially on the industrial side. He further noted Lakeside Lodge has talked about how wonderful the inspection process has been from the Planning Department to the

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Building Codes Department and also Project Epoch spoke very highly of Oconee County. Mr. Davis also thanked Ms. Brock and staff for what they are doing.

Mr. Elliott echoed Mr. Davis's comments noting it is a sign that Oconee County is strong and getting stronger.

**The Committee took no action on this matter at this time.**

Survey Establishing Baseline Information regarding the Utica Community

Mr. Chapman addressed the Committee utilizing a PowerPoint presentation [copy filed with backup materials] entitled "Utica Survey" and gave a brief presentation.

Mr. Cain thanked the GIS staff, Administration, and the Planning Department staff working together.

Ms. Brock noted the following to include but not limited to:

- Expanding the application field for public service, public safety, etc.
- Application was created to develop the criteria for how to address issues we have experienced in Utica
- Spoke with Oconee Community Theatre in the past about potentially giving Oconee County land for the designation of a Sheriff's substation

Mr. Cain thanked Mr. Chapman and staff for their hard work and also the volunteers with the Boards & Commissions. He further noted the more community involvement, the stronger the plan is.

Mr. Davis complemented Mr. Cain for his continued commitment to the Utica area.

Ms. Brock thanked the Oconee Roads & Bridges staff who worked on the community walking path.

**The Committee took no action on this matter at this time.**

Economic Development Update

Ms. Janet Hartman, Interim Economic Alliance Director & Destination Oconee Manager, addressed the Committee utilizing a PowerPoint presentation and video [copy of PowerPoint presentation and DVD filed with backup materials] entitled "Economic Development Update, 8/20/2019" and gave a brief presentation.

Discussion continued to include:

- Opportunity zones; two in Oconee County which are the Utica area and the Newry area
- Interest from investors in opportunity funds to start putting money to work in these different communities
- Recently met with different individuals that are looking at projects in each of these areas
- State of South Carolina is offering a grant for the counties to apply which would allow the County to utilize funds to pay an outside vendor to complete an Economic Impact Study
- Propose the County to submit a Request for Proposal [RFP] for a vendor to complete an Economic Impact Study
- Due to the opportunity zones being close in proximity, suggest completing in a radius that would encapture the majority of it

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- Get RFP out and get a proposal back, we can submit the proposal to the State and the grant is worth \$25,000
- Application is due by October 1<sup>st</sup>

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 3 – 0, to refer to full Council for submission of an RFP for a vendor to complete an Economic Impact Study for the two opportunity zones in Oconee County.

Mr. Elliott thanked Ms. Hartman for the drone video.

Mr. Cain thanked Ms. Hartman for all of her hard work and noted she will be leaving Oconee County and moving to California. He noted he appreciated all that Ms. Hartman has done for Oconee County as working for Destination Oconee and as the Director for Economic Alliance and further thanked her for staying on and helping select the next Economic Alliance Director.

**Unfinished Business:**

None addressed at this meeting.

**New Business:**

Mr. Elliott noted the architecture for Oconee County was defined as rustic and Appalachian. He asked that Mr. Chapman and Ms. Brock look at the selected corridors and come up with a definition or standard for this type of architecture and also investigate the additional cost to a contractor for complying with this standard in relation to a new ordinance requiring the commercial buildings in those selected corridors.

Mr. Elliot made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 3 – 0, to direct staff to research a potential ordinance and the cost to developers or contractors for complying therewith, including the definition of rustic elegance.

Mr. Elliott noted signs for commercial buildings need a standard maximum height, width, and distance from the road due to safety concerns and to possibly write an ordinance requiring this on the selected corridors for commercial buildings.

Per Mr. Davis, Mr. Frankie Pearson, Planning Commission Chairman, addressed the Committee and noted the Planning Commission wants Council's input on what they want in the community regarding signage and does not want to overstep their boundaries.

Per Mr. Elliott, Mr. Mike Smith, Planning Commission member, addressed the Committee and noted they needed to take a look at the signs height and width and further noted citizens are using GSP systems on their phones and not looking for signs.

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 3 – 0, for the Planning Director to work with Planning Commission to investigate the business corridors on Hwy 123 from the Clemson entrance to Georgia, I85 at Exit 1, Hwy 76, Hwy 130, and Hwy 28 and in that investigation to include the topics of rustic elegance, parameters and statistics, business signage, and setbacks for shrubbery.

**Adjourn:**

Mr. Davis made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Katie D. Smith  
Clerk to Council