



Oconee County Planning Department

415 S. Pine Street, Walhalla, SC 29691

Telephone: 864-638-4218
Fax: 864-638-4168

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MINUTES PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING October 08, 2007

The Oconee County Planning Commission held their regularly scheduled monthly meeting at 7:00 p.m. on October 08, 2007 in the Council Chambers of the Oconee County Administrative Complex at 415 S. Pine St., Walhalla, SC 29691.

Members Present: Tommy Abbott, (Chairman)
Randy Abbott
Ryan Honea
Howard Moore
Rex Ramsay
Bill Evatt
Bill Nelson

Art Holbrooks (Planning Director)
Aaron Gadsby (County Planner)

Media Present:
Bret McLaughlin (Daily Journal)
Ashton Hester (Keowee Courier)

Item 1: Call to Order- Chairman Abbott called the meeting to order.

Item 2: Approval of Minutes - The minutes from the August 13th meeting and the September 10th were reviewed by the Commission and no changes were made. Mr. Honea made a motion to approve the August 13th minutes, Mr. Ramsay seconded the motion. The minutes were approved 7-0. Mr. Ramsay made a motion to approve the September 10th minutes, Mr. Abbott seconded the motion. The minutes were approved 7-0.

Item 3: Discussion of Draft Zoning Enabling Ordinance – Mr. Holbrooks discussed the latest Census data that shows Oconee County as a Micropolitan Statistical Area, pointing out the county is only fifty miles from metro Atlanta along Interstate 85. Mr. Holbrooks introduced and reviewed the draft zoning ordinance that was given first reading by Oconee County Council on September 18, 2007. Major points of interest were highlighted. Mr. Randy Abbott expressed concerns that Council was moving too fast with the proposed regulations; Mr. Honea agreed that the ordinance was moving ahead too quickly and the public meetings needed to take place first.

Item 4: Discussion of Draft Future Land Use Map – Mr. Holbrooks introduced a draft of the proposed Future Land Use Map of Oconee County. Mr. Holbrooks explained to the Commission that this map would need to be amended into the County's Comprehensive Plan prior to the enactment of the enabling ordinance, and once adopted, would guide all of the County's projects and regulations, not just zoning. Mr. Moore asked how a community would go about changing the Future Land Use Map if they realized that it was not correct; Mr. Holbrooks informed the Commission that the Future Land Use Map could be changed, and at the very least, had to be reviewed every five years. Citizens can at any time ask County Council to review and amend a portion of the map.

Item 5: Old Business – There was no old business.

Item 6: New Business - Mr. Hobrooks informed the Commission that the next Planning Commission meeting would fall on November 12th and the County Offices would be closed that day in observance of Veterans Day. The Commission rescheduled and will meet on Monday November 19th at 7:00 pm.

Item 7: Public Comment-

Ms. Susie Cornelius expressed concerns about the use of the Fire Districts in conjunction with the Planning Districts. Ms. Cornelius also stated that County Council and the State Delegation needed to meet on takings legislation.

Mr. Tom Markovich stated that he was surprised about Council took first reading on a Zoning Enabling Ordinance and thinks that they are getting the cart ahead of the horse. He also expressed concern that the public was not being made aware of what has been occurring in regards to zoning and that the Planning Commission was on the right track before.

Mr. Berry Nichols stated his objection to only having three minutes to speak. Mr. Nichols asked the Commission who was going to conduct the public meetings and expressed concern about the discrepancies in the draft ordinance.

Mr. Tyler Nix commended Mr. Abbott and Mr. Honea for their comments in the meeting and expressed concern about the lack of information getting out into the community.

Ms. Linda Lovely began by stating the people needed to read the Seneca Journal and that she was happy about Council moving this ordinance forward. She expressed concerns about the development around the lake. Ms. Lovely applauded the work Mr. Holbrooks has done on the ordinance. Ms. Lovely stated that if we take it rationally we can accommodate everyone.

Mr. B.J. Littleton stated that he has been saying for years that this is really very plain and simple, all property needs to stay where it is and that money talks. Leave things exactly like they are today.

Item 8: Adjourn