



Oconee County Planning Department

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MINUTES PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING February 11, 2008

The Oconee County Planning Commission held their regularly scheduled monthly meeting at 7:00 p.m. on February 11, 2007 in the Council Chambers of the Oconee County Administrative Complex at 415 S. Pine St., Walhalla, SC 29691.

Members Present: Tommy Abbott, (Chairman)

Ryan Honea
Howard Moore
Rex Ramsay
Randy Abbott
Bill Evatt

Aaron Gadsby (County Planner)
Amanda Schell (Planner)

Media Present:
Peter Kent (WGOG)

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

Item 2: Approval of Minutes - The minutes from the January meeting were reviewed by the Commission - no changes were made. Mr. Honea made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Randy Abbott seconded the motion. The minutes were approved 6-0.

Item 3: Public Comment Session –

Mr. Jerry Barnett thanked the Commission for making a stand and getting behind the silent majority regarding zoning. Mr. Barnett also quoted from the Constitution of the United States, and asked the Commission to think about consequences and where this puts us.

Mr. Keith McDonald thanked the Commission for letting him speak. Mr. McDonald mentioned that he had been hearing a lot about special interest groups, and that he belongs to a special interest group that wants to protect Lake Keowee. He informed the Commission that he doesn't live in a gated community, he attends church, his son plays baseball for Walhalla. All he and others like him are begging for is a small amount of protection from the Commissioners. Overlay districts do not zone against the will of the people, but apply only to new construction. Mr. McDonald also informed the Commission that he has been in the chicken house business for years, but understands that they don't belong just anywhere.

Mr. Jim Conger, President of the South Oak Pointe Homeowners Association, asked the Commission to protect the lake. Mr. Conger informed the Commission that a parcel beside South Cove Park was currently being promoted as unrestricted and ideal for multi-family, and it will happen if there is not protection. Mr. Conger urged the Commission to place the Lake Overlay Zone back into the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Reg Dexter thanked the Commission for reviewing Park View South and East and showing them as residential on the Future Land Use Map. Mr Dexter also informed the Commission that he supports protection on all lakes in Oconee County.

Mr. Keith Denny addressed the Commission in regards to the Lake Overlay around Lake Keowee. Mr. Denny informed the Commission that he is concerned about quality of life. We need to attract people by

properly managing our resources. Otherwise development will come in, get there pound of flesh, rip up the shoreline, and leave us with roads and infrastructure we can't support. Mr. Denny is interested in his family's welfare that is his special interest.

Mr. Paul Reckert thanked the Commission and Mr. Holbrooks for recognizing them as residential.

Mr. Tom Markovich addressed the Commission regarding the Future Land Use Map and the area around I-85. He agrees with setting areas aside for job creation, but thinks that a five acre minimum for residential is short sighted. Mr. Markovich asked the Commission to consider allowing Planned Development with mixed-use opportunities. He said that we shouldn't use all the sewer capacity on residential, but for now we don't have sewer there anyway.

B.J. Littleton informed the Commission that County Administrator Dale Surrett tried to use scare tactics by saying "Atlanta is coming" to get people to give away their rights. He stated that if we have a good County Council we don't need to be afraid. Mr. Littleton stated his dislike of the Planning Department, Economic Development Director Jim Alexander, Upstate Alliance, and ACOG. Mr. Littleton also commented negatively on the IT 5 year budget projections.

Item 4: Discussion of Capital Improvements List – Before beginning his presentation on the Capital Improvements List, Mr. Gadsby introduced a new member of the Planning Department to the Commission, Ms. Amanda Schell, and stated that since beginning her employment in September of 2007, she has proven to be a vital asset to both the Planning Department and Oconee County.

Mr. Gadsby handed out to the Commission a list of projects mentioned in plans approved by County Council. Mr. Gadsby asked the Commissioners to prioritize the list and get them back to the Planning Department so that a list can be prepared for next meeting. Mr. Abbott asked Mr. Gadsby about the expansion of the terminal areas and that he suspected that it was the tenants in the business areas are wanting larger ramp areas. Mr. Honea asked if this was everything. Mr. Gadsby informed the Commission that after the Department requests have been made public the Commission would receive more information, but that Mr. Holbrooks wanted to start with the projects mentioned in approved plans. Chairman Abbott commented about the proposed kitchen expansion when they didn't have enough jail space.

Item 5: Discussion of Draft Future Land Use Map –Mr. Gadsby presented the latest draft of the Future Land Use Map to the Commission for their review. Mr. Gadsby informed the Commission that the draft was based on previous discussions, particularly those stemming from the zoning workshop with County Council. Mr. Gadsby also informed the Commission that staff's opinion was the map was ready to be forwarded on to County Council. Mr. Honea made a motion to forward the future land use map on to County Council to be amended into the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Evatt seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0.

Item 6: Old Business – Mr. Gadsby presented the Commission with a draft zoning ordinance, stating that the document reflected where the Planning Department felt the Commission was at in terms of the proposed citizen-initiated zoning process. Mr. Gadsby pointed out to the Commission that the draft was intentionally vague in places so that the Commission could give direction prior to drafting the text.

Also under Old Business, Mr. Evatt asked about the property along 123 where the previous adult night club had been located, and wanted to know if a similar business could open there. Mr. Gadsby informed the Commission that the particular property in question would not meet the standards put forth in the sexually oriented business chapter of the performance standards. Mr. Evatt said he was glad to see it closed.

Item 7: New Business – There was no new businesses.

Item 8: Adjourn