



# Oconee County Planning Commission

415 S. Pine Street, Walhalla, SC

29691

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## Minutes

### Planning Commission Meeting

December 14, 2009

The Oconee County Planning Commission held a regular meeting on December 14, 2009 at 6:30 PM in the Conference Room at the Oconee County Administrative Building, 415 S. Pine St., Walhalla, SC 29691.

Members Present: Tommy Abbott (Chairman)  
Ryan Honea, (Vice Chairman)  
Randy Abbott  
Andy Heller  
Rex Ramsay

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

#### Media Present:

Carlos Galarza, Daily Journal  
Ray Chandler, Anderson Independent  
Dick Mangrum, WGOG

#### **Item 1: Chairman Abbott called the meeting to order.**

#### **Item 2: Approval of Minutes –**

- a. November 9, 2009 (regular meeting) – approved
- b. November 30, 2009 (special meeting) – Ms. Heller asked to correct “none funds” on page 1, otherwise approved.
- c. December 8, 2009 (special meeting) - approved

#### **Item 3: Public Comment -**

**Steve Moore** – Mr. Moore suggested that more details on how estimates for projects are derived and how the information is obtained should be made available for review.

**Donna Linsin** – Ms. Linsin expressed concern that the public did not have opportunity to comment on the Comprehensive Plan and that the goals and objectives from the Plan were not brought out in any public meetings.

**Larry Linsin** – Mr. Linsin provided additional figures on the 33 empty spec buildings, to support his opinion that the cost of installing sewer service will not be recouped.

**Jerry Barnett** – Mr. Barnett advised the Commission to make decisions carefully and consider citizen rights.

**John Adams and Sue Baldwin** – Mr. Adams asked the Commission to reconsider their position on the library projects, per the Master Plan. He informed them that the Master Plan architect will be providing updated figures by December 21<sup>st</sup>. Andy Heller asked him if other options had been considered and he said that the new library was the only option that had received unanimous support from the Library Board. Sue Baldwin noted that when other options were considered, it was determined that it would cost more to renovate and upgrade existing buildings, due to issues such as the weight of stored books. Randy Abbott asked if any consideration was made for establishing satellite locations for uses such as internet access and Mr. Adams replied that satellite locations would require additional staff, as well as buildings, and was not considered.

**Item 4: Capital Project Commission Presentation** – Mr. Jim Alexander spoke on behalf of Mr. Don Fuller, explaining that Mr. Fuller was absent due to medical reasons. Mr. Alexander explained that there will be a limited number of projects for a referendum; therefore much depends on what the Planning Commission decides priorities will be for the Capital Projects list.

**Item 5: Discussion of Comprehensive Plan Update** – Mr. Art Holbrooks referred Commission members to the draft copies of the Comprehensive Plan that were distributed to each of them. He informed everyone that the draft plan is posted on the county website and that the draft will be provided free of charge on a CD to any citizen who requests one.

**Item 6: Presentation of Economic Development Related Capital Projects** – Mr. Jim Alexander conducted a presentation on the Golden Corner Commerce project and the proposed speculative building, providing specific details on the phasing of the projects and the costs associated with each phase. Commission members asked various questions about the phasing of the projects. Mr. Randy Abbott asked him if anyone had considered leasing the speculative building and he said that an alternative had been considered, to avoid having the county in a position of renting property. Ms. Heller asked if any consideration had been given to using any of the existing empty buildings in the county. Mr. Alexander explained that consideration is always given to existing buildings but needed modifications and repairs often make it cheaper to build.

**Item 7: Consideration of Capital Projects Prioritized List:** Commission members agreed to hold a special meeting on January 4<sup>th</sup> to hear further information concerning the airport's, rock quarry's, and Coroner's projects. Ms. Heller asked for clarification on the ranking of the 10 unit T-hangar; the commission decided to have the Airport director come to the meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Holbrooks explained that some of the IT issues would be handled through regular operational procedures rather than as special projects. Mr. Holbrooks also informed the group that a column would be added to the Commission priority list, allowing the members to list conditions and explanations for priorities. Members of the Commission agreed to move Phase I of the Golden Corner Commerce Park and the elevated water tank to Priority 2 in the list.

**Item 8: Election of Officers for 2010** – Chairman Abbott called for nominations for Chairman. Mr. Randy Abbott nominated Mr. Tommy Abbott. Mr. Rex Ramsay nominated Mr. Ryan Honea for Vice Chairman, who declined. Mr. Randy Abbott nominated Mr. Howard Moore for Vice Chairman. Ms. Heller asked members of the Commission to consider adopting a policy for rotating positions on the Commission so that all members assume some responsibility for an office. She also suggested grooming the Vice Chairman position to take on the position of

Chairman for each following term of office. Mr. Tommy Abbott responded that the bylaws would need to be amended for these changes. The Commission approved Mr. Tommy Abbott as Chairman and Mr. Howard Moore as vice-chairman for the 2010 calendar year unanimously.

**Item 9: Old Business – none**

**Item 10: New Business** – Mr. Holbrooks informed the Commission that the Planning and Economic Development meeting that was scheduled for Wednesday, December 16, at 4:00 PM has been rescheduled again for Friday, December 18, at 10:00 AM in Council Chambers.

**Item 11: Adjourn**