



Oconee County Planning Commission

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Minutes

Planning Commission Meeting

April 18, 2011

The Oconee County Planning Commission held a regular meeting on April 18, 2011 at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers at the Oconee County Administrative Building, 415 S. Pine St., Walhalla, SC 29691.

Members Present: Ryan Honea, (Chairman)
Tommy Abbott
Howard Moore
Andy Heller
William Gilster
Gwen McPhail

Staff Present: Aaron Gadsby (County Planner)
Yancey Green (Planner)

Media Present: Carlos Galarza, Daily Journal

Item 1: Called to Order

Chairman Honea called the meeting to order.

Item 2: Approval of Minutes

Mr. Gilster made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 4, 2011 meeting. Ms. Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 3: Public Comment

There was none.

Item 4: Extended Public Comment Session (5 minute limit)

Ms. Anna Connelly from the Foothills YMCA spoke to the Commission regarding the mission of the YMCA in Oconee County. Ms. Connelly informed the Commission that the YMCA was planning a new facility along HWY 130 which would enable them to expand their services in Oconee County. Ms. Heller asked Ms. Connelly what the new facility would mean for the citizens of Oconee. Ms. Connelly explained that the new facility would allow the YMCA to offer a full gym, weight training room, pool, and outdoor recreation fields for sports such as soccer. Mr. Abbott asked about Father/Son

programs offered by the YMCA. Ms. Connelly stated the new facility would include additional staff to allow for such programs.

Item 5: Discussion and/or Consideration of Armstrong/Retreat Area Rezoning Request, Ordinance 2011-10

Mr. Gadsby informed the Commission that the proposed ordinance stems from a citizen-initiated rezoning request, which consisted of two parcels comprising approximately 233 acres currently in the Control Free District, located off of Armstrong and North Retreat Roads in Oconee County. Both parcels were being considered for the Traditional Rural District. County Council took 1st reading in caption only at their meeting on April 5, 2011 and referred the matter to the Planning Commission for review and consideration. Mr. Gadsby then presented the Commission with an overview of the request with the following staff recommendation: This rezoning request lies in the agricultural preservation area on the future land use map. The traditional rural district complies with the comprehensive plan and is consistent with the zoning that has been adopted in this area by County Council. Therefore, we recommend the request be forwarded to County Council after consideration is given to all public input. With the consensus of the Commission, staff will develop other alternatives for consideration.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Abbott made a motion to recommend the Traditional Rural District to County Council. Mr. Moore seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 6: Consideration of Amendments to Ordinance 2011-04, Happy Holler Request

Mr. Gadsby informed the Commission that County Council considered their recommendation on Ordinance 2011-04 and took Second Reading amending it to reflect one additional parcel. Pursuant to the South Carolina Code of Laws 6-29-760(A) the Commission had 30 days to review the changes and forward a recommendation to County Council. The Commission discussed the amendments and Mr. Abbott made a motion to recommend approving the changes made by County Council. Mr. Moore seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 7: Consideration of Amendments to Ordinance 2011-07, Long Creek Orchard Road Request.

Mr. Howard Moore excused himself from the discussion and voting on this matter, stating a conflict of interest, as the owner of some of the property being considered.

Mr. Gadsby informed the Commission that when County Council considered Ordinance 2011-07 for Second Reading they amended the ordinance by adding two additional parcels. The addition was based upon public input received by the Planning Department after the Commission made their recommendation. Council, pursuant to South Carolina Code of Laws 6-29-760(A), forwarded the amendments to the Commission for review. The commission discussed the amendments. Ms. Heller raised concerns about the areas

that were not included in the rezoning, and asked whether or not the Commission should recommend to Council that they be zoned TRD. Discussion followed. Mr. Gilster made a motion to send County Council the map with the “holes” filled in as TRD and to accept the amendments that Council made. Ms. Heller seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Chairman Honea called for a vote. The motion failed, with Mr. Gilster and Ms. Heller voting in favor, and Mr. Abbot, Ms. McPhail, and Chairman Honea voting against. Ms. McPhail made a motion to recommend approving the changes made by County Council. Mr. Abbott seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Chairman Honea called for a vote. The motion passed with Chairman Honea, Mr. Abbott, Ms. McPhail, and Ms. Heller voting in favor, and Mr. Gilster voting against.

Item 8: Discussion of Grandfathering and Non-conformity.

Mr. Gadsby presented draft language for the Commission to consider that would clarify the grandfathering and non-conformity language in the ZEO. Mr. Gadsby stressed that this section of the ZEO only applies to those uses not specifically listed as permitted, conditional, or special exception when a rezoning takes place. The Commission discussed the draft. Mr. Moore asked staff to submit the draft to the County attorney for an opinion. Mr. Abbott stated that the grandfathering is only good until County Council decides to change the ordinance as they see fit in the future. Mr. Gadsby stated that the authority behind the grandfathering and non-conformity was the currently adopted ordinance, and if the ordinance was changed in the future, the law would change. Mr. Moore asked staff to suggest how to clarify the standards so a change of use not resulting in a change of intensity might be allowed. Mr. Gadsby stated that staff would make changes to the draft and submit those to the County attorney.

Item 9: Continued Discussion of Draft Uses in ZEO, and Other Items Discussed at the Joint Workshop with Council on February 8, 2011

Mr. Gadsby presented a draft list of uses and their correspondence to the Traditional Rural District. Mr. Gadsby stated that the “day care facilities (all ages)” was skipped and should have been listed as permitted. Mr. Gilster stated that “warehousing” and “distribution and other warehouses” were basically the same thing and should be combined. Mr. Gilster also stated that “Air Strips” and “Golf courses, country clubs, driving ranges” should be listed as special exceptions. Ms. McPhail stated that “Museums, cultural centers, historical sites, sightseeing, & similar institutions” should be listed as permitted. Mr. Moore stated that “Public, private, and commercial parks and recreation, camping or social facilities” should be listed as permitted. Mr. Gadsby stated that “light manufacturing” would be good use in the Traditional Rural District. Mr. Gadsby stated that he would make the changes mentioned and that as part of the review we need to allow for public comment. Ms. Heller made a motion to hold a public hearing and workshop on the draft. Mr. Honea seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 10: Old Business.

Mr. Gadsby briefed the Commission on a meeting held between Chairman Honea, Mr. Moore, and Ms. Heller to review the list of names submitted for consideration as the Commission’s nomination to fill the vacant at-large seat. The meeting resulted in the group’s recommendation to the Commission to vote on a list of four names: Mr. Randy Abbott Jr., Mr. John Lyle, Mr. Richard Hughes, and Mr. Allen Medford. Chairman Honea called for additional nominations; none were heard. The Chairman called for a

vote by closed ballot, with each member selecting 2 individuals to recommend to Council. The results of the voting were that Mr. John Lyle received 5 votes, Mr. Randy Abbott Jr. received 3 votes, and both Mr. Richard Hughes and Mr. Allen Medford received 2 votes. Mr. Moore made a motion to forward to County Council the names of both Mr. John Lyle and Mr. Randy Abbott Jr. for consideration to fill the at-large seat on the Planning Commission. Mr. Abbott seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 11: New Business.

There was none.

Item 12: Adjourn.