

OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



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MINUTES

6:00 PM, MONDAY, JULY 27, 2015
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
OCONEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

Members Present: Mr. Childress
Mr. Honea
Mr. Kisker
Ms. McPhail
Mr. Ownbey (6:18 PM)
Mr. Richards

Staff Present: Matthew Anspach, Planner I
William Brewer, Planning Intern

Media Present: None.

1. Call to Order

Ms. McPhail called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes for July 7, 2015 and July 13, 2015

Mr. Richards motioned to approve the minutes from July 7, 2015.

Mr. Honea seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Honea motioned to approve the minutes from July 13, 2015.

Mr. Richards seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, except for Mr. Childress who recused himself due to his absence from the July 13 meeting.

3. Public Comment for Agenda and Non-Agenda Items (3 minutes)

Mr. Tom Markovich explained his concerns and opposition to the proposed Coordination Element. He also explained his input on the regulation of communication towers and Wi-Fi towers. He recommended that the Commission be cautious when separating Wi-Fi from other communication towers. He also suggested that that the regulation of communication towers should be included in Chapter 38, as opposed to Chapter 32.

4. Presentation on Location and Tentative Dates of Community Meetings

Mr. Kisker expressed his concern with including the Keowee Key Clubhouse as a location due to the presence of a gate.

The Commission decided to remove the Keowee Key Clubhouse from the list.

Ms. McPhail asked if any of the members would contact the locations in their districts.

Mr. Anspach suggested that staff would contact Commission members individually to confirm if the meeting locations have been contacted and confirmed.

The Commission decided on a starting time of 6:00 PM to begin the community meetings.

Mr. Anspach agreed to begin work on the advertising of community meetings at the request of Mr. Richards.

Ms. McPhail suggested providing copies of the Oconee County Zoning Map at the community meetings for citizens attending the meetings.

5. Discussion of Update to Proposed Coordination Element for Comprehensive Plan

Ms. McPhail expressed her support for the proposed Coordination Element and explained that the 'version 2' document was written more clearly. She also expressed the importance of including coordination with other jurisdictions in the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Richards agreed that 'version 2' was the preferable document, but thought portions of it should be removed.

Mr. Anspach mentioned that this proposed element is simply a tool for the Commission and staff to guide their future decisions.

Mr. Kisker expressed that it was his understanding that much of the details in the proposed element were already present in the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Honea mentioned that there have been past issues regarding communication between jurisdictions.

Mr. Markovich expressed that creating an element in the Comprehensive Plan requires an act of County Council. He also mentioned that this proposed element suggests mandatory coordination.

Mr. Bill Gilster explained his experience in coordinating with County jurisdictions and encouraged the Commission to make efforts to work together with these jurisdictions more often.

Ms. McPhail requested that staff make corrections to the document by changing the wording to make it less restrictive, but also encouraged staff to continue to work on the proposed Coordination Element.

6. Presentation on Wi-Fi Tower Permitting Draft Ordinance #2015-25

Ms. McPhail suggested some minor corrections to the grammar and wording in the ordinance. She also inquired about the Residential and Lake Residential districts wording in the draft.

Mr. Anspach explained that the districts were singled out because they both prohibit communication towers outright.

Mr. Richards requested that Mr. Markovich step forward to answer a question. He asked him about moving Article 4 of Chapter 32 to Chapter 38.

Ms. McPhail asked about the significance of moving the article. She also suggested that the Commission could seek legal advice about making any decisions regarding the structuring and placement of communication towers within the code of ordinances.

Mr. Richards inquired about the legality of communication tower setbacks on scenic highways. He also asked about the legality of the visual impact analysis required in the ordinance.

Mr. Anspach informed the Commission the staff could use direction from the Commission on obtaining legal advice over items pertaining communication towers.

Mr. Richards motioned to direct staff to seek legal counsel on items pertaining to communication towers.

Mr. Childress seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Presentation on Height Ordinance Consolidation Draft Ordinance #2015-26

Mr. Anspach explained the draft of the height ordinance and requested that the Commission motion to amend the draft by removing the words: “at the front” in Chapter 38-9.4.

Mr. Ownbey motioned to direct staff to amend the height ordinance draft by removing the words: “at the front” in Chapter 38-9.4.

Mr. Richards seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Honea motioned to direct staff to remove the Building Height Regulations ordinance in Chapter 32 Article 9 and consolidate any overlapping language into Chapter 38 Article 9.4 for County Council consideration.

Mr. Ownbey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

9. New Business

Mr. Anspach informed the Commission that the next meeting is set for Monday, August 10, 2015. He mentioned that the first community meeting is set for a tentative date of August 13, 2015. He also informed the Commission that staff would be attending a conference on Thursday for the South Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association.

10. Adjourn

Mr. Honea motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Childress seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. 6:56 PM