

OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



TEL (864) 638-4218 FAX (864) 638-4168

Minutes

5:00 pm- Monday, June 21, 2021

Council Chambers - Oconee County Administrative Complex

Members Present

Frankie Pearson

Dave Nix

Gary Gaulin

Mike Smith

Mike Johnson

Pat Williams

Staff Present

Vivian Kompier

Laura Zimmerman

Media Present

Lauren Pierce – The Journal

1. Call to order – Mr. Smith called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.
2. Invocation was led by Mr. Nix
3. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Johnson
4. Approval of minutes for June 7, 2021– Mr. Gaulin made a motion to approve the June 7th minutes. Seconded by Mr. Johnson and the vote approved 6/0.
5. Public comment for non-agenda items – None
6. Ed Halbig, Planning Director for the City of Seneca – Presented a brief overview of public transportation via the CATbus and the potential for expansion. Discussion included:
 - a. The duality of Walhalla as a municipality and the County Seat of Oconee and the need for citizens of Oconee County to have access to County services.
 - b. Expansion must be a partnership between the City of Seneca/CATbus and the other municipalities and the County
 - c. Interest of expansion has been voiced, but no serious conversations are taking place
 - d. Safety concerns regarding designated bus stops, lack of sidewalks and crime on busesMr. Halbig thanked the Commission for the opportunity to open the dialogue regarding public transportation.
7. Commission member comments – Mr. Smith reminded Commission Members that the next meeting is scheduled for July 8, 2021, which is a Thursday, not a Monday as usual. He also reported that Kyle Reid with Oconee County Roads & Bridges is tentatively scheduled to attend the July 19th meeting and discuss Exit 4 and sidewalks. Mr. Gaulin expressed his desire to properly thank invited speakers, for example sending thank you notes. Ms. Kompier and Mr. Gaulin will discuss details. Mr. Williams thanked all Commission Members for their service.

8. Staff Comments – Ms. Kompier gave an update on the Planning Department
9. Agricultural Advisory Board Meeting Report – Mr. Smith and Mr. Williams attended the June 14th Agricultural Advisory Board meeting to open dialogue and form a working relationship where beneficial, specifically the protection of agricultural land now and in the future. Mr. Williams reported that support from the community regarding protecting ag land is growing, there are a lot of ideas on what to do, but there is no plan. Mr. Williams believes that education of the land owners will be critical to finding the solution. Mr. Williams will meet with Mr. Blanton from the Ag Board to further the dialogue and form a plan. Mr. Johnson and Mr. Nix agreed that the positive effects of zoning need to be considered. Mr. Smith stated the strategy for Protecting Ag Land will be moved over to the Planning Commission’s open items list and Mr. Williams will be the lead on formulating an action plan and keeping the Commission up-to-date.
10. 2021 Strategies Review – Mr. Smith reminded members that as they review the strategies, to keep in mind what is achievable and attainable. Item #3, Protect ag land (8.1.1.4, 6.2.1), can be checked off as reviewed and moved to the open item list. Item #5, Road Maintenance Planning – (9.3.3.2, 9.3.2.2), will remain open. Mr. Gaulin made a motion to accept the strategies category list as written to help move the review process forward. Mr. Johnson seconded. The discussion included:
 - a. Concern that there are no strategies that have been categorized as 1 or 2, which require Planning Commission action. Mr. Smith advised the current strategies listed as 1-5 will be re-categorized as CAT 1.
 - b. Issue with sewer system in Oconee County should be a Category 1Mr. Smith reminded Commission that the motion is to accept the **process** of reviewing strategies, not to review the strategies.
Mr. Gaulin restated the motion; Mr. Johnson seconded and the vote approved 6/0.
The review of strategies list yielded these results:
 - a. 3.1.1.3 – falls under Item #3 on the open items list and the category will be changed to category #3.
 - b. 3.2.1.4 – COVID-19 bill has money for rehabbing and building affordable housing and Administrator is working through the process to be considered for funds. Strategy was marked as review complete.
 - c. 4.3.2.5 – under the purview of the Oconee Economic Alliance. Strategy was marked as review complete.
 - d. 5.1.1.2 – Litter Control Ordinance was recently revised in ordinance #2021-09 and the County has posted a position for a Code Enforcement Officer. Strategy was marked as review complete.
 - e. 5.1.2.1 – Ordinance 2021-11 was recently passed and protects historical buildings and monuments. Strategy was marked as review complete.
 - f. 5.1.2.4 – Oconee Economic Alliance has two developers actively completing their due diligence on the Utica Mill Area. Strategy was marked as review complete.
11. Adjourn – Mr. Nix made a motion for adjournment. Seconded by Mr. Pearson and unanimously passed 5/0 at 6:17 PM.

Anyone wishing to submit written comments to the Planning Commission can send their comments to the Planning Department by mail or by emailing them to the email address below. Please Note: If you would like to receive a copy of the agenda via email please contact our office, or email us at achapman@oconeesc.com.