



MINUTES

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

June 6, 2023

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Don Mize, Chair, District III

Mr. Durham, District II

Mr. Hart, District V

The Planning and Economic Development Committee met at 5:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, Oconee Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all members present, as well as County Administrator Amanda F. Brock, County Attorney David Root, and Jennifer C. Adams, Clerk to Council, present.

Staff Present: James Coley / Planning and Zoning Director
Jamie Gilbert / Economic Development Director

Press Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [www.oconeesc.com/council]. In addition, it was made available [*upon request*] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Call to Order

Mr. Mize called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Moment of Silence

Mr. Mize asked for a moment of silence prior to the Invocation by County Council Chaplain.

Invocation by County Council Chaplain

Mr. Root, County Council Chaplain, gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Durham led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Durham made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 3 - 0, to approve the March 21, 2023 minutes as presented.

Discussion & Action Regarding the Following Items

Planning and Code Enforcement Update

Mr. James Coley, Oconee County Planning and Zoning Director, addressed the Committee utilizing a power point presentation entitled, "Planning, Zoning and Code Enforcement June 2023 Year to Date" [copy in backup].

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Mr. Coley provided an update to the Committee regarding the Planning and Zoning Department's 2023 year-to-date plat reviews, subdivision applications, variances and special exemptions and buffer permits, along with Code Enforcement caseload updates.

Mr. Coley offered details to Mr. Mize concerning his inquiry about subdivision applications and staffing of the Planning and Code Enforcement office.

Mr. Durham inquired as to how many subdivision applications actually came to fruition from those that applied in the year 2022.

Mr. Coley noted to the Committee that he did not have an exact number but would estimate 1/3 of those application actually came to fruition.

Mr. Durham also offered comments related to possibly implementing a "termination fee" to help recapture lost time for subdivision reviews that do not come to fruition.

Short discussion followed related to review fees by the Committee and Mr. Coley.

Mr. Durham inquired if there are any redundant ordinances or standards that the County has in place, that are possibly covered by the state or outdated, that could be reviewed and/or revised to improve the process of reviews.

Mr. Coley stated that the department could certainly provide a list for the Committee.

Ms. Brock added that it may be advantageous to include road standards in the review.

Economic Development Update

Mr. Jamie Gilbert, Oconee County Economic Development Director, addressed the Committee utilizing a power point presentation entitled, "Economic Development Update" [copy in backup].

Mr. Gilbert provided an overview of the inquiries, leads and projects that the Oconee Economic Alliance has received since January of 2023, along with an update related to marketing strategies.

Mr. Mize inquired about the comparison of growth in Oconee County compared to other counties in the state.

Mr. Gilbert noted he would not have a record of other counties inquiries or project but stated he may be able to pull some data, but this would be a rather large task to do for 46 counties.

Mr. Durham noted that the growth data Mr. Gilbert provided was great news for Oconee County and inquired as to where the leads are received from.

Mr. Gilbert commented that the majority of leads come from the Department of Commerce and the Upstate Alliance.

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Mr. Gilbert offered comments to the Committee related to Mr. Durham's inquiry as to if leads are received that are connected to Chinese based companies, noting that South Carolina has pulled back from doing business with China based companies.

Mr. Durham inquired as to if there is a better way to inform the public regarding projects without compromising the integrity of the project.

Mr. Gilbert offered to complete an AIS, Agenda Item Summary, for projects that are coming before Council, noting this would provide the public and Council with a more detailed project description without compromising the integrity of the project.

Ms. Brock noted to the Committee and Mr. Gilbert that AIS's for Economic Development projects can be initiated at the next Council meeting.

Adjourn:

Mr. Hart made a motion to adjourn, approved unanimously at 5:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jennifer C. Adams
Clerk to Council

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