

OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



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MINUTES OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

6:00 PM, MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2013
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
OCONEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

Members Present: Mr. Lyle, Chairman
Mr. Gilster
Mr. Hancox
Ms. Heller
Mr. Honea
Ms. McPhail

Staff Present: Josh Stephens, Deputy Director of Community Development
Matthew Anspach, Planner I
Tom Martin, Esq., County Attorney

Media Present: None

1. Call to Order

Mr. Martin called the meeting to order in lieu of the impending election of officers.

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Gilster commented on confusion that he had with part of old business in the third paragraph.

Mr. Stephens clarified that staff would remove the typo.

Mr. Martin further clarified the context of the record in light of the typo.

Ms. Heller motioned to approve the minutes as corrected. Ms. McPhail seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

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

Buzz Williams (Board Chairman, Chattooga Conservancy) commented that the Commission should consider an amendment to Chapter 32, Article 4 of Oconee County's Code of Ordinances they proposed for a specific portion of the County near the Chattooga to help protect the watershed of the river.

David Bennett (Waterside Crossing) commented about his concern that a previous communication tower hearing was not adequately advertised to enough proximate land owners. He added he wanted to look into what could be done to mitigate the concern of the many neighboring land owners.

Tom Markovich expressed his concern with some of the preliminarily proposed changes made by the Sub-Committee with the Code of Ordinances in Chapter 32 and 38.

4. Election of Officers

a. Chair

Ms. Heller nominated Mr. Lyle as Chairman. Ms. Heller's nomination was the only nomination for Chairman. The vote for Mr. Lyle as Chairman was unanimous.

b. Vice-Chair

Ms. Heller nominated Mr. Gilster as Vice-Chair. Ms. Heller's nomination was the only nomination for Vice-Chair. The vote for Mr. Gilster as Vice-Chair was unanimous.

5. Consideration of Capital Improvements Project List

a. Staff Presentation

Mr. Stephens commented that the Capital Improvements Project List (CIP) had been talked about at the previous meeting and gave a small recap.

b. Discussion & Consideration

Mr. Martin gave an update to his comments at the previous meeting concerning the Commissions role in regards to Capital Projects Advisory Committee (CPAC) and Capital Projects Sales Tax Committee (CPSTC) after researching the matter further.

Ms. McPhail had some questions about the CPAC, specifically about the Library items in relation to the previous times Capital Improvement Project List (CIP) was discussed. She stated her concern that more consideration should go into searching for lower costs on the library improvements.

Ms. Heller wanted to know why CPAC and the Planning Commission both needed to review the Project List.

Mr. Stephens reiterated that they are reviewing it because it is one of the duties of the Planning Commission to review capital improvements.

Ms. McPhail asked whether they could review the list but also add that they would like to add some stipulations to any concerns they may have.

Mr. Stephens answered that they could do that.

Mr. Gilster asked if they should rank or prioritize the items they choose on the list.

Mr. Stephens answered that they could rank them.

Mr. Honea mentioned that they could move items from Pending List to the Scored if they decided that a project on Pending List was a priority.

Ms. McPhail made a motion to recommend that County Council approve the CIP pending 1.) they look at more ways to lower the budget for the Library Projects, specifically the Seneca Branch portion, and 2.) they put the Golden Corner Commerce Park development as a priority should funding become available.

Ms. Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Upcoming Activities for 2014

a. Staff Presentation

Mr. Stephens covered the Comprehensive Plan's prominence for 2014. He suggested members become familiar with the Plan. He also recommended the Commission get input from the public concerning the County's future and the Comprehensive Plan. He also talked about looking into development of an Agricultural Committee and incentivizing the Code with Form Based Code.

b. Discussion & Consideration

Mr. Gilster asked if there were any specific ways in which the Commission should go about seeking input from the public.

Mr. Stephens mentioned that it would be helpful to get input from the public by having public meetings in different locations around the County.

Mr. Gilster asked whether the Commission should make a motion to move forward with plans to reach out to the communities for input on the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Stephens stated that he that that would not be necessary at this point and that he and Mr. Anspach would continue to meet with Art Holbrooks on the necessary steps that should be taken in the review process.

7. Workshop for Sub-Committee Ordinance Review of Chapter 32 & 38

a. Staff Comments

Mr. Stephens offered to give an overview of the Sub-Committee's progress made regarding the ordinance review.

b. Subcommittee Member Comments

Ms. Heller requested all members thoroughly read, review, and request changes or improvements that they deem necessary concerning the ordinance review. She also covered many of the proposed changes made in the ordinance review.

Mr. Lyle also encouraged members to read through the review material.

c. Discussion & Consideration

Ms. Heller had questions about comments made previously from Mr. Markovich regarding the Commission's scope in reviewing and updating an ordinance.

Mr. Honea asked what the current radius is for posting and mailing of hearing notices.

Mr. Stephens responded that there is not a specific distance, but that the ordinance does specify all adjacent properties.

Mr. Bennett added that he believed the request to add an official minimum distance for posting and mailing of hearing notices was consistent with places that he has lived.

Ms. Heller asked Mr. Martin where the Commission's responsibilities lie in regards to updating ordinances.

Mr. Martin replied that the Planning Commission cannot actually change them but County Council could. He added that the Commission could certainly specify and recommend the changes and pass them on to County Council.

Mr. Stephens asked if the Committee would like for him to give an overview of the review.

Mr. Lyle suggested the Commission wait until the next meeting in which the majority of the meeting could be devoted to the review.

Mr. Stephens agreed with Mr. Lyles suggestion and offered up that any Commissioner's contact him if they have any questions before the next meeting.

Ms. Heller asked what the next meeting date should be.

Mr. Stephens requested that everyone consider Monday, January 27 for the next meeting. Commission agreed to meet on Monday, January 27.

8. Old Business

None.

9. New Business

Mr. Stephens requested the Commission establish a yearly meeting schedule.

Ms. McPhail motioned that the Commission continue to meet on the first Monday of every month.

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

10. Adjourn

Ms. McPhail motioned to adjourn.

Mr. Gilster seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. 7:25 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: jstephens@oconeesc.com.