

OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



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

MINUTES

6:00 PM, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2014

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

OCONEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

Members Present: Mr. Lyle, Chair
Mr. Gilster, Vice Chair
Mr. Childress
Ms. Heller
Mr. Honea
Mr. Richards

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

Media Present: None.

1. Call to Order

Mr. Lyle called the meeting to order. 6:00 PM

2. Approval of Minutes for Monday, August 11, 2014

Mr. Honea motioned to approve the minutes.

Mr. Richards seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

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

Mr. John Murray stated his concerns about amateur operated radios in light of ordinance revisions.

Ms. Jean Geiman spoke about her opposition to any changes in the ordinance.

Mr. Morey talked about his concerns over potential changes to setbacks for communication towers on scenic highways, and any restrictions to amateur operated radios.

4. Discussion regarding Ordinance Review of Chapter 32 & 38

a. Staff Comments

Mr. Stephens presented on moving forward with the reviewed and updated chapters 32 & 38. He informed the Commission that they would need to vote on whether to recommend to forward the proposed amendments to Council.

b. Discussion & Consideration by Commission

Mr. Richards mentioned that he thought it would be a good idea to vote for each item individually.

Mr. Stephens clarified that the first item would be the creation of a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

Mr. Richards asked regarding the UDO, what type of timeframe staff would be looking at for its creation.

Mr. Stephens responded that he didn't know at this point and that this is simply in the conceptual stage.

Mr. Richards asked for comments from developers and the public who would be familiar with or affected by a potential UDO.

Mr. Tom Markovich spoke on his concerns with uniting the two chapters.

Ms. Heller suggested a table of contents for the ordinances and sequential numbering of all articles.

Mr. Stephens noted the suggestions from Ms. Heller. He then explained that staff is simply looking to put the idea of unifying the two ordinances before the Council for their thoughts.

Mr. Richards explained that whatever is decided, the Commission would simply suggest exploring the idea to Council, rather than recommend to Council any unification of the ordinances.

Ms. Heller explained that the Commission would not need direction from Council to explore the creation of a UDO.

Mr. Gilster motioned that the Commission recommend to County Council that the planning staff explore the creation of a UDO.

Ms. Heller seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-2 with Mr. Richards and Mr. Honea dissenting.

Mr. Stephens spoke on the second item for recommendation as being the matter of creating an agricultural advisory committee.

Mr. Lyle asked if there was a motion to recommend the creation of an agricultural committee. There was no motion.

Based on suggestions amongst members of the Commission, Mr. Stephens suggested that the first and second items of recommendation to Council be the updated Chapter 32 and 38 ordinances. He added that the recommendation for exploration of a UDO be the third item.

Mr. Honea spoke on a topic in Article 4 of Chapter 32 dealing with communication tower removal, and cell companies attempting to form contracts with landowners potentially extending the allowable non-use time period, and thus possibly violating the language in County ordinance.

Mr. Martin explained that cell companies cannot make contracts that are contrary to the law, or the ordinance.

Mr. Martin mentioned that he will need to research and see if a tower could be exempted based solely on whether it is noncommercial.

Mr. Gilster mentioned that it would be a good idea to make Council aware that the ordinance review with regards to amateur radios is not finalized and still under consideration.

Mr. Stephens responded that he would highlight that for the Council. He then suggested that the reference to the lake buffer in Chapter 32 Article 6 be removed for redundancy purposes.

Mr. Richards motioned to remove the reference to the lake buffer in Chapter 32 Article 6.

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

Mr. Stephens presented the rest of the final pre-workshop changes made by staff.

Ms. Heller motioned to move conservation subdivisions out of special exception and into conditional use, in the conservation district.

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

Mr. Childress made a motion to move “multi-family 5 or more units” and “single-family 10 or more units” out of special exception and into permitted in the mixed use district.

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

Mr. Gilster made a motion to approve the staff changes made to include Wi-Fi towers within the permitted uses in the zoning matrix under 65' tall.

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

5. Old Business

a. Discussion of Workshop with County Council regarding Review of Chapter 32 & 38

Mr. Richards motioned to accept Chapter 32 as amended and recommend the changes to County Council.

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

Mr. Honea motioned to accept Chapter 38 as amended and recommend the changes to County Council.

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

b. Update on Research of Storm Water Management Programs

Mr. Stephens spoke on work that had been accomplished related to the research of a program, and that he should have something soon.

6. New Business

Mr. Stephens stated that the new date would be decided at a later date.

7. Adjourn

Mr. Lyle adjourned the meeting. 7:49 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.