

OCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



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

Minutes

5:00 pm- Thursday, February 24, 2022

Council Chambers - Oconee County Administrative Complex

Members Present

Gary Gaulin

Frankie Pearson

Mike Johnson

Mike Smith

David Nix

Staff Present

James Coley, Planning Director

Vivian Kompier, Senior Planning

Media Present - None

1. Call to order – Mr. Pearson called meeting to order at 5:00 PM.
2. Invocation was led by Mr. Nix.
3. Pledge of Allegiance was led by audience member Travis Nix.
4. Approval of minutes from January 31, 2022 – Mr. Nix made a motion to approve the minutes for January 31, 2022; seconded by Mr. Johnson. After brief discussion, Mr. Pearson called for a vote. Motion passed unanimously 5/0.
5. Commission member comments:
 - a. Mr. Smith – requested that instructions for public comment be placed in more prominent spot on the Planning Commission Agenda. Staff agreed to do so.
 - b. Mr. Gaulin – read the Planning Commission Purpose Statement to frame the business for the new year. Mr. Gaulin voiced his support for the Greenway Trail. He extended an invitation to a meeting with Chris Eleazer, Oconee Joint Regional Sewer Authority, on Thursday, March 3, 2022 at 11:00 AM at the Coneross Plant to discuss the work of the OJRSA, the south sewer project, and the basin study. Mr. Gaulin also announced that the Fair Play master plan has been completed and they will hold a meeting on Thursday, March 10th at 7:00 PM at the Fair Oak Youth Center.
6. Staff comments:
 - a. Mr. Coley stated the Planning Department has reviewed 10 subdivision applications, which represents approximately 1200 lots/units, and 69 plat reviews thus far in 2022.

7. Public comment (non-agenda items):
 - a. Tom Markovich, Citizen – expressed his disappointment that the County Council did not ask for input from the Planning Commission when considering the Greenway Trail.

8. Highway 123 curb cuts and auxiliary turn lane ordinance:
 - a. Mr. Smith made a motion that a sub-committee be formed, of no more than three Planning Commission members and interested members of the County to consider developing a draft ordinance for curb cuts and auxiliary turn lanes on Highway 123 in Oconee County as requested by the Planning & Economic Development Committee at their June 1, 2021 meeting. This item is to be on the agenda when the sub-committee is ready to report their findings for consideration at a regular scheduled Planning Commission meeting; Mr. Gaulin seconded the motion. Discussion included the need for sub-committees versus addressing issues as a complete Commission.
 - b. Public comment:
 - i. Tom Markovich, citizen – expressed his opposition to developing an ordinance for Highway 123.
 - ii. Travis Nix, citizen – offered his opinion on working with State right-of-ways.
 - c. Mr. Pearson called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously 5/0.

9. Sidewalks, Chapter 26-3, q, construction of sidewalks in the County road right-of-way
 - a. Public comment:
 - i. Tom Markovich, citizen – expressed his opposition to revising ordinance that includes sidewalks
 - b. Mr. Smith made a motion that a sub-committee be formed, of no more than three Planning Commission members and interested members of the County to consider revising Ordinance Chapter 26-3 to allow for construction of sidewalks within the County road right-of-way. This item will be on the Planning Commission agenda when the sub-committee is ready to report their findings for consideration at a regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting; Mr. Gaulin seconded the motion. Discussion included understanding why the ordinance was written to begin with, safety aspects of sidewalks, clarification of the intent of the revision of the ordinance, and responsibility for maintaining sidewalks if allowed. Mr. Pearson called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously 5/0.

10. Junkyard Ordinance
 - a. Public comment:
 - i. Travis Nix, citizen, operates a storage yard – explained the differences between storage yards, salvage yards, and junk yards. He opposes storage yards being regulated by the proposed junkyard ordinance.
 - b. Mr. Gaulin spoke to his personal experience prior to becoming a Planning Commission Member where property owners created unregulated “dumps” with no regard to the neighboring properties and their property values. Mr. Gaulin made a motion to show a video of the area. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. A brief discussion followed regarding confidentiality and time available for remaining agenda items. Mr. Pearson called for a vote. The motion was denied 2/3 with Mr. Johnson, Mr. Pearson, and Mr. Nix voting against.
 - c. Mr. Pearson made a motion to add a discussion about the Junkyard Ordinance to the agenda for the next scheduled meeting, show Mr. Gaulin’s video, and discuss the creation of a sub-committee at that time. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. A brief discussion followed. Mr. Pearson called for a vote. The motion was denied 2/3, with Mr. Smith, Mr. Gaulin and Mr. Nix voting against.

- d. Mr. Nix made a motion to amend the agenda to bypass the remaining two items and skip to the adjournment. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. A brief discussion followed regarding public comment and other items on the agenda.
 - e. Mr. Gaulin made a motion to form a sub-committee with no more than three Planning Commissioners, at least one staff member, and at least one community stakeholder to consider developing an ordinance on junkyards and to allow this item to be on the agenda when the sub-committee is ready to update, report, and share their findings at a regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. No discussion followed. Mr. Pearson called for a vote. The motion passed 3/2 with Mr. Pearson and Mr. Nix voting against.
 - f. Mr. Gaulin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. No one seconded; motion died.
11. Sewer basin study for Fair Play
- a. Public Comment – Tom Markovich, citizen – expressed his hope that the Basin Study will find more ways to add more gravity to the proposed sewer expansion.
 - b. Mr. Coley – updated Commissioners on the activity to this point.
12. Adjourn – Mr. Gaulin made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Nix seconded the motion. Mr. Pearson called for a vote. The motion passed 3/2, with Mr. Johnson and Mr. Pearson voting against at 5:55 PM.