

MACON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

April 4, 2006

A meeting of the Macon County Planning Board was held on April 4th, 2006 at the Macon County Environmental Resource Center. The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm.

CALL TO ORDER:

Planning Board members present were Ronnie Beale, Lamar Sprinkle, Evelyn Southard, Larry Stenger, Jimmy Goodman, Evelyn Owens, Mark West, Mike Decker, Alan Marsh, Charlie Leatherman - Commissioner Liaison, County Planner Stacy Guffey and Planning Assistant Gregory Hunt, members of the press and members of the general public, Rick Moorefield – County Attorney, Jack Morgan – Chief Building Inspector, Barry Patterson – Environmental Health Director, Warren Cabe – EMS Director

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Jimmy Goodman made a motion to approve the minutes as read with Barry Patterson comments amended. Larry Stenger seconded the motion and the minutes were accepted and passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Beale opened the meeting by introducing the County Representatives present to answer and/or discussion portions of the proposed draft Subdivision Ordinance. Beale then opened the floor for questions to the County Representatives present. West asked for clarification on what constitutes a minor vs. major subdivision. Jack Morgan responded that that would have to be decided by the Planning Board or County Commissioners. Rick Moorefield stated the real reason for defining a minor or major subdivision, per the last meeting of the Board, would be to set the procedure for who would be involved in the review process of a subdivision application. Goodman asked Morgan about burden on his department if he was appointed the review officer. Morgan explained he was pre-approved to include in his 2007 Budget request, another staff member who would help in the review process. Beale asked about wells on property in relation to setbacks and spacing. Patterson pointed out how the spacing and setback policy is applied to current state and local regulations. Patterson asked that there be some consideration regarding well restrictions in the subdivision ordinance. Decker inquired, should the Planning Board use lot size or some other criteria to help the well and septic issues. Patterson said if a good review was in place that would take care of it.

Leatherman talked about what the Commissioners are wanting and looking for from the Subdivision Regulations. Health and safety are the biggest issues to deal with. Leatherman stated the Planning Board should be looking at the County a decade down the road and generate a subdivision regulation that reflects that image.

Warren Cabe discussed things relating to the County EMS in the way of health and safety that should be considered. Cabe mentioned access road width should be addressed and mentioned Firewise Program by National Forest Service.

Open discussion on publishing brochures/flyers with information about Macon County, i.e. topography, emergency vehicles, etc.

Beale asked Morgan, concerning portion of proposed draft ordinance regarding review process, the number of days he thought the review process should be allowed. Morgan replied it depends on how many you get, it could always change.

Open discussion continued with questions and answers between the Planning Board members and County employees that oversees the Building Inspections, Environmental Health and EMS departments. Questions such as building in floodplains, impact or strain on EMS services when building in remote or hard to get to home sites and what they thought was needed to head off any potential problems with subdivision growth in the future. Cabe gave an in depth description on the hardships his department is seeing due to lack of volunteers, equipment and the difficulty getting to some of the home sites being built on steep slopes and ridge tops. The concept of subdividing and legal ramifications based on the proposed Subdivision Regulations and how home owner associations will be effective in transactions and home owners doing what is best for the health and safety of all residences. Moorefield attempted to clarify some of the concerns and questions regarding who is responsible for issues down the road when the developer is gone and the home sites are all sold in a subdivision. Beale asked Morgan about section in draft ordinance regarding Chief Building Inspector meeting with sub dividers within a time frame, and Moorefield asked that the time be made easier to understand and deal with. Morgan stated it would depend on the work needed to review sub dividers information, as to what language should be in the ordinance for the review process. Beale insisted on having maximum developer flexibility in setting any time frames or recording deadlines. Moorefield interjected that a lot of the discussion is walking on issues that are already addressed in current ordinances in place. Sprinkle asked what exactly will be asked in the preliminary plat plan to get approval to begin developing a subdivision. Moorefield replied that that would be whatever the Planning Board decides is required.

Leatherman stated that in his mind common sense would dictate more time than the 90 days announced is needed but that was just his opinion and Beale agreed that the Subdivision Regulations was a product of the last 25 minutes of a six hour work day and both Beale and Leatherman could not understand how or where this came from.

Beale talked about appointing 3 committees that would report to the Planning Board and the three committees would be, Review of Existing Ordinances Committee, Steep Slope Review Committee, and Cost Enforcement Committee. Beale asked Leatherman as a Commissioner if Cost Enforcement should be studied and discussed. Leatherman replied that the Commissioners had already covered this and approved, in his opinion, fees and department setting appropriate fees based on the cost of enforcement. It was decided the third committee would be Major/Minor Subdivision Classification Committee. Beale asked the Board if these three committees were satisfactory with the Board. Beale then asked each Board member their thoughts or opinions on the need to proceed with the Subdivision Ordinance and the committees announced. Each Board member responded and agreed to the committees.

Beale asked the Board to look at the definitions in the proposed Subdivisions Regulations. Beale informed the Board that it's important that the Board understand the document because if they don't the general public will not. Beale then began discussion on some of the definitions listed in the proposed draft ordinance. Beale then asked Guffey to read the Mission Statement of the Planning Board to remind the Board members why they are here sitting on this Board.

PUBLIC SESSION:

Several members of the general public spoke on their support and opposition to any new regulations and in particular the proposed Subdivision Regulations Ordinance.

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business to discuss

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Ronnie Beale - Chairman

Stacy Guffey - Clerk/Secretary to the Board