

MACON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

April 18, 2006

A meeting of the Macon County Planning Board was held on April 18th, 2006 at the Macon County Environmental Resource Center. The meeting was called to order at 3:10 pm.

CALL TO ORDER:

Planning Board members present were Ronnie Beale, Susan Ervin, Eric Pierson, Lamar Sprinkle, Jimmy Goodman, Evelyn Owens, 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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Alan Marsh made a motion to approve the minutes as read. Mike Decker seconded the motion and the minutes were accepted and passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Beale opened the meeting by reading a letter of resignation from the Planning Board submitted by Board member Evelyn Southard. Southard express sincere thanks to the Board and due to time restraints she would no longer be able to serve on the Planning Board.

Beale discussed the three committees and the work that has been done to date. Decker passed out a written committee report from the Ordinance Review Committee and then proceeded to give details of the report. Beale asked for questions and/or comments on the report from the Board. The question as to how the land use ordinances currently adopted related to each other and if there was some way to tighten them up. Guffey suggested he confer with Jack Morgan, Chief Building Inspector and Josh Ward, Soil and Erosion Control Officer and see if they would be available to attend the committee meeting to answer questions and help in clarifying issues that would encourage tightening the land use ordinances. Beale asked Decker to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Southard. Beale directed Decker and his committee to meet again to help answer questions and to further their research. Beale turned to Owens to report on the Steep Slope Committee's work. Owens relayed notes from the committee meeting, stating the committee didn't get a lot done but a lot of discussion was conducted. Ervin suggested the committee consist of others outside of the developer group. Beale asked for questions or comments for the Steep Slope Committee. Ervin suggested White County, Georgia Commissioners as consultants. Sprinkle asked why use White County as a model and not do something for Macon County as a new process. Beale explained that White County was close to Macon County in topography and things. Leatherman stated the Board needs to refocus on Subdivision Ordinance and White County could be a good reference later on when time allows because the 90 day deadline still stands. Beale encouraged the Board to look at Haywood County's definition in their Slope Ordinance. Beale then introduced the Minor/Major Subdivision Committee. No report from this committee since Chairperson West was not present.

Guffey discussed the projected cost of hiring and staffing a review officer position that Jack Morgan had submitted for the Boards consideration. Beale stated the Board and Commissioners don't want something lying out there not being able to enforce and if any additional staff would be needed. Guffey explained Jack Morgan's position on current staff and with new staff member it would be enough to handle the enforcement process.

Guffey talked about the work sheet he had put together for the Board to consider, thus helping with the time restraint of 90 day output direction. Beale highlighted item 6 on the worksheet and talked about the Sign Ordinance and all appeals need to go to the BOA. Discussion by the Board on this subject evolved. Marsh made a motion to make the BOA the hearing body for all appeals, Decker seconded the motion and it passed with 1 nay, 1 no vote, and 5 yeas. Marsh asked the Board to consider item 5, reference changing the time for review from 10 days to 14 days. Goodman made a motion to accept the change, Marsh seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Beale mentioned item 4, Guffey informed the Board this would have to be done in the 14 day time frame. Beale asked Guffey to get clarification from Barry Patterson on item 4 before taking a vote. Beale moved Board to item 3, discussion on if Jack Morgan was qualified to be the Administrator or will it need to be done by a separate/new department. Also, would an on site inspection be needed to complete this review process. Beale suggested language being added to explain who and how a review and approval be done as far as qualifications and experience of the review staff. Marsh made a motion to accept Chief Building Inspector as the Subdivision Regulations Administrator; Decker seconded the motion with recommended change in language to describe the review staff job description and qualifications. A vote was taken and it passed unanimously. Item 2 was opened for discussion and the necessity for this provision in the Subdivision Regulation Ordinance. Goodman made a motion to exclude commercial development from the ordinance, Marsh seconded the motion and it passed unanimously to exclude all commercial development from the ordinance. When item 1 was discussed, Beale directed the Board to the draft for review of family member's language. Beale asked Guffey if there was language that the public would understand. Beale stated that there wasn't 5 people in the world that knew what that was saying. Goodman made a motion to exempt family members from regulation under this ordinance. Marsh seconded the motion and it passed with 1 abstaining and 6 yeas.

Decker asked for clarification on the number of exemptions proposed in the ordinance. Guffey stated the 4 per state statute and adding 3 additional one for a total of 7 exemptions. All board members present accepted this and understood what was being discussed.

Beale discussed setting the next meeting date for the committees and the Board as a whole. Beale wanted to talk about the 90 days the Board was strapped with by the Commissioners. Beale asked to Board to set a goal to have the draft ready for the Commissioners to look at. A continuation of the current meeting will be May 4th at 3:00 PM to hear from committees and begin getting the proposed draft ordinance ready for the Commissioners.

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 to be continued on May 4, 2006

Ronnie Beale - Chairman

Stacy Guffey - Clerk/Secretary to the Board