

Minutes
Regular Meeting of the Florence County Planning Commission
Tuesday, May 24, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.
County Complex, Room 803
180 N. Irby St., Florence, South Carolina 29501

The Florence County Planning Department staff posted the agenda for the meeting on the information boards at the main entrance and lobby of the County Complex and on the information board in the lobby of the Planning and Building Inspection Departments office.

The agenda was also mailed to the media.

I. Call to Order:

Chairman Jody Lane, called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

II. Attendance:

Commissioners Present: Jody Lane, Chairman
Allie Brooks
Dwight Johnson
Doris Lockhart
Karon Epps
Linda Borgman
Jeffrey M. Tanner

Commissioners Absent: Cheryl Floyd, Vice-Chairman
Mark Fountain

Staff Present: J. Shawn Brashear, Planning Director
Malloy McEachin, Esq, County Attorney
Ethan Brown, Planning Manager
Derrick Singletary, Senior Planner
Holly Smith, Planner II
Lisa Becoat, Secretary III

Public Attendance: See sign in sheets on file with the Florence County Planning Department.

III. Review and Motion of Minutes

• **Meeting of January 25, 2022**

Motion to approve minutes – Commissioner Allie Brooks made a motion that the minutes be approved as presented. / Second – Commissioner Linda Borgman / Unanimously approved 7 to 0 the minutes of January 25, 2022.

IV. Public Hearing

Sketch Plan:

PC#2022-05 Sketch Plan Approval Requested By West Star Development, LLC, For Wessex Phases 4, 5, and 6, Located Off Of North Ebenezer Rd., Florence, SC As Shown On Florence County Tax Map Number 00098, Block 01, Parcel 032.

(Copy of the staff report and presentation are available at the Florence County Planning Department and on the Florence County website at: <http://www.florenceco.org/offices/planning/commission/>).

Mr. J. Shawn Brashear presented the staff report and presentation to the Commission. He indicated that the proposed phases 4, 5, and 6 were located off N. Ebenezer Road, Council District 3, Florence, SC. The property is unzoned and is approximately 48.52 acres. He further indicated that the sketch had been reviewed at a Technical Review Meeting and the developer had met all technical requirements per the county ordinance for sketch plan approval. The property was posted per county ordinance notifying the public of the public hearing. Staff has entertained visits and received calls from the community regarding the proposed sketch plan and some residents were in attendance at the meeting.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any questions and/or comments from the Commission.

There were no questions and/or comments from the Commission and Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed sketch plan approval.

Mr. Dennis Beckley 816 Bellemeade Circle, Florence, SC was present and spoke against the proposed sketch plan. He indicated that he resided in Kings Gate and that he and some of his neighbors had spoken at a previous meeting regarding the proposed sketch plan. He stated that the sketch plan had a few changes to it but there really were no changes. The last talks and comments were about all the traffic that would be funneled through Kings Gate streets, which have no sidewalks and where the families with their children walk in the streets because they do not walk in each other's yards. When residents park in the street and with the increased traffic, it is going to be dangerous area. The code provides the minimum road width but we should not settled for the minimum in any development when you know it is going to impact public safety. He indicated that he felt the developer could have taken a different stance at the sketch plan and continued forward with his original plan for the Kings Gate subdivision. It doesn't make sense to have the dense's housing in the back of the development funneling all the traffic through the front. It is just not how a development is built. The sketch plan has morphed and changed and the meeting appears to have been moved to a time period when homeowners are tied up with graduations and other things so that only a few residents would appear at the meeting. The developer is going to talk about moving a pond, adding a park but there has been no substantive changes based on the comments that the Kings Gate and Wessex residents and homeowners took issue with, all of those concerns are still there. Public safety, exiting onto Pisgah road as busy as it is and getting on and off with no lights and the ability to walk in the streets with your children, which are still real issues for the community with the proposed sketch plan. It is requested that the commission not approve the sketch plan until the developer comes back with a better plan that addresses the community's issues.

Mr. Dean Lisenben 3102 Wainwright Court, Florence, SC was present and spoke against the proposed sketch plan. He indicated that the commission heard the thoughts and concerns of the homeowners at the last meeting and that his largest concern was still density and he wanted that pointed out. The concern of more homes than what was planned originally for the development.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any public in attendance who desired to speak in favor of the proposed sketch plan approval.

Mr. Greg Hendrick of Finklea, Hendrick & Blake, LLC, was present representing the developer West Star, and spoke in favor of the proposed sketch plan approval. He thanked the Commission for their presence and hearing their concerns. He indicated that the developer did hear the concerns of the community, the citizens and the commission that were raised at the last meeting. He stated that the developer went back and revised the sketch plan and tried to be responsive to all of their concerns. With the assistance of their engineer, they revised the plans by expanding and making additional green space, by taking land away for some of the lots and expanded the areas so there would be places to play and the likes. They added an additional playground in the back of the development as a playground already exists towards the front of the subdivision that will make two playgrounds for the children to play. They added some signage for separation of the neighborhoods for Wessex homes and Kings Gate homes so that it will be understood what is Wessex and what is Kings Gate. There will be more density with the housing because the lots sizes have changed. If you develop a lot that is too large, you stand the risk of not being able to sell the large lot homes and sizes. The cost of infrastructure and the cost associated with building a home and making it economically feasible basically created the new density of homes. What they are doing meets the requirements of the ordinance and they have far exceeded what is required of the ordinance. During the last meeting, the citizen's mentioned walking trails but since the trails would have to be maintained and would require constant maintenance, they thought that adding additional sidewalks to that part of the development would accomplish that. The developer has met with some of the members of the homeowner's association regarding the traffic issues and speeding through the neighborhoods and the developer is looking to add additional stop signs to help with that. Some resident's mentioned adding cul de sac's for separation but after speaking with the engineer for the project there is no way that could be accomplished and meet the requirements of the ordinance.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any questions and/or comments from the Commission.

In response to questions by the Commission Mr. Hendrick's indicated that the dark lines throughout the sketch plan were the lines for the sidewalks. (Mr. Hendrick's pointed and showed the commission on the proposed sketch plan all the lines for the sidewalks. A copy of the proposed sketch plan is maintained at the Florence County Planning and Building Department.)

There were questions and discussions by the Commission.

In response to questions by the Commission Mr. Brashear indicated that the mechanism to request a traffic light at the intersection of Ebenezer Road would have to go through the Department of Transportation. They would be the department to review the requirements to determine if a traffic light could be installed. If any resident had questions and/or would need assistance in how to move forward with a request, they could contact Planning staff and they could assist them with the information.

Mr. Dennis Beckley requested to make further comments. He indicated that he would like the Commission to take a good look at the proposed sketch plan that was provided as they only show what is being expanded; it is not showing what Kings Gate and Wessex's looks like right now. When the

developer points out that Kings Gate will continue how is that so as Kings Gate lots are ½-acre lots and the new proposed lots are ¼-acre lots. There maybe one or two that are over but they are not the same. There is a huge difference and the proposed lots are not Kings Gates lots. There are four streets that run through Kings Gate, East and West and none of them has sidewalks. There are many streets that are not getting sidewalks. It sounds good for the developer to say that there are going to be sidewalks and present half of it but they are concealing the other half and that is where the issues lie.

There were questions and discussions by the Commission.

In response to questions by the Commission Mr. Brashear indicated that the sketch plan met all development standards of the Florence County Ordinance. If citizens want to see and/or make changes to an ordinance, they can contact staff and staff can lay out the ordinances and the technical requirements aspects and show them what is there and then explain the avenues for possibly getting those things changed and amended.

There were no further questions, comments and/or discussion and Commissioner Jeffrey Tanner made a motion that the proposed sketch plan PC #2022-05 be approved as presented and as recommended by staff. / Second – Commissioner Allie Brooks / The Commission approved 7 to 0 the proposed map amendment **PC #2022-05**.

Map Amendments:

PC#2022-06 Map Amendment Requested By Akshay LLC, Rock Hill Property Management LLC And Maha Laxmiji LLC To Change The Zoning Designation For The Property Of Tax Map Number 90045, Block 01, Parcels 011, 030, 031, 035 And Tax Map Number 90045, Block 03, Parcel 001 Located On Curry Lane And W. Darlington St., Florence From R-3A, Single-Family Residential And B-2 Convenience Business, To B-3 General Commercial.

(Copy of the staff report and presentation are available at the Florence County Planning Department and on the Florence County website at: <http://www.florenceco.org/offices/planning/commission/>).

Mr. J. Shawn Brashear presented the staff report and presentation to the Commission. He indicated that the property is located on Curry Lane and West Darlington Streets and the owners of the several properties desire to change their designations to a B-3 zoning designation. He indicated that the property owner Akshay LLC originally initiated the request and his property was to the far right. In order to get to a B-3 and maintain contiguity the property owner is having to go from the far right to the far left. As such, he has negotiated with the other property owners to the left of his property to come together and request a change to the zoning land use designation. The land use map for the area is suburban development and it does not support a B-3 zoning designation for the area. He indicated within the area is a Cruizers convenience store, which is less than ten years old and adjacent surrounding properties in the back that also desire to change their zoning designation with various uses around the area. The property was properly posted notifying the public of a public hearing and adjacent property owners were notified. He further indicated that the property was contiguous and that staff otherwise would not have concerns with changing the zoning because the applicants have agreed together to request the change; however, the problem is the zoning does not fit with the land use designation. Staff is requesting that the item be denied or deferred until a later date when the comprehensive plan project land use information is completed. As part of the comprehensive plan review and updates, will be updated recommendations for land use and land use maps. It is proposed to create some new land uses including more flexibility in land uses. If the

proposed map amendment is changed now, it could possible interfere with the work that has already been completed by the consultant. The comprehensive plan land use project information is anticipated to be completed in August or September of 2022.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any questions and/or comments from the Commission.

In response to questions and comments from the Commission Mr. J. Shawn Brashear indicated that the area is a little strip mall and the building that looks like a home is a little church. To the North of the property is Florence County and across the street is City Zoning IL-Light Industrial and NC-Neighborhood Conservation.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any public in attendance who desired to speak in favor of the of the proposed map amendment.

Mr. Matthew Smothers, 121 Rogers Avenue, Hartsville, SC, was present and spoke in favor of the proposed map amendment. He indicated that he was the representative for all the parties to this request. They are requesting the change over for additional use of the B-3 zoning for future development.

Mr. Darnell Carter was present and indicated he lived at Carriage Place Florence, in the property behind the Cruizers' and that he desired to know how the rezoning would affect the adjacent properties in the area.

In response to the inquiry, Mr. Brashear indicated that the zoning change would not impact the adjacent properties just the tax map numbers that are requesting the zoning map change.

There were questions and comments by the Commission.

In response to questions and comments by the Commission, Mr. Smothers indicated that the little church mentioned is also owned by Mr. Sam Patel one of the applicant's. He additionally stated that there was an addition completed onto the convenient store, which is a laundry mat, and allowed in a B-2. They also completed an addition onto the other side of the store that they desire to use as a vape store. The B-3 would allow a vape store but presently as it is zoned, B-2 the vape store is not allowed. The rezoning is holding up the applicants activities, as they cannot open up the vape store in the B-2 zoning district. The rezoning is needed to move forward with opening up the vape store. Across the street is industrial so the property is caught up in the middle of the light industrial and having it rezoned a B-3 would open up the entire area for Mr. Patel's store and the other properties owned by the other applicants.

Mr. Darnell Carter requested to make further comments. He indicated that he would definitely oppose having a vape store in the neighborhood. The residential area is a family area and a vape store just does not fit. He opposed the zoning and requested map amendment.

There was further questions and comments by the Commission.

In response to questions and comments by the Commission Mr. Brashear indicated the comprehensive plan would provide recommendations for different land use. Presently, the land use for the area does not support a B-3 zoning district. For the Commission to support the zoning change they would also have to recommend a land use designation for the property that would support a B-3 zoning district. Changing the land use at this time is critical to the presently ongoing study. Their use for the property can be considered as a part of the study and if the land use does not change, when and if the item is brought back to the Commission the land use could be recommended for a change at that time. The property is contiguous to what is around it with the same tracts they are requesting at this present time. The zoning behind the properties is all residential zoning. If a particular use is put on the properties such as a liquor store or a vape store a buffer maybe be required, staff would have to check the ordinance.

There was further discussion and comments by the Commission.

There were no further questions, comments and/or discussion and Commissioner Allie Brooks made a motion that the proposed map amendment PC# 2022-06 be deferred until the land use portion of the Comprehensive Plan Study is completed. / Second – Commissioner Doris Lockhart / The Commission approved 7 to 0 to defer the proposed map amendment until such time that the Land Use Portion of the Comprehensive Plan Study is completed for the proposed map amendment **PC #2022-06**.

Prior to the remaining items being presented to the Commission and the public Mr. J. Shawn Brashear provided information as to how and why the next items are being presented. He indicated that Florence County is involved with several impactful endeavors. The Comprehensive Plan Review is nearly 60 percent complete and staff anticipates completion in the Fall of 2022. the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan which extends out beyond 2046, and should be updated and completed by the end of the summer. Another major endeavor is the 76 Gateway Study from the City of Florence out to Francis Marion University and Highway 327 Williston Road from Highway 76 all the way to the Interstate. Plans are being made to conduct a market analysis to help determine what is needed and what is going to trigger growth in a particular area along those two corridors. Ultimately, Florence County hopes to install an overlay district and zoning for both of those areas. Several Industrial Parks are under consideration and several more industrial projects are being considered. These are a sample of things that Florence County is doing to better future generations of the residents that are presently here. In the many town hall meetings staff has had with the public they have commented repeatedly that they desire for Florence County to be a place where their children and their grandchildren chose to live, where they can thrive and have a healthy, vibrant and enjoyable life.

Florence County Council hears all of this and as such looks to expand the economic opportunities by recruiting industrial and economic investors into the County. One thing that is measured and considered is the predictability of the community. Can anyone discern with any certainty as to what will occur in the neighboring property and/or next street, well that would be more difficult in some areas than others. No industry wants to build their business inside of a residential neighborhood, no more than a neighborhood wants the industries in the middle of it. However, nearly anything can happen in an unzoned area, and when it does to late. There is not much County can do after the fact. Zoning protects those types of things from happening and that is predictability. Being able to understand, to guide and direct development as it occurs. If a testing facility of air handlers were to

move into a residential neighborhood that would cause many problems with the neighbors as they are testing air handlers. If a developer builds a residential subdivision around that same testing facility, that business owner would have problems, as they would receive constant complaints. Proper planning helps steer development in a more predictable manner and an investor needs predictability. An investor needs to know that the type of business they are placing on the property is going to be sustainable. Predictable is what a person uses when they decide to build their home. Do I build it on shifting sand or solid ground? When an investor looks at Florence County and in its incorporated areas, municipalities, Florence, Johnsonville, Lake City, Olanta, all those areas and they see these donut holes and clusters of properties that create donut holes, it's not that big of a deal, it happens everywhere, annexation causes donut holes. However, the problem occurs when those properties are unzoned, now you have zoned properties within clusters of unzoned areas. That makes it nearly impossible to have any amount of prediction of what may occur in that area. That same investor is looking at investment opportunities all across the state, Greenville, Charleston, why should they come here. When comparing Florence to our neighbors just West in Sumter County, the whole county is zoned. That is very predictable of what is going to happen, as to what can be built around me, what is going to hamper my development in the future. That puts Florence County at a disadvantage and also puts people in neighborhoods at a disadvantage as there is no way to determine what may be placed beside you because the property is unzoned. County Council has directed staff to study the donut holes and the clusters of donut holes; and, present the findings to the Planning Commission for their recommendation of proper zoning back to County Council for their consideration and action. This along with so many other things that leadership is working towards making Florence County enjoyable and a prosperous place for future generations. A place where our children and grandchildren will chose to live in the future.

In the study staff has examined the properties individually; how big is the property, what is the road frontage. Each zoning district has to have a particular road frontage to fit in that zoning district. What are the current uses there now, is it a house or a business, staff has considered those things. What is the future land use designation in the comprehensive plan those particular items have to line up. Staff also considered the zoning that is adjacent to it which in this case was the City of Florence. The two zoning ordinances have different designations. The City of Florence acronyms are far different from Florence County's but they do line up when compared to the definitions of what they are. Staff has done a lot of work to get to this point and this is the first of many properties that will be presented to the Commission within the next several months as staff moves forward with the study endeavor.

PC#2022-07 Map Amendment Requested By Florence County To Change The Zoning Designation For Properties In Group One Of The Zoning Study From Unzoned To R-1 Single Family Residential Consisting Of The Following Properties As They Are Reflected On The Tax Maps As:

00984-01-014, 01221-01-004, 01221-01-006, 01221-01-009, 01221-01-010, 01221-01-022, 01221-01-025, 01221-01-027, 01221-01-029, 01221-01-031, 01221-01-032, 01221-01-034, 01221-01-039, 01221-01-040, 01221-01-050,

01221-01-051, 01221-01-053, 01221-01-057, 01221-01-059, 01221-01-061, 01221-01-074, 01221-01-078, 01221-01-090, 01221-01-092, 01221-01-101, 01221-01-108, 01221-01-110, 01221-01-140, 01221-01-148, 01221-01-161, 01221-01-164, 01221-01-168, 01221-01-177, 01221-01-180, 01221-01-186, 01221-01-191, 01221-01-192, 01221-01-197, 01221-01-198, 01221-01-199, 01221-01-201, 01221-01-204, 01221-01-205, 01221-01-206, 01221-01-207, 01221-01-226, 01221-01-228, 01221-01-263, 01221-01-264, 01221-01-268, 01221-01-285, 01221-01-286, 01221-01-287, 90097-01-011.

(Copy of the staff report and presentation are available at the Florence County Planning Department and on the Florence County website at: <http://www.florenceco.org/offices/planning/commission/>).

Mr. J. Shawn Brashear presented the staff report and presentation to the Commission. He indicated that all properties were unzoned and the existing land uses were studied to determine the recommended zoning. He further indicated that the land uses were studied and considered with future land uses and with the City of Florence zoning. Notifications were sent to property owner's weeks in advance as the study was being conducted and samples copies of the letters sent were provided for information to the Commission. (A sample copy of the letters are maintained at the Florence County Planning and Building Department.) The letters mailed out on April 8, 2022 identified the property and the proposed zoning districts that were being recommended for that property. Additionally, on the back of that same letter zoning characteristic information was provided for the proposed zoning including some allowed uses, accessory uses, uses not allowed, conditional uses and support uses. The letter also directed that for a complete list they would have to refer to the table in the Zoning Ordinance. It also provided a dedicated telephone number and email address to the staff team that is working on this endeavor encouraging the citizens to call with any questions and/or comments. Staff has received in excess of 135 visits, inquiries and comments from citizens wanting more information, to learn what is going on, and what does it mean. (A copy and list of some of the comments and inquiries are maintained at the Florence County Planning and Building Department.) Staff's attempt has been and continues to ensure that the recommended zoning is conducive to what is presently there, lines up with the comprehensive plan and lines up with the zoning that is adjacent to the property within the City Of Florence.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any questions and/or comments from the Commission.

In response to questions by the Commission Mr. Brashear indicated that the donuts holes and cluster of donut holes being referred and recommended for zoning goes back to the alignment of properties with the comprehensive plan, land use designations and properties adjacent to them within the City of Florence.

Chairman Jody Lane made comments to the public indicating that the Planning Commission had been directed by Florence County to review maps and make zoning recommendations to the Florence County Council in an effort to reduce the donut holes and cluster of donut holes. He further stated that staff had posted signs to inform the public of what was going on and to get the communities involvement. He stated that the Commission would hear any and all concerns but asked that the public to be mindful and respectful of each other. To direct all remarks and questions to the Commission not the other public and/or staff.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any public in attendance who desired to speak in favor of the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance who desired to speak in favor of the proposed map amendment.

There were no further questions, comments and/or discussion and Commissioner Dwight Johnson made a motion that the proposed map amendment PC# 2022-07 be approved. / Second – Commissioner Karon Epps / The Commission approved 7 to 0 the proposed map amendment PC #2022-07.

PC#2022-08 Map Amendment Requested By Florence County To Change The Zoning Designation For Properties In Group One Of The Zoning Study From Unzoned To R-2 Single Family Residential Consisting Of The Following Properties As They Are Reflected On The Tax Maps As:

00175-01-007, 00175-01-010, 00175-01-051, 00175-01-057, 00175-01-098, 00175-01-117, 90097-01-005, 90097-01-006, 90097-01-012, 90097-01-015, 90097-01-016, 90097-01-018, 90097-01-022, 90097-01-023, 90097-01-024, 90097-01-027, 90097-01-030, 90097-01-032, 90098-01-001, 90098-01-005, 90098-01-006, 90098-01-007, 90098-01-008, 90098-01-010, 90098-01-011, 90098-01-012, 90098-01-013, 90098-03-013, 90098-04-005, 90098-05-001, 90098-05-006, 90098-05-008, 90098-05-010, 90098-05-011, 01461-02-006, 90096-01-010, 90096-02-010, 90096-02-011, 90096-02-013.

(Copy of the staff report and presentation are available at the Florence County Planning Department and on the Florence County website at: <http://www.florenceco.org/offices/planning/commission/>).

Mr. J. Shawn Brashear presented the staff report and presentation to the Commission. He indicated that all properties were unzoned and the existing land uses were studied to determine the recommended zoning. He further indicated that the land uses were studied with the present use of the properties, the surrounding properties, with future land uses and with the City of Florence zoning.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any questions and/or comments from the Commission.

There being no questions and/or comments from the Commission. Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

Mr. Bryant Moses 1708 N. Irby Street, Florence was present in the meeting and indicated that he was not opposed to the zoning but would like to ask a question. He indicated that if letters were going to be sent out to citizens they should have addresses entered thereon and not just numbers. He further indicated that most citizens are not familiar with numbers but they do know addresses. He stated that there is a business at 1512 N. Irby Street, Florence and if the numbers he had (he never mentioned the numbers) were being recommended zoned R-3 then why was that address not on the list. He called and staff informed him that they were not a part of the donut hole. He reiterated and requested that in the future when letters are sent out that an address be included and not just the tax map numbers. He indicated there is no way to know the addresses that are affected you just see the signs up and down Irby Street. If staff was going to address the public then use addresses so the public is aware of what addresses are being affected. He would love to see all the properties in his area residential. Additionally, he inquired if 1512 N. Irby Street, Florence could be looked into as a business. He indicated that a business was being run at

the address and it is right next door to residential property. He would like to know where the addresses are before any properties are considered for rezoning.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any other public in attendance who desired to speak against, in favor of and/or had inquiries regarding the proposed map amendment.

Mr. James Wilkes 517 Wilson Road, Florence was present in the meeting and indicated that he has lived at his residence for 46 years and he was unaware that his property was unzoned. He thought that his property was already zoned residential.

Mr. James Robinson 1306 Fraser Street, Florence was present in the meeting and he indicated that only two homes reside on his street. He could not understand why the property was being zoned.

In response to the inquiry Chairman Jody Lane summarized what staff had indicated regarding the zoning and explained that as a citizen of Florence County having their property and the neighbor's property zoned protects the property. It helps to determine what can and what cannot be placed around them. The comprehensive plan speaks of this and explains that residents should be in residential neighborhoods and keep industrial businesses from moving into the neighborhoods. It provides peace of mind and protection of the neighborhood.

Mr. James Robinson indicated that he understood the summarization but behind his home was a 10-foot ditch and in front of his home was Irby Street. He is in a hole of sorts and zoning the property does nothing for him. Zoning may keep industrial from moving in, but there are schools right around him and he is just in a hole. He just does not understand any good the rezoning is going to do for him.

Chairman Jody Lane indicated that Mr. Robinson should see no change to his property being rezoned and the property should continue to serve him as it has already been known to.

Mr. James Robinson indicated that the only problem he has is when the street grows bushes all around. The street used to be a two way street and now the bushes have grown so you can only get one vehicle through the street. He complained about the bushes as it impeded him from getting home. When he called the County the County told him to call the City and vice versa. The run around left him with no other options but to cut the bushes down himself. He does not understand why the zoning is taking place and it appears that nothing is actually changing.

Chairman Jody Lane indicated that staff would get the address of Mr. Robinson and look into the issue regarding the bushes.

Ms. Sophie R. Davis 1421 Buckingham Road, Florence, Clifton Heights was present in the meeting and indicated that in their community they do not have access to anything. She was concerned that if the entire community is zoned R-2 residential will there be viable businesses allowed in their community. Presently, nothing exist, not even a pharmacy. If the community is rezoned and if viable businesses want to build in that area of Irby Street, out by QVC where there is lots of property, will it be restricted.

In response to the inquiry, Chairman Jody Lane explained that the County as part of the Comprehensive Plan is looking at the County as a whole to ensure eventually that the whole County is zoned. Their desire is to move every piece of property in the County into a zoning that meets that property and the Comprehensive Plan. At that point, most businesses would be restricted from being in a residential

community per the Comprehensive Plan. There is a place for a business such as a pharmacy but it should not be in a neighborhood.

Ms. Lisa Scott Williams 1503 N. Irby Street was present in the meeting and indicated that she would like to ask a question. She inquired and wanted to know if the properties that were unzoned in the County that were being zoned residential in the County, how would that affect them being annexed into the City of Florence. She wanted to know if they were related at all.

In response to the inquiry, Chairman Jody Lane explained that the items were completely unrelated.

There were no further questions, comments and/or discussion and Commissioner Dwight Johnson made a motion that the proposed map amendment PC# 2022-08 be approved. / Second – Commissioner Karon Epps / The Commission approved 7 to 0 the proposed map amendment **PC #2022-08**.

**PC#2022-09 Map Amendment Requested By Florence County To Change The Zoning Designation For Properties In Group One Of The Zoning Study From Unzoned To R-3A Single Family Residential Consisting Of The Following Properties As They Are Reflected On The Tax Maps As:
90083-01-001, 90083-01-002, 90083-01-003, 90083-01-004, 90083-01-005,
90083-01-010, 90083-01-014, 90083-01-015, 90083-01-019, 90083-01-042,
90096-02-001.**

(Copy of the staff report and presentation are available at the Florence County Planning Department and on the Florence County website at: <http://www.florenceco.org/offices/planning/commission/>).

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Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any questions and/or comments from the Commission.

There being no questions and/or comments from the Commission. Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any public in attendance who desire to speak in favor of the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance who desired to speak in favor of the proposed map amendment.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any public in attendance that had general questions and/or concerns that they would like to present and bring forward regarding the proposed map amendment.

Mr. Christopher Bacote 1213 N Irby Street was present in the meeting and stated that he was the caregiver for his mother Mrs. Ruby Bacote who resides at the same address. He stated that he was laughing to himself when the gentleman who spoke earlier spoke about going back and forth between the City and

County about an issue. He stated that he had some limbs cut down at the home approximately a month ago. He provided an example of paying someone to conduct yard work and then having the debris sit outside the fence, ugly and die as it sat there so long; and, then be told after going back and forth between the City and County that due to COVID they were placed on a waiting list for the removal of the debris. He could not understand that when taxes and other bills are paid on time every year; and residents are trying to keep their neighborhoods up but get the back and forth from the City and/or County regarding debris pickup, but the zoning and informational letters could be delivered so quickly in the mail.

In response to the inquiry, Chairman Jody Lane indicated that the COVID virus could live on some surfaces for a period of time. He additionally made comments regarding the timeliness of things getting done, stating that the staff working on the rezoning was very organized and had a great support team and were very efficient at what they did. As for the trash and debris, there is a limited number of services, staff and equipment available to service the large areas needed. With all businesses especially during this time of COVID there are likely some employment issues, with personnel being sick and out of work, but if residents are consistent and continue to call and keep their names on the lists he was certain that they would finally get to them.

Mr. Christopher Bacote indicated that they understood the zoning as construction continues in their area with the changing of the schools. The debris has been in the area for months and when you call you get the back and forth with the City and the County. Additionally, you have to continually contact the City and County for the little streets around them on that side of Irby Street as the trees and brush continue to grow out into the streets where traffic can no longer access the streets. There is an area below their driveway that when it rains, it floods like a small pond, which causes mosquitos in the warmer months. For the last three years he has continually called regarding the problem and nothing has been resolved to date. He really appreciates the Commission listening and hearing his venting concerns.

Ms. Renee Alexander was present in the meeting and indicated that she had concerns, as she was not the only property owner of the properties at 301 W. Power Street, Florence and 1303 Elmore Street, Florence. For the past three years, they have been trying to clean off their father's property. It has taken two years for the electrician to come out so that they could obtain power to clean up the trees on the property so that homes could be placed on them. She does not understand the zoning and hopes to be able to put the type of home she desires on the two separate properties. The two lots are presently vacant.

In response to the inquiry Chairman Jody Lane indicated that based on the proposed zoning, it would have to be determined what type of home could be placed on the properties.

Ms. Renee Alexander indicated that there are two separate vacant lots one on 301 W. Power Street and one on 1303 Elmore Street were the homes have been demolished and she desires to replace them with the same types of homes that were demolished.

In response to the inquiry, Chairman Jody Lane indicated that based on Ms. Alexander's description and comments for the homes she should be able to replace the homes with the same types of homes based on the proposed zoning for the presently vacant lots.

Mr. Danchester White was present in the meeting and indicated his concerns on the properties at Lot 5 on Irby Street and the other on 1211 Elmore Street, Florence. He stated that he understood the zoning and home building, but was concerned about the R-3A. He indicated that a mobile home was on his property and he wanted to know if he would have to remove the bricked in mobile home.

In response to his inquiry, Chairman Jody Lane indicated that whatever was on the lot would be grandfathered into the proposing zoning.

Mr. Danchester White further inquired and explained that Lot 5 facing Irby Street used to have a mobile home on it and he wanted to know would that also be grandfathered in.

In response to his inquiry, Chairman Jody Lane indicated that if the mobile home was not presently their most likely it would not be grandfathered in if it did not meet the current proposed zoning for the property. He further explained the grace period for replacing properties that are nonconforming but after that grace period had expired, the structure must meet the current zoning requirements.

Mr. Danchester White indicated that he did not understand why Lot 5 facing Irby Street is in the County and Lot 6 right next to it is in the City of Florence and other properties around the lot are in the City of Florence.

In response to his inquiry, Mr. Shawn Brashear indicated that the possible reason for the properties surrounding Mr. White's property being in the City of Florence was that the property owners requested to be annexed into the City of Florence and Mr. White had not requested that same annexation for his property.

There were no further questions, comments and/or discussion and Commissioner Allie Brooks made a motion that the proposed map amendment PC #2022-09 be approved. / Second – Commissioner Jeffrey M. Tanner / The Commission approved 7 to 0 the proposed map amendment **PC #2022-09**.

**PC#2022-10 Map Amendment Requested By Florence County To Change The Zoning Designation For Properties In Group One Of The Zoning Study From Unzoned To RU-1 Rural Community Consisting Of The Following Properties As They Are Reflected On The Tax Maps As:
00175-01-058, 00175-01-060, 00175-01-064, 00175-01-065, 00175-01-066,
00175-01-072, 00175-01-076, 00175-01-077, 00175-01-087, 00175-01-121,
00175-01-134, 00175-01-232.**

(Copy of the staff report and presentation are available at the Florence County Planning Department and on the Florence County website at: <http://www.florenceco.org/offices/planning/commission/>).

Mr. J. Shawn Brashear presented the staff report and presentation to the Commission. He indicated that all properties were unzoned and the existing land uses were studied to determine the recommended zoning. He further indicated that the land uses were studied with the present use of the properties, the surrounding properties, with future land uses and with the City of Florence zoning.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any questions and/or comments from the Commission.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any public in attendance who desired to speak in favor of the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance who desired to speak in favor of the proposed map amendment.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any public in attendance that had general questions and/or concerns that they would like to present and bring forward regarding the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance with general questions and/or concerns regarding the proposed map amendment.

There were no further questions, comments and/or discussion and Commissioner Dwight Johnson made a motion that the proposed map amendment PC #2022-10 be approved. / Second – Commissioner Karon Epps / The Commission approved 7 to 0 the proposed map amendment **PC #2022-10**.

PC#2022-11 Map Amendment Requested By Florence County To Change The Zoning Designation For Properties In Group One Of The Zoning Study From Unzoned To RU-1A Rural Community Consisting Of The Following Properties As They Are Reflected On The Tax Maps As: 00175-01-013, 00175-01-035, 00175-01-225, 00176-01-024, 00176-01-035, 00147-01-021.

(Copy of the staff report and presentation are available at the Florence County Planning Department and on the Florence County website at: <http://www.florenceco.org/offices/planning/commission/>).

Mr. J. Shawn Brashear presented the staff report and presentation to the Commission. He indicated that all properties were unzoned and the existing land uses were studied to determine the recommended zoning. He further indicated that the land uses were studied with the present use of the properties, the surrounding properties, with future land uses and with the City of Florence zoning. He indicated that there was one property in question 00147-01-021, that staff was asking the Commission to remove from the agenda items as additional review was required.

Commissioner Dwight Johnson made a motion to amend PC #2022-11 and remove the reference to the proposed tax map number 00147-01-021 to allow staff to review their concerns for the property and bring the proposed tax map number back to the Commission at a future meeting. / Second – Commissioner Allie Brooks. / The Commission approved 7 to 0 the amended PC item number PC #2022-11.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any questions and/or comments from the Commission.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

Ms. Tedra Harris, 500 E. Sam Harrell Road, Florence, SC was present and spoke opposed to the proposed map amendment. She indicated that the property was a ten-acre tract of land part of a total of 18 acres. It is the back of their property which has been in their family for over seventy years. There is family that currently resides off on Sam Harrell Road. Her spouse inherited the property from his grandfather who lived in the Community. The back of the property backs up to Spaulding Heights where the baseball field and the pond are and it was negotiated years ago with their grandfather to allow that property to be given to the community. The family has always been community players. The property belongs to family and they are opposed to it being rezoned. There are homes on the front of the property that have been

remodeled and maintained. They feel that it is questionable as to why only ten acres in the back of the property is being proposed and considered for rezoning. They are not requesting the property to be rezoned it is unzoned and the family would like it to stay that way. The family does not intend to do anything with the property at this time. They understand that it is a residential area and the property belongs to them. They do not feel that they are hurting their community and/or anyone and feel that it is in the families' best interest that the property remain unzoned and they would like the Commission's consideration to their request.

Mr. Steven Cox 500 E. Sam Harrell Road, Florence, SC was present and spoke opposed to the proposed map amendment. He indicated that he lives at 500 E. Sam Harrell Road along with his in-laws. His father-in-law and him have discussed that the land is theirs and they pay the taxes on it. They have never had any complaints against their property because they make sure that it is maintained and kept. There are six properties in the area that are being questioned but there are other properties within their area that are unzoned, which makes them feel as if they are being targeted for rezoning. If all the properties surrounding them were being rezoned, they would have no argument, as everyone would be inclusive. They wanted to know if the rezoning could be forced on them even though they do not desire a zoning change.

In response to the inquiry Chairman Jody Lane indicated that he was certain that their family was not be targeted for rezoning. He indicated that Florence County is looking to evidentially zone all properties within the County in an effort to help the citizens and not hurt them in anyway. If the family desired there property to be zoned something different from what is being recommended they should discuss that information with Staff. He further indicated that the zoning is being driven by the comprehensive maps to clean up the communities and to help them, not to hurt them in anyway.

Mr. Steven Cox indicated that Ms. Harris' great grandfather actually helped the community by donating property and the family does not intend to do anything to hurt that. They pay their taxes, they maintain the property, it is in their name and they desire it to remain unzoned. It does not feel good to have something forced on you. If it were everyone on E. Sam Harrell Road they would get it, but it does not appear that way and they would like their property to remain as it is.

There was discussion by the Commission regarding the comprehensive plan, land use and zoning of properties within Florence County.

Mr. Bobby Welch 717 E. Old Marion Highway, Florence, SC was present in the meeting and spoke opposed to the proposed map amendment. He stated that they understand the zoning but was unsure of what the County is doing and why. His spouse inherited eighteen acres of land at the corner of Old Marion Highway and East McIver Road, Florence. Presently on the property is one site built single-family home, one mobile home and there is enough space for one additional mobile home. Reading through the proposed zoning for RU-1A, it appears that mobile homes will not be allowed on the property. The family also has a business that has been then for years on the property and is presently used as a private club with a beer and wine license. They are not sure how the zoning is going to affect that. It appears the zoning was merely based on the home being on the property. Also on agenda item number PC# 2022-13, there are several pieces of property directly across the street from their property on Old Marion Highway and on McIver Road that are proposed to be zoned B-5 Office and Light Industrial and they don't understand why there is a difference in zoning on both fronts. They feel that some abilities and things for their property may be taken away with the present proposed zoning for their property. They feel that the other properties were put in a better position to lease and/or sell their properties, which does not appear equitable.

There was discussion by the Commission regarding the comprehensive plan, land use and zoning of properties within Florence County. There was also discussion about structures on zoned properties being grandfathered into the proposed zoning and information regarding changing the zoning of properties in the future if someone desired to do so.

Mr. Bobby Welch indicated that they felt they would not have a leg to stand on if they came back to staff with a different request for zoning. They felt that the County was flexing its muscles where it was not wanted and they understood some of the reasoning behind it but it appeared to be some fairness issues with properties being so close to each other but are being proposed for different zoning.

Mr. LeVance McIver 1522 N. Alpine Trail, Florence, SC was present in the meeting and indicated that he was neighbors of the Harris family. He met their grandfather some years ago and has lived in the neighborhood approximately 50 years. He understands how they feel and he is against the proposed zoning. He understood that Florence County is trying to preserve properties and protect zoning but he wanted it noted for the record that he supports the Harris family and opposes the proposed zoning.

Ms. Angeline Nowlin 330 E Sam Harrell Road, Florence, SC was present in the meeting and indicated she was there to support the Harris Family and is opposed to the proposed zoning.

There were comments made by the Chairman of the Commission Jody Lane regarding unzoned properties in the County and the Counties quest to get properties zoned and aligned with the comprehensive plan and land use. He further provided comments of uses of the property and the protection that zoning provides for properties.

Ms. Heather Harris 500 E. Harrell Road, Florence, SC requested to provide additional comments. She indicated that when the Commission is having public meetings and signs are being put in citizens yards, what was the point of even coming to the meetings because they felt that the properties were going to be zoned whether the citizen's desired them zoned or not. Florence County has made the decision to zone the properties and they are going to do it. Why even ask just say this is what you are going to do. Why waste time asking citizen's about it and/or asking for their input when they feel that the Commission is going to do what staff recommends be done.

In response to the inquiry, Chairman Jody Lane indicated that this is a project that Florence County has been working on for some time to protect the communities and that it did not just come up. They want the public's presence at the meetings to provide feedback so that the Commission can make the right recommendation. The Commission is made up of all volunteers who volunteer their time to support the Community. No one on the Commission is a paid staff member, they are part of the community just like the public in attendance and they want to do the best thing for the community. At times, it is stressful and not always understood but everyone on the Commission is faced with the same things as the public community.

There was further discussion by the Commission.

Mr. Heather Harries indicated that she understood the zoning but wanted to know what changed on April 8, 2022 when they received a letter indicating the proposed zoning was RU-1 then another letter was received on April 29, 2022 indicating the proposed zoning was RU-1A. What changed in that short period from the original recommendation of RU-1 to now RU-1A? They would prefer the property to remain, as it is unzoned.

In response to the inquiry Mr. J. Shawn Brasher indicated that staff had completed an initial analysis and sent out bulk letters and then checked, rechecked and rechecked again and upon the third or fourth review they located about three properties that were misquoted to RU-1 that should have been RU-1A. In addition, the discrepancies mentioned regarding the zoning of one side of the street versus the other was dictated by the land use. Choosing the land designation that fits as closely as possible to how the land is presently being used.

Mr. Stephen Cox was present and indicated that he understood the Counties desire to protect the land use but he knows of land presently being used for mostly agriculture. If the Commission cares about the community, will they protect the community from someone coming in and building or stacking 6,000 square foot houses on the properties and invading the communities.

In response to the inquiry, Chairman Jody Lane indicated that he did not want to sound like a broken record. However, the comprehensive plan is looking at the entire county and its land uses. Based on that the County is attempting to put things in their correct places so that there is not an industry that buys a piece of property that is unzoned and tries to move into it. The County is trying to clean this up and fix this.

Mr. Louie Perkins 1309 N. Irby Street, Florence, SC was present in the meeting and indicated that sitting in the meeting listening, if the property were zoned one thing now and someone wanted to come back and request a rezoning what would those fees be, if any.

In response to the inquiry Mr. Shawn Brasher indicated the permit fees to request to have a property rezoned was \$100.00.

There were no further questions, comments and/or discussion and Commissioner Dwight Johnson made a motion that the proposed map amendment PC #2022-11 be approved. / Second – Commissioner Karon Epps / The Commission approved 7 to 0 the proposed map amendment **PC #2022-11**.

PC#2022-12 Map Amendment Requested By Florence County To Change The Zoning Designation For Properties In Group One Of The Zoning Study From Unzoned To B-1 Limited Business Consisting Of The Following Properties As They Are Reflected On The Tax Maps As: 90083-01-007, 90098-01-004.

(Copy of the staff report and presentation are available at the Florence County Planning Department and on the Florence County website at: <http://www.florenceco.org/offices/planning/commission/>).

Mr. J. Shawn Brashear presented the staff report and presentation to the Commission. He indicated that all properties were unzoned and the existing land uses were studied to determine the recommended zoning. He further indicated that the land uses were studied with the present use of the properties, the surrounding properties, with future land uses and with the City of Florence zoning.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any questions and/or comments from the Commission.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any public in attendance who desired to speak in favor of the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance who desired to speak in favor of the proposed map amendment.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any public in attendance that had general questions and/or concerns that they would like to present and bring forward regarding the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance with general questions and/or concerns regarding the proposed map amendment.

There were questions and discussion by the Commission.

There were no further questions, comments and/or discussion and Commissioner Dwight Johnson made a motion that the proposed map amendment PC #2022-12 be approved. / Second – Commissioner Allie Brooks / The Commission approved 7 to 0 the proposed map amendment **PC #2022-12**.

**PC#2022-13 Map Amendment Requested By Florence County To Change The Zoning Designation For Properties In Group One Of The Zoning Study From Unzoned To B-5 Office and Light Industrial Consisting Of The Following Properties As They Are Reflected On The Tax Maps As:
00175-01-153, 00176-01-002, 00176-01-003, 00176-01-004, 00176-01-005,
00176-01-006, 00176-01-007, 00176-01-030.**

(Copy of the staff report and presentation are available at the Florence County Planning Department and on the Florence County website at: <http://www.florenceco.org/offices/planning/commission/>).

Mr. J. Shawn Brashear presented the staff report and presentation to the Commission. He indicated that all properties were unzoned and the existing land uses were studied to determine the recommended zoning. He further indicated that the land uses were studied with the present use of the properties, the surrounding properties, with future land uses and with the City of Florence zoning.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any questions and/or comments from the Commission.

There was discussion regarding the comments of Mr. Bobby Welch and the surrounding recommended zonings of the property.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance who desired to speak against the proposed map amendment.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there were any public in attendance who desired to speak in favor of the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance who desired to speak in favor of the proposed map amendment.

Chairman Jody Lane inquired if there was any public in attendance that had general questions and/or concerns that they would like to present and bring forward regarding the proposed map amendment.

There was no public in attendance with general questions and/or concerns regarding the proposed map amendment.

There were no further questions, comments and/or discussion and Commissioner Dwight Johnson made a motion that the proposed map amendment PC #2022-13 be approved. / Second – Commissioner Jeffrey M. Tanner / The Commission approved 7 to 0 the proposed map amendment **PC #2022-13**.

There was a comment made by the Commission so that the public would know that the items would appear before County Council on June 16, 2022. To inform them that the County was initiating the study for the zoning but that the Planning Commission’s determination was a recommendation to County Council and not the final decision. That the items would have to appear before County Council before anything officially happened regarding the proposed map amendments and rezoning items.

The Public Hearing was closed.

Chairman Jody Lane explained to the remaining public in attendance at the meeting that the Planning Commission was an advisory Board and all recommendations were forwarded to County Council. That the Commission did not make any final decisions and that the public was welcome to contact staff to obtain information on how and when they could attend the County Council meeting if, they so desired.

V. Other Business:

Chairman Jody Lane made a comment to staff regarding the tax map numbers. He stated that not everyone was familiar with tax map numbers. He stated that although he was familiar with tax map numbers, the average citizen was not and it appeared that most citizens who received the letters and tax map numbers had no idea what they were. He requested that staff would be able to put those numbers together with an address for the citizens when they send out the letters in the future.

In response to the stated comment, Mr. J. Shawn Brashear indicated that staff would look into adding the addresses, as they had not done so in the past. He also indicated that some of the parcels did not have addresses because only structures were addressed. Vacant lots and/or old farm barns most likely would not have an address. Staff would look into adding the addresses but it could be misleading to have some letters with addresses and some without. Staff hopes that when the letters are received that the citizen’s would call the office and inquire how the information applied to them and what it meant.

There was further discussion by the Commission about how staff and the Commission could better serve the community regarding addresses, tax map numbers and somehow adding addresses and/or additional information onto and/or within the letters sent out to the property owners and adjacent property owners.

VI. Director’s Report:

Mr. J. Shawn Brashear comments were as follows:

The summary plat and building reports were attached and presented for review.

- **Summary Plat Reports for (January, February, March and April 2022)**

- **Building Reports for (January, February, March and April 2022)**

Mr. J. Shawn Brasher indicated to the Commission that this month there were approximately 135 proposed properties for rezoning. He indicated that next month would have approximately 250 proposed properties for rezoning. There were many individuals who contacted staff regarding the proposed zoning but did not attend the meeting tonight. Staff hopes that was due in part to them explaining well what was happening and they felt they did not need to attend the meeting. That being the case, he inquired of the Commission if they wanted to consider starting the meeting earlier as staff would have to make sure that the time change was properly advertised to the public.

There was discussion by the Commission.

There were no further questions, comments and/or discussion and Commissioner Allie Brooks made a motion that the Planning Commission Meeting for June 28, 2022 be moved to 5:00 p.m. / Second – Commissioner Karon Epps / **The Commission approved 7 to 0 that the Planning Commission meeting for June 28, 2022 be moved to 5:00 p.m.**

VII. Adjournment:

There were no further questions and/or discussion Chairman Jody Lane call for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Allie Brooks made a motion that the meeting be adjourned / Second – Commissioner Dwight Johnson / Unanimously approved 7 to 0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Lisa M. Becoat
Secretary

Approved by:

J. Shawn Brashear
Planning Director

*These minutes reflect only actions taken and do not represent a true verbatim transcript of the meeting.