



JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL WORKSHOP AND COUNCIL MEETING

Jasper County Clementa C. Pinckney Government Bldg.
358 3rd Avenue Ridgeland, SC 29936
Monday, March 6, 2023

MINUTES

Officials Present: Chairman L. Martin Sauls IV, Vice Chairwoman Barbara B. Clark, Councilman Pastor Alvin Adkins, Councilman John Kemp and Councilman Coy Garbade.

Staff Present: County Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Clerk to Council Wanda H. Simmons, County Attorney David Tedder, Kimberly Burgess, Russell Wells, Lisa Wagner, and Videographer Jonathan Dunham.

Also Present: Jessica Dailey, Lowcountry Council of Governments

Chairman Sauls called the meeting to order at 5:30PM and welcomed everyone to the Workshop. Chairman Sauls asked the Clerk to Council to read the Report of Compliance to the Freedom of Information Act. Ms. Simmons, Clerk to Council to read the Clerk's Report of Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act as follows: *In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, notice of meetings and agendas were posted and furnished to all news media and persons requesting notification.*

Executive Session SECTION 30-4-70.

(a) A public body may hold a meeting closed to the public for one or more of the following reasons:

- (1) Discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, a student, or a person regulated by a public body or the appointment of a person to a public body – Auditor; Treasurer; Magistrates; Emergency Services
- (2) Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contract arrangements and proposed purchase or sale of property, the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice related to pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency of a claim – Hangar Lease TMP # 061-21-01-001-M3; THC, Inc. – Rt. 278 Widening Project; Bailey Park; Davis V. Jasper County
- (5) Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by a public body – Prospect Update; Project Refurb; Jasper Ocean Terminal

ANY EXECUTIVE SESSION MATTER ON WHICH DISCUSSION HAS NOT BEEN COMPLETED MAY HAVE DISCUSSION SUSPENDED FOR PURPOSES OF BEGINNING THE OPEN SESSION AT ITS SCHEDULED TIME, AND . COUNCIL MAY RETURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION DISCUSSION AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE OPEN SESSION AGENDA ITEMS. PLEASE BE ADVISED THERE MAY BE VOTES BASED ON ITEMS FROM THE EXECUTIVE SESSION.

Motion to go into Executive Session: Councilman Adkins

Second: Vice Chairwoman Clark

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

Return to Open Session:

Motion to approve: Councilman Kemp

Second: Councilman Adkins

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

Action coming out of Executive Session:

Motion to move to authorize the Administrator to negotiate the renewal extension on Hangar 34 for the term and conditions discussed in executive session including the execution of the lease for

TMP 062-21-01-00100 : Councilman Adkins

Second: Councilman Kemp

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given, and the Invocation was led by Councilman Adkins.

Discussion of Consent Agenda and Agenda Items:

There was no discussion on the consent agenda or agenda items.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve: Vice Chairwoman Clark

Second: Councilman Adkins

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

Approval of the Minutes 12.05.2022 and 01.03.2023:

Motion to approve: Vice Chairwoman Clark

Second: Councilman Adkins

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ACTION ITEMS

Jessica Dailey of the Lowcountry Council of Governments – Public Hearing and Presentation on the Annual Needs Assessment for Jasper County.

Jessica Dailey was present to hold the public hearing and do a presentation on the annual Needs Assessment for Jasper County. She discussed the 2023 CDBG Grant, Fair Housing and Discrimination. She provided a phone number for anyone interested to call the Lowcountry Council of Governments at 843.473.3990. She discussed low- and moderate-income families and what that meant to the program. She discussed the Community Development Program and noted that Jasper County should be in the Fall Round. She discussed community infrastructure, community enrichment and local priorities. She also mentioned the Business Development Program and the Regional Plan Program. For additional information on this presentation please go and visit our YouTube Channel https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmloqX05cKAsHm_ggXCJIA.

Lisa Wagner – Public hearing and consideration of 2nd reading of Ordinance #O-2023-03 to Amend Article 8:8 of the Jasper County Zoning Ordinance, *Gateway Corridor Overlay District (“GCOD”)*, to better define the location of the designated highway and amend the Official Zoning Map of Jasper County to expand the GCOD to include the property located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Alligator Alley and Off Ramp Road as depicted on the attached map.

Ms. Wagner was present to address this request. The Planning Commission received an application to rezone a property located at the intersection of Alligator Alley and Off Ramp Road, which was reviewed at their November 2022 Meeting. After some discussion, it was decided that extending the Gateway Corridor Overlay District (GCOD) to include the subject property may be a better alternative than re-zoning the property. The GCOD allows additional uses that are found in the General Commercial District, while prohibiting uses that have been identified as inappropriate for the Gateway Corridor. The GCOD also requires additional design standards, which are intended to protect the character and appearance of the entrance into Jasper County. The proposed ordinance would adopt the GCOD Map, amend Article 8:8.2, *Gateway Corridor Overlay District* of the Jasper County Zoning Ordinance, as outlined below, and amend the Official Zoning Map of Jasper County to expand the GCOD.

Article 8:8.2, Application:

(new language in red)

The GCOD shall apply to all land within five hundred feet (500') of the right-of-way of Highway 17, beginning at the intersection of Strain Place and ending at Alligator Aly as depicted on the GCOD Map ~~the designated highway~~. The regulations of this overlay shall apply to all new non-residential development and any existing development which meets the following criteria:

- Any change of use of a non-residential property, and/or
- Any building expansion that increases the floor area of a non-residential use by 20 percent or more or any parking addition of ten (10) or more spaces.

[Commentary: The overlay applies if a vacant property converts to any non-residential use; a change in non-residential use such as a restaurant to a hardware store. However, changes of similar uses (e.g., retail to retail) would not apply unless parking or floor area is increased by the thresholds listed.]

Unless a deviation from such restrictions are provided elsewhere in this Section 8:8, property within the GCOD shall be required to adhere to all provisions of the Jasper County Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Regulations otherwise applicable within the underlying zoning district.

Ms. Wagner noted that the Planning Commission recommends approval of the Zoning Text Amendment to Include adoption of the GCOD Map and the amendment of the Official Jasper County Zoning Map to extend the GCOD. The public hearing was opened but there were no public comments so the public hearing was closed.

Motion to approve: Councilman Adkins

Second: Vice Chairwoman Clark

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

Lisa Wagner - Public hearing and consideration of 2nd reading of Ordinance #O-2022-26 to adopt Planned Development District for two tracts of land consisting of approximately 26.63 acres, bearing Jasper County Tax Map Numbers 081-00-04-007 and 081-00-04-080, located along N. Okatie Highway (Highway 170), approximately 2 miles east of the intersection of Highway 462, and known as Bailey Park PDD (1st reading 08.15.2022; 2nd reading was tabled at the 09.06.2022 meeting)

Ms. Wagner noted that the Applicant has requested a Planned Development District (PDD) zoning designation for a mixed-use development, which will be known as Bailey Park. The project site consists of two parcels, which are identified by tax map numbers 081-00-04-007 and 081-00-04-080. Tract A is tax map number 081-00-04-007 and is currently zoned Community Commercial, consisting of 6.63 acres. Tract B is tax map number 081-00-04-080 and is currently zoned Residential, consisting of 20 acres. The properties are located along Highway 170, approximately 2 miles east of the intersection of Highway 462 and has frontage along Old Bailey Road. Both properties are vacant and have not been developed.

The Planning Commission originally reviewed this application in May 2022. The County Council approved 1st Reading on August 15, 2022 and 2nd Reading was tabled on September 6, 2022. A Public Hearing was also held on September 6, 2022. Since that time, the applicant has revised the PDD document to remove all commercial uses and designate both parcels as residential. The proposed density has been decreased from 12 units to 7.5 units per acre. The traffic study was revised based on residential uses only, at 12 units per acre. (See more details about the revisions on page 3 in red). The Planning Commission reviewed these changes at their February 14, 2023 Meeting and recommended approval by majority. In accordance with Article 8:1 of the Jasper County Zoning Ordinance, the intent of a PDD is to encourage flexibility in the development of land to promote its most appropriate use; and to do so in a manner that will enhance public health, safety, morals, and general welfare. The PDD, regulations are intended to accomplish the purpose of zoning and other applicable regulations to an equivalent or higher degree and are designed to control unscheduled development on individual lots or tracts, promote economical and efficient land use, provide an improved level of amenities, foster a harmonious variety of uses, encourage creative design, and produce a better environment. In view of the substantial public advantage of "planned development," it is the intent of the PDD regulations to promote and encourage or

require development in this form where appropriate in character, timing, and location, particularly in large undeveloped tracts. All PDD's shall conform to the Jasper County Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Land Use Map (latest edition). She noted that according to the 2018 Jasper County Comprehensive Plan, the Future Land Use Map identifies this area as "Rural Conservation," which seeks to protect and promote the character of Jasper County that largely exists today outside of the municipalities. In these areas, new development should be thoughtfully placed within the existing landscape.

The Land Use Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan recommends guiding growth and new development in or around the municipalities where infrastructure and services are available to serve new growth.

While this project site is not near a municipality, it is located in an area where infrastructure and services are available to serve the site. Figure 1 of the packet showed the project location and Table 1 showed the adjacent land uses and zoning designation. One of the properties is accessed by North Okatie Highway (Highway 170), which is a four-lane state maintained highway, classified as an arterial road. The other property has direct access to Old Bailey Road, which is a two-lane state maintained road classified as a local road.

The revised Bailey Park PDD Concept Plan illustrates the proposed uses, the general layout, and access points. A Master Plan will be submitted separately and will provide additional information regarding the layout of the development.

REVISIONS: The revisions to the Bailey Park PDD changes Tract A from mixed use commercial to residential with a mixed housing product. This eliminates 65,000 square feet of commercial uses and adds no more than 7.5 units per acre, which may be in the form of apartments, townhomes, or single family detached houses. Tract B has been changed from 12 units per acre (233 units) to 7.5 units per acre. Based on the upland acres, the total residential density for both Tract A and B will be limited to approximately 187 units.

The traffic study was revised and is based on 300 townhouses with no commercial. This traffic study compared to the 1st traffic study reduces the total daily trips from 4,186 to 1,998 total daily trips. The AM peak hour trips were reduced from 168 trips to 116 trips, while the PM peak hour trips were reduced from 374 trips to 150 trips. With the reduction of density to 7.5 units per acre, the traffic count will be further reduced by approximately 35%.

The revised PDD proposes to establish the following:

- **Access Points** – One full access point is proposed along Highway 170 and a second full access point is proposed along Old Bailey Road.
- **Allowed Land Uses** – Tract A and Tract B is proposed as multi-family residential, and single family detached and attached residential (townhomes). With multi-family being limited to Tract A.
- **Density** – The overall density proposed for Bailey Park PDD is 7.5 units per acre of uplands, approximately 187 units.
- **Open Space** – 10% open space for residential land uses with 1.25 acres devoted for active open space for community use.
- **Buffers** – Tract A will require a 50' buffer along Highway 170 and both Tract A and Tract B will require a 20' buffer around the perimeter except where there is an existing residential use adjacent to the property, the buffer will be 30'. In regard to setbacks and buffers, the International Fire Code will be met.
- **Setbacks** - For detached single-family residential and duplexes, the side setbacks are 6', rear yard setbacks are 15', and front yard setbacks are 25' for lots with front loaded garages, and 15' setbacks for lots with side

loaded garages. For attached single-family residential, townhomes, or condominiums there will be no minimum setbacks except for a 6' side setbacks from non-common property lines.

- **Landscaping Standards** – will meet or exceed the County's requirements.
- **Utilities** – Water and Sewer will be provided by BJWSA; Electric will be provided by Dominion Energy; Telephone Service will be provided by Hargray.

A full environmental assessment of the site has been conducted (this was provided in the May 2022 submittal). The Traffic Impact Analysis has been revised and is included with this staff report. The approved jurisdictional determination letter is included in Appendix C of the PDD (this is a new item).

A zoning designation of PDD does not entitle an applicant or owner of the affected property a right to develop or engage in any land use or land disturbing activity, other than the rights in existence at the time of the Concept Plan approval. To engage in development or any land use or land disturbing activity, a Master Plan and subsequent Development Plan(s) must be approved for the areas to be developed. While the Concept Plan is very generalized, a Master Plan is a more refined document, which will be reassessed by the Planning Commission at a future date. As such, the Planning Commission recommends approval of the PDD designation, the PDD document, and the Concept Plan. There had been a second reading on 09.06.2022 which was tabled after holding the public hearing on that same date.

The public hearing was opened. Council discussed this item and offered up some questions and the Developer and Ms. Wagner was present to address those. The following public comments were offered up:

Grant McClure discussed this item and specific measures that should be put into place. He asked that Council follow guidelines for conservation design. He also furnished information to provide with the minutes regarding his discussion of this item. This item is attached as "Attachment A"

Cathy DeCourey was present to discuss her concerns with the project.

Ben Kennedy stated his viewpoints on the project and asked Council to look harder before making a decision.

George Ward stated his viewpoints on this matter and noted that a letter from BJWSA was not worth anything.

Jerry Reeves he stated that he wasn't against development, it was just that this was a bad development.

Christy Smith she noted her concerns of the project and mentioned the traffic and situation that was ongoing with growing traffic issues.

Ann Copley discussed her thoughts on this development and the concerns of traffic, runoff and drainage.

Erika Bailey Gainey discussed her concerns with this project and asked that the land be kept at the current rural zoning.

Debbie Cooler expressed her shock that this came thru the Planning Commission, noting this was a rural community and discussed her concerns.

Motion to approve the 2nd reading: Councilman Garbade

Second: None

Motion to table to have a workshop: Councilman Kemp

Second: Councilman Adkins

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

Kimberly Burgess – Public hearing and consideration of the 2nd reading of Ordinance #O-2023-04 of the County Of Jasper, amending the Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023 Budget as originally adopted by Ordinance No. 2022-17 adopted June 27, 2022, in accordance with The Local Government Code Of The State Of South Carolina and the Ordinances And Rules Of The County Of Jasper, South Carolina; Appropriating the various amounts thereof, to provide for the Expenditure of not to exceed \$635,000 from the Fund Balance for the Purchase of a Storage Array System and Repealing all Ordinances or parts of Ordinances in conflict therewith, and providing an effective date.

Ms. Burgess was here to review and present this request for Council. She noted that the Council had approved the purchase of the storage array and this was to approve the payment of such. A public hearing was held but there were no public comments so the public hearing was closed.

Motion to approve: Vice Chairwoman Clark

Second: Councilman Adkins

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

Danny Lucas – Consideration of the 1st reading of an Ordinance to authorize Jasper County to Enter Into A Memorandum of Understanding/Lease Agreement with Jasper-Ridgeland Youth Baseball, Inc. (“JRYB”) for the use of Athletic Facilities.

Mr. Lucas was here to present and review this request. He noted that there had been a previous lease and the new lease would be for the same acres but at a 5 year lease.

Motion to approve: Vice Chairwoman Clark

Second: Councilman Adkins

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

Ryan Lee, CEO of Coastal Carolina Hospital – Presentation of a Brief Hospital Update

Mr. Ryan Lee was present to give the current state of affairs of the Coastal Carolina Hospital. He noted that they had a great 2022 year and employ over 500 colleagues. He said they also carried the Stroke Certification and are one of the best in the nation. They have seen over 40,000 persons annual in the ER; and noted that their ER performance is ahead of the national benchmarks. He also noted that the L & D program celebrated 10 years and that NICU would be added to the hospital in April. He noted that they serviced over 60 babies, and also discussed the Hospital’s Robotics Program.

Please visit https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmloqX05cKAsHm_ggXCJIA for more information.

Dr. Rechel Anderson – Update on the Jasper County School District

Dr. Anderson provided an update to the Council for the Jasper County School District. She discussed the JCSD’s purpose, vision and mission. In her presentation she discussed and provided:

- An introduction of District Staff / School Leaders
- Student enrollment and demographics
- Career readiness opportunities
- Staffing
 - Certified Staff Members: approx. 190
 - Classified Staff Members: approx. 174
 - Administration: 3
 - Drivers: 16
 - Bus Aides: 4
 - Trainees in Progress: 4
 - Starting Pay
- Financial stability
- Campus Safety
- Opportunities
 - STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics)
 - Early Learning and Literacy
 - Language Immersion Program
 - Dual Enrollment Program and Goals

Please visit https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmloqX05cKAsHm_ggXCJIA for more information.

Proclamations: None

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Open Floor to the Public per Ordinance 08-17 Any citizen of the County may sign to speak in person at the Council Meeting (before the Council Meeting’s 6:30PM start time on the Sign In Sheet on the Podium), to address Council on matters pertaining to County Services and Operations. Presentations will be limited to three (3) minutes per person and total public input will be limited to 30 minutes.

Chairman Sauls noted that several people were present to discuss the Gillisonville Project but it was not on the agenda tonight. He noted however that they were welcome to speak on this item. The floor was opened for public comments.

Freddie Brantley spoke regarding his concerns of the Gillisonville Project, large trucks and traffic it would create. This, he noted would destroy the community and they did not want that.

Don Newton spoke regarding his concerns of the Gillisonville Community Project. He had a statement that he read noting that the community disagrees with item 1 of the proposed ordinance that designates

parcel "A" Tax Map # 050-00-04-011 for Resource Extraction. He noted that his designation is not consistent with the Jasper County Comprehensive Plan. We request a workshop be scheduled and then meet with Mr. Farmer.

Steven Schmidt spoke regarding the Airport, State Law, and County Ordinances.

Ponsetta Horton declined to speak.

Rosemary Washington discussed water problems that she is having on her property. Chairman Sauls asked that she give that information to the Administrator for review.

Michelle Gaston noted that she was the Jasper County Council Representative to the Beaufort Jasper Housing Trust Board. Established to address the affordable housing challenges in the 8 jurisdictional area. She discussed what had been happening over the prior 90 days and what they had been doing. She discussed proposed legislation at the state level. For additional information on this item and further discussion go to https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmloqX05cKAsHm_ggXCJIA . Chairman Sauls thanked her for her service to that Board.

Resolutions: None

Administrator's Report:

Mr. Fulghum noted that his report was in the packet, and he was available to answer any questions. He noted that he had to topics to discuss one being the Capital Projects Update which he reviewed with Council. He mentioned the Coosawhatchie Fire Station and Coosawhatchie Community Center as potential projects which would be discussed during the retreat. He noted that Jasper County Neighbors United having a new event which will be an annual event and they are asking for your consideration of sponsorship. Mr. Ted Moyd stepped forward and discussed the event the County's opportunity for the different levels of financial sponsorship.

Motion to have Council consider approving the \$3500.00 sponsorship: Chairman Sauls

Second: Councilman Adkins

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

CONSENT AGENDA

Kimberly Burgess – Consideration of appointments to the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee.

Kimberly Burgess – Consideration of Council approval of the Contract with Woods Dendy for the Pratt Memorial Library.

Wanda Simmons – Consideration of approval to amend the Official Adopted Jasper County Meeting Yearly Schedule start time to 5:30PM Executive Session and 6:30PM Regular Session.

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items: Councilman Kemp

Second: Councilman Adkins

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

Old Business: None

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

Council Members Comments:

Councilman Kemp said he had a meeting at a church with the Sheriff there and Hardeeville Police with an excellent turnout. Attended a meeting at the Lovely Hill Baptist Church.

Councilman Adkins thanked God for another night.

Councilman Garbade discussed garbage cleanup and the nuisance ordinance. He noted that the county needed to be cleaned up. He said Mr. Murphy was stretched out doing all he can do.

Vice Chairwoman Clark no comments.

Chairman Sauls spoke at the State of the County Address with both Mayors. He noted it was a great turnout. He mentioned he had been to the Quarterly Southern Carolina Alliance Meeting. He then offered up a moment of silence for Reverend Gregory and his family's loss. He reminded everyone of upcoming meetings and workshops.

Possible Return to Executive Session to Continue Discussion on Matters Regarding Agenda

Item II. There was no reason to return to executive session for this meeting. For additional information on Items on this meeting go to https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmloqX05cKAsHm_ggXCJIA.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn: Vice Chairwoman Clark


Second: Councilman Kemp

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:


Wanda H. Simmons
Clerk to Council


L. Martin Sauls IV
Chairman

Wanda Simmons

Attachment "A"

From: Grant McClure <grantm@scccl.org>
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 12:55 PM
To: Comments
Cc: Marty Sauls; Barbara Clark; Andrew Fulghum
Subject: Bailey Park
Attachments: Bailey Park 3.6.22.pdf

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Good afternoon,

Attached for your consideration and inclusion in the public record, please find comments submitted on behalf of the Coastal Conservation League regarding the zoning map amendment for Bailey Park before the Jasper County Council this evening. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Grant McClure
Project Manager- South Coast Office

o (843) 522-1800 | c (803) 770-2074



1212 King Street · Beaufort, SC 29902
coastalconservationleague.org



3/6/2023

Dear Chairman Sauls and Jasper County Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed rezoning of two parcels totaling 26.63-acres along Highway 170 to allow for the development of the Bailey Park PDD, a 187-unit residential development. I am a project manager with the Coastal Conservation League, a nonprofit advocacy organization working to protect the health of the natural resources of the South Carolina coastal plain and ensure a high quality of life for all of the people who live in and love this special place.

The proposed rezoning is concerning for several reasons. First and foremost, the future land use map from the Jasper's Journey, Comprehensive Master Plan designates the 26.6-acre Bailey Park property as Rural Conservation lands. This future land-use seeks to "promote the character of Jasper County that largely exists today outside of the municipalities." The Land Use Chapter in the Comprehensive Plan further recommends guiding new development into or around the municipalities. Bailey Park lacks proximity to a municipal center and empties residential traffic onto Hwy. 170, an already overburdened 4-lane arterial road.

There are also environmental challenges inherent to developing on these two, tree-covered parcels near the Altamaha Town Heritage Preserve and the Okatee River. The Okatee River's declining health has been well documented and studied and the Okatee is currently under a set of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) regulations to attempt to slow this decline and improve its health in the future. **However, specific measures can and should be put into place prior to approving this rezoning to limit negative impacts to the natural resources, rural character, and the community wellbeing of Jasper County.**

1. **Use of Conservation Subdivision Design**– Conservation Subdivision design is the preferred method for development in Rural Conservation areas. By clustering development in strategic locations setback from wetlands and other natural resources, these subdivisions can create more open space, better fit the context of the landscape, and allow for larger buffers and the preservation of landmark features such as oaks. These design principles should be adopted along with Low Impact Design (LID) stormwater features such as bioswales and bioretention to maximum extent possible.
2. **Commitment to avoid all impacts to wetlands**– The site contains 1.7 acres of wetlands. Impacts to wetlands are regulated by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and the United States Army Corps of Engineers. However, filling of wetlands can be permitted by these agencies. Jasper County should insist that this development does not fill wetlands in order to maintain the important services they provide.
3. **Incorporating a 50-ft vegetated buffer around all wetlands** –Development near wetlands has negative impacts on their overall health and function. Maintaining a vegetated 50-ft buffer around all wetlands will help avoid and offset these impacts.

4. **Maintaining a minimum 200-ft forested buffer along Hwy. 170/Old Bailey Rd.**— Forested buffers help protect the scenic nature and rural character of the area. As an example, a 200-ft buffer requirement is utilized in the Ashley River Historic District along Ashley River Road.

5. **Incorporation of Mixed-Use elements which reduce trip generation**—Notably, the proposed all-residential PDD at 7.5 development units per acres lacks the mixed-use component that is mandated by state law¹. Incorporating mixed-use components can reduce trip generation and car dependency and encourage walkability by creating access to goods and services within a community. For example, “residential over retail” apartments allow residents to simply walk downstairs to access their neighborhood market, pharmacy, restaurant, coffee shop, gym, retail store, etc. instead of traveling to Bluffton or Beaufort.

While the Conservation League maintains that prioritizing infill development within the municipalities leads to more sustainable and vibrant communities and protects rural areas like the Bailey Park property from encroaching development, we are hopeful that implementing these measures before approving the rezoning will limit and mitigate impacts to the natural resources, rural character, and the quality of life in this sensitive and unique area of Jasper County.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Please don't hesitate to reach out if we can provide any additional information, clarification, or support as you consider this important decision.

Respectfully,



Grant McClure
South Coast Project Manager
(843) 522-1800 | grantm@scccl.org

¹ See *Sinkler v. County of Charleston*, 387 S.C. 67, 690 S.E.2d 777 (2010) (finding PDD rezoning invalid for failure to meet state law requirements for a PD district, the essence of which is to provide mixed use).