

*Jasper County Planning Commission  
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**Minutes of the April 11, 2023  
Regular Scheduled Meeting**

**Members Present:** Mr. Alex Pinckney, Chairman; Mr. Randy Waite Vice-Chairman; Dr. Earl Bostick, Sr.; Dr. Debora Butler; Ms. Sharon Ferguson; Mr. Thomas Jenkins; and Mr. Art Rothenberg.

**Staff Present:** Ms. Lisa Wagner

**Others Present:** Mr. James Ware and Mr. John Binder

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act the electronic and print media were notified. During periods of discussion and/or presentations minutes are typically condensed and paraphrased. The recorded version is available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/@jcmedia6537/streams>

**Call to Order:** Chairman Pinckney brought the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m.

**Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance:** Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance was given by Dr. Bostick.

**Approval of Agenda:** Mr. Waite moved to approve the Agenda as published, seconded by Mr. Jenkins. The Commission Members voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

**Approval of February 14, 2023, Regular Scheduled Meeting Minutes:** Mr. Jenkins moved to approve the Minutes of February 14, 2023, seconded by Dr. Butler. The Commission Members voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

**New Business:**

**Road Name Petition – Slater Oaks Road:** Chairman Pinckney said this application is for a new subdivision, and the proposed road name has no conflicts with any other road name. The Commission Members had no concerns. **Mr. Rothenberg moved to approve the Petition to name the road Slater Oaks Road, seconded by Mr. Waite. The Commission Members voted unanimously in favor of the petition.**

**Zoning Map Amendment – General Commercial, Tax Map Number – 6-acre portion of 029-00-02-028:** Ms. Wagner read the Description, Analysis, and Staff Recommendations portion of the Staff Report for this project. She said the Applicant, James Ware, reached out to the City of Hardeeville about annexation prior to applying for a zoning change and was told that the property was not adjacent to the City. Mr. Ware said that he would like to build a warehouse on the property to provide space for a contractor of some sort.

Dr. Butler asked for clarification about the parcel, site map, zoning, and location of adjacent property and adjacent zoning. Ms. Wagner provided visual maps to clarify. Dr. Butler doesn't think commercial buildings fit in with the surrounding residential area and said she is concerned about this area becoming commercialized. Ms. Ferguson agreed

that commercial has no place in residential areas. Dr. Bostick asked about existing commercial buildings in the area and agreed that it is spot zoning. Mr. Rothenberg said there are a lot of residences in this area, and he thinks a six-acre commercial parcel is not compatible with the community.

Mr. Pinckney asked Ms. Wagner what the City of Hardeeville said about the property and why it is not supported by the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Wagner said the City of Hardeeville said the subject property is not adjacent to the City so it can not be annexed. She said the Comprehensive Plan identifies this area as Urban Transition and recommends working with the municipality for annexation in these areas when new development is proposed. In addition, re-zoning of this parcel would be spot zoning because no other commercial zoning exists. Mr. Waite agrees that re-zoning a single parcel would not be appropriate, but he thinks re-zoning all of the parcels that are currently being used as commercial in the surrounding area may be appropriate to fit their current use. Ms. Wagner agreed, she thinks the applicant should try to work with neighboring property owners as a group effort and would lean more toward Community Commercial than General Commercial for this area. Chairman Pinckney suggested they consider all the allowed uses before they decide to zone it General Commercial. Dr. Bostick suggested the applicant try to get the neighboring property owners to annex into the City of Hardeeville for their own benefit and then the subject property could be annexed also. Chairman Pinckney informed the applicant that if his application is denied, he would not be able to re-apply for a year and he told the applicant he could withdraw his application if he wanted to avoid the 1 year wait.

Mr. Binder pointed out that there are other commercial properties in the area and believes that many more are coming. He stated that there are active businesses on either side of the property and feels like commercial makes sense in this area. Mr. Ware asked if the Commissioners are opposed to General Commercial would they be open to something else like Community Commercial. Chairman Pinckney said yes, which is why he offered for him to withdraw so he didn't have to wait 1 year to re-apply. Ms. Wagner reiterated that she thinks it should be a group effort with surrounding business owners. Mr. Waite agreed and thought it would be in the best interest of all of the property owners. Dr. Butler asked if the existing businesses would meet criteria for Community Commercial, she does not think it's an appropriate area for General Commercial. There was discussion about the current businesses there and after some discussion, it was determined that there is a roofing company, an electrical supply/contractor, a forklift company, and a cabinet warehouse.

Mr. Ware said he would withdraw his application if the Commissioners thought that was best and will try to work with the neighboring businesses to re-submit the application for Community Commercial as a group effort. Dr. Bostick asked which zoning designation would best fit the business owners' needs while protecting the community at the same time. Ms. Wagner said Community Commercial offers a wide array of uses that support a residential community and she thinks that would be best. There was discussion about which types of uses would fit under Community Commercial. Ms. Wagner said specialty trade contractors along with retail uses are allowed in Community Commercial, but no type of general contractors or heavy contractors, and no manufacturing or pre-fabrication is allowed in Community Commercial. Mr. Pinckney recommends following the Comprehensive Plan and have those parcels annexed into the City of Hardeeville. Dr. Butler asked if the businesses operating in the area are licensed and Ms. Wagner said she does not have access to the Business Licenses but would imagine they are since they went through the zoning process and have existed for many years. Mr. Ware withdrew his application. **Mr. Waite moved to withdraw the application, seconded by Mr. Jenkins. The Commission Members voted in favor of the motion with Dr. Butler opposing the motion.**

**Zoning Map Amendment – Community Commercial, Tax Map Number - .74-acre portion of 015-01-00-012:** Chairman Pinckney recused himself from this portion of the meeting and turned the floor over to Vice-Chairman Waite. Ms. Wagner read the Description, Analysis, and Staff Recommendation portion of the Staff Report for this project and referred to pictures attached to the Staff Report. Mr. Jenkins asked for clarification regarding building use and Ms.

Wagner said it would be a Community Event Space for reunions, weddings, celebrations, etc. Mr. Jenkins expressed concern about the possibility of serving alcohol. Ms. Wagner said they would not be able to get a license for onsite consumption of alcohol (like a bar or club) because of the proximity to residences and a church. She said if they are not selling alcohol, they would not need a license; however, it would be recommended for the property owner to get insurance to protect himself from accidents. The building will be inspected beforehand to make sure everything is up to code. Mr. Rothenberg asked if an Event Center would be allowed in Residential. Ms. Wagner said no. Mr. Rothenberg liked the idea of the Event Center but is concerned that it wouldn't remain that and would end up being used for something else.

Dr. Butler asked for clarification of adjacent properties that are zoned Residential and what was the original use of the building. Dr. Bostick said the building was a printing shop at one time. Ms. Wagner shared a visual map to show the surrounding properties. She said a red zoning sign was placed on the property and a public hearing will be scheduled before the Council. Dr. Butler expressed concern about how the property would be accessed and Ms. Wagner said there is a driveway to the property off School Road. Dr. Bostick asked how far off the highway was originally designated for Community Commercial and if this property is located within that area. Ms. Wagner said using the measuring tool on the GIS, it appears to be approximately 236' to the beginning of the property from Highway 321 and 320' to the back of the property. The original intent was for the Community Commercial District to be 350' in depth.

Ms. Ferguson would like the community to be better informed of what is going on aside from a red sign being posted on the property. Ms. Wagner said once the public hearing is scheduled, a new sign is posted on property advertising the public hearing date, letters are sent out to the community, and the public hearing ad is posted in the newspaper. There was some discussion about if the signs are big enough. Ms. Ferguson suggested mailing a notice to everyone in the community to inform them of possible upcoming changes. There was some discussion about having public hearings at Planning Commission level and if it is even possible. Ms. Wagner said she would like to receive advice from the County Attorney. She said it may require a policy change. Dr. Butler said she believes public hearings should remain with the County Council but agreed that more input from the community is needed in order to make recommendations. **Dr. Bostick moved to forward a favorable recommendation to County Council to change the zoning from Residential to Community Commercial, seconded by Mr. Jenkins. The Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion.**

#### **Discussion:**

**Rescheduling of the May 9, 2023, Planning Commission Meeting:** Ms. Wagner said she was going to be at a conference for continuing education on May 9, 2023, and would like to re-schedule the May 9<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission Meeting to May 16, 2023. **Dr. Bostick moved to change the meeting date to May 16, 2023, seconded by Mr. Waite.** Ms. Wagner will revise the online schedule and ask IT to add the revised date to the County's online event calendar.

**2022 Annual Reports:** Ms. Wagner gave a brief overview of the 2022 Annual Reports for Jasper County Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and the Planning & Building Department's permits and fees.

#### **Open Discussion:**

Chairman Pinckney turned the floor over to Councilman Kemp. Mr. Kemp said with all the development coming to the County, the Council is trying to stay ahead of issues so he has been designated to go where these projects are proposed and contact the Councilman who represents the specific district where the project is located in an effort to try and come up with a resolution. Mr. Kemp would like to see a public comment option added for more input from the community.

Dr. Bostick agrees with community involvement and requests Ms. Wagner to come up with some ideas and options for the next meeting. Ms. Wagner said when Bailey Park came back to the Planning Commission in February, she sent out 54 letters to the community inviting comments for the Planning Commission Meeting. Dr. Bostick commented that he thinks we need to get back to in person meetings so that there can be more community involvement. Ms. Wagner reminded the Commissioners that she recently set up a county email address for each of the Commissioners and posted it on the County website so that the public can reach out to them as well.

Chairman Pinckney asked about the guidelines that the County Council is using for in-person meetings. Ms. Wagner discussed the guidelines for in-person meetings. After some discussion, it was agreed that the format of future in-person meetings and/or virtual meetings will be determined by Chairman Pinckney and Ms. Wagner, based on the agenda. It was also agreed that the same format used by the County Council for public comments will be used for in-person meetings. **Ms. Ferguson moved that Chairman Pinckney and Ms. Wagner will decide if the future Planning Commission monthly meetings will be in-person or virtual based on the agenda, seconded by Dr. Butler.** The Commission Members voted unanimously in favor.

Mr. Jenkins asked who makes the final decisions on road paving, Ms. Wagner said SCDOT makes that decision on most all paved roads. We do have a Jasper County Transportation Committee and they identify what roads need to be repaired.

Ms. Ferguson asked Ms. Wagner if she received any additional information on complaints and violations, Ms. Wagner said she reached out to Chief Wells but has not received any information. Ms. Ferguson also inquired about requirements for construction sites and cleanup, Ms. Wagner said that a person who sustains damage to their vehicle should contact SCDOT or the company whose employees may have caused the damage to see if they can be reimbursed for any damages.

Mr. Jenkins asked Councilman Kemp about the status of the cleanup of the Waste Management site near Bolan Hall. Ms. Wagner said that she thought it had all been taken care of, she saw a crew grading the mound and all the trash had been removed.

Mr. Pinckney asked Ms. Wagner about the 5-year review of the Comprehensive Plan and when will that begin. Ms. Wagner said there is a new resiliency element from the state that should be incorporated into the Plan, and she recently received a proposal from the Consultant who helped write the Plan, which will include meetings with the Planning Commission. Ms. Wagner is working with Mr. Lucas, Mr. Fulghum, and the Finance Director to get that approved.

**Adjourn: Dr. Bostick moved to adjourn, seconded by Dr. Butler. The Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:01 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Wagner