

# **PICKENS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

## **MINUTES**

**of**

**April 12, 2021**

**6:30pm**

### **PICKENS COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING Administration Auditorium**

**NOTICE OF MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING:** Pursuant to Section 30-4-80 of the S.C. Code of Laws, annual notice of this Commission's meetings was provided by January 1, 2021 via the Pickens County Website and posted next to the Offices of the County Planning Department. In addition, the agenda for this meeting was posted outside the meeting place (Pickens County Administration Building Bulletin Board) and was emailed to all persons, organizations, and news media requesting notice. Notice for the public hearings was published in the *Pickens County Courier*, posted on the properties subject of public hearing(s), and emailed to all persons, organizations, and news media requesting notice pursuant to Section 1205(d)(1) of the Pickens County Unified Development Standards Ordinance.

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Bobby Ballentine, Vice-Chairman (Presiding Official)  
David Cox  
Gary Stancell  
Bobbie Langley  
Jon Humphrey  
Michael Watson

#### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Ray Holliday, County Planner  
Chris Brink, Community Development Director

#### ***Welcome and Call to Order***

Mr. Ballentine, the Presiding Official, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Ballentine asked those in attendance to join in a moment of silence and for the recital of the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### ***Approval of Minutes***

Mr. Ballentine called for a motion regarding the minutes of the March 8, 2021 meeting. Ms. Langley motioned to approve the minutes, with a change to line 18, page 8 substituting the word "put" with "out". Mr. Cox seconded the motion. The motion to approve the corrected minutes passed unanimously.

#### ***Public Comments***

No one signed up or was otherwise present to speak.

#### ***Public Hearings***

Mr. Ballentine briefly went over the procedures that will be followed for this evening's public hearing.

Mr. Ballentine opened the public hearing portion of the meeting and called for the case being heard.

- 1. LU-21-0002 Land Use approval for a 317 Site RV Park and Campground on approximately 188 acres. The subject property is located on Country Club Road and Griffin Mill Road, Pickens. The applicant is Small Brothers Pickens, LLC. The property owner of record is Small Brothers Pickens, LLC. TMS#s 4099-07-59-2848**

Mr. Duane Bishop, Small Brothers, LLC, appeared before the Commission and presented the application and the request. Appearing also on behalf of the applicant was Riley Small, Jon Small, Joe Ciresi, Ericka, Kennedy, and Derrek Pulley.

Mr. Bishop gave a detailed presentation of the request and explained several presentation boards that were around the room that demonstrated the potential reinvestment in the site and provided representations of existing conditions.

The site redevelopment will entail the reconfiguration of the golf facility including a reduction to nine golf holes and the addition of nine new holes in a par 3 arrangement; that the entire site would be open to the public; that the existing club house would be replaced with a new facility that will include a restaurant, a new pool (2,500 square feet), pickle ball courts, and new tennis courts; that amenities will be included that will incorporate the lake with picnic areas, beach, pavilion, and bath house.

The RV Park and Campground will comprise of 213 RV sites and 104 cabin sites; that the cabin sites will be Park Model RVs up to 400 square feet in size.

Mr. Ballentine asked about the cabins.

Mr. Bishop explained that the cabins would be what are considered Park Model RVs.

Ms. Langley asked what type of RVs would be permitted; being Class A units or anything down to vans and if the cabins would be around or close to the lake.

Mr. Bishop stated that there would be no limit to the type of RV units permitted or allowed; that pricing would be geared toward a certain class over another but open to all; that some cabins would be close to the lake but not all.

Mr. Bishop gave an explanation of the Park Model RV cabins being contemplated on the 104 sites and that a good reference to what is proposed is a like RV resort they are developing just outside of the Kings Island Park in Cincinnati.

Mr. Ballentine asked about site access.

Mr. Bishop explained that there would be a primary entrance close to where the existing entrance to the Country Club exists now and also a new secondary access for the RV park area.

Mr. Bishop gave a detailed overview of the new club house that would be constructed, replacing the existing facility; that the new building will encompass a traditional golf club house, a patio, restaurant, camp store, golf shop.

Mr. Watson asked if the individual RV sites would be large enough for a car or golf cart in addition to the RV.

Mr. Bishop stated that the resort will have golf carts for users, to discourage guest from bringing their own carts, and sites will be sized to accommodate a car in addition to the RV.

Mr. Watson asked if tent sites would be provided.

Mr. Bishop stated that there would be not tent sites provided.

Ms. Langley asked about site access, widths of individual sites, interior roadways, age of units allowed in the park and the type of units permitted.

Mr. Bishop stated that they have no intention on limiting RV types and access, site sizes, and interior access would meet both the minimum requirement of the county as well as sized appropriately to meet the size of the RVs allowed; that most sites would be have a minimum of 12 feet of pavement but in excess of 30 feet in width for the site and up to 60 or 70 feet long; that sites will be designed according to site access (pull through or back in).

Members of the Commission asked specifics regarding site access, interior roadways, site design, etc.

Mr. Derrek Pulley gave specifics on site design.

Ms. Langley asked about future sale of the project, offloading of the asset, in the future.

Mr. Bishop stated that there is no intent to sell the property once developed.

Ms. Langley asked about protection measures to help with neighboring properties and owners.

Mr. Bishop stated that what is being proposed will only help increase property values in the area and that they will use buffers as required for protection and separation from adjacent neighbors and property.

Mr. Ballentine and Ms. Langley asked about the use being consistent with the area and designated future land use of the area.

Mr. Bishop stated that he believes that the use fits the area and is consistent with surrounding uses; that strictly from a traffic standpoint, what is being proposed is a better fit than additional homes that could be constructed on the 188 acres, generating more traffic than what the RV project will.

There being no additional presentation from the applicant and no additional questions from the Commission, Mr. Ballentine asked if there were additional proponents that wished to speak.

The following individuals signed up and spoke before the Commission in favor (proponents) of the land use request:

Ben Massingill - works at Pickens Country Club, an opportunity for Pickens County to have something nowhere in Upstate has, large economic development investment, and opportunity to have a Par 3 course.

Jim Hackenburg – a PGA golf pro, the Pickens Country Club is a great property in the center of Pickens County, the Country Club had a great following in the past and where most golf courses are closing, this in an opportunity to keep one open.

Tonya Earnhardt – is an All About Golf representative and real estate agent, is in favor of saving the golf course facility, searched for a development team that was interested in saving golf rather than put up several hundred homes on the property, this a growth opportunity for Pickens County and the City of Pickens.

Jon Ciresi – works with development team and will own and run the proposed restaurant, Small Brothers is a great organization.

Mayor Fletcher Perry, Pickens – had prepared a great presentation for the Commission, the Pickens Country Club has a significant history and meaning for his family but also Pickens County; that his family, starting with his father have worked at the Country Club.

Lynn Williams – was not always in favor of the RV park, ignored rumors and listened to the proposal anyway, learned about the project and the development group, now in favor of the project and excited what this means for Pickens, a place to go with lake access and restaurant.

Laurie Morris – Club Ridge HOA president, homeowners excited about RV park and saving of golf, jobs, and abundance of community support for the project.

Don Marler – lives in Griffin Oaks, was not initially in favor but now is 100% in support of the project.

Rosanne Maw – lives on Country Club Road and is in favor of the RV Park.

Todd McAlister – likes that the project is something other than residential and all the traffic that comes with it.

Bobby Day – community is overwhelmingly in favor, out of town guest and out of town money, concerned about golf carts, bikes, and runners on local roads

Others signed up to speak but chose not to – Debbie Gravley, Nancy Holcombe, Frances Blake, Coby Gambrell

There being no additional citizens wishing to speak in favor, Mr. Ballentine opened the floor to those that wished to speak in opposition.

The following individuals signed up to speak in opposition:

Greg Fortin – 6 year resident of Pickens County, moved to get away from crime and traffic, a traffic study needs to take place, an environmental study needs to be conducted, the project will cause a decrease in property values, he will look directly at the RV Park

Caleb Green – project is better than homes, traffic and RVs on local roads will create problems, need for better traffic enforcement

Jon McManus – former Planning Commission member in Greer, concerned about the land use plan and lack of planning in Pickens County, the county's plan is full of intent but no staff to enforce or plan, use is not consistent with surrounding area, this will set precedent.

Felicia O'Shields – examples of bad RV parks in Louisiana, property values depreciated, no control about what goes on long term, issues relative to length of stay and enforcement, what happens to project in the future.

Michael Pilgrim – 34 acres on other side of lake, in favor of new restaurant but who is going to police guest and trespassing on adjacent property

There being no additional comments, Mr. Ballentine gave the applicant a time for rebuttal and to address concerns.

Mr. Bishop stated that yes, the project would be bringing in jobs to the area and his team will work with our economic development staff as the project moves forward; that during project construction, there would be approximately 150 employees and during operation there would be

in excess of 75; that yes, there will be traffic, but not as what a fully operational and thriving 18 hole golf course generates or even close to the number that several hundred new homes would generate; that the project will be built for peak occupancy but rare to have 217 RVs show up at one time; that with an approval, they plan on moving forward with the club house and golf redevelopment within 30 days.

Ms. Langley asked about the development timeline.

Mr. Bishop stated that they hope to be completed with the entire project by the fall of 2022.

Mr. Stancell asked about the potential of surrounding the site with a fence for security of both the guest and neighbors.

Mr. Bishop stated that there would be areas where fencing would be needed but there would be other areas where fencing would not be appropriate; the resort will have security in place during operations.

Ms. Langley asked about ensuring public access.

Mr. Bishop stated that their business model only works with full public access; that such access would be in the form of daily admittance, memberships, or a combination.

Ms. Langley asked if a dump station would be provided.

Mr. Bishop stated that they will have full hook-ups at each site so a dump station would not be needed but if SCDHEC required one they would provide.

There being no additional presentation by the applicant and no additional questions from the Commission, Mr. Ballentine closed the public hearing and called for a motion.

Mr. Watson motioned that the request be approved with staff recommended conditions. Those conditions being:

1. *Approval shall be considered site specific and is based on the conceptual plans submitted with the Land Use Application and reviewed by the Planning Commission. Any substantial changes to what has been reviewed by this Commission must be sent back for review as a change in conditions of this land use permit action.*
2. *County Public Works/Engineering staff must review project plans during the development permitting stage for compliance of all internal roads and associated infrastructure for compliance to both county UDSO standards for local streets and typical road design. A full set of Street Improvement Plans will be required for review. This is not in lieu of any other development permit submittal that may be required for the project.*
3. *Prior to or in conjunction with the submittal of any development application for the re-development of the Pickens Country Club site into a RV Park and Campground, a Traffic Impact Study will need to also be submitted to County Staff for review. Such study will need to look, at a minimum, at access from/to the project onto Country Club Road, all collector intersections within one (1) mile of the proposed project (Griffin Mill Road and Country Club Road, Old Bethlehem School Road and Griffin Mill Road), and the intersections of Old Bethlehem School Road and SC 8 and Old Bethlehem School Road and US 178. Additional reviews may be warranted and required by Pickens County Public Works and or SCDOT. Any improvements or mitigating alternatives will need to be in place prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Site Compliance or the issuance of a*

*Certificate of Occupancy associated with the development.*

Mr. Stancell seconded the motion.

Ms. Langley motioned that the original motion be amended to add an additional condition. That condition being:

4. The Park Model Homes be limited to the 400 square feet as stated in the presentation.

Mr. Watson seconded the motion.

Mr. Humphrey asked for clarification on the motion; if it set a minimum size of the proposed Park Model cabins at 400 square feet or was that to be a maximum. It was understood to be a minimum size.

The motion to amend the original motion passed with four (4) in favor (Langley, Humphrey, Watson, Cox) and one (1) opposed (Stancell).

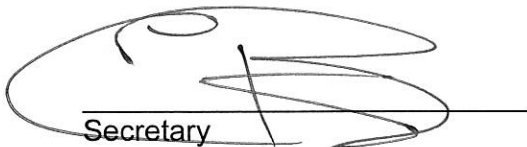
***Commissioners and Staff Discussion***

Mr. Brink briefly, for the benefit of the new members, went over the information regarding the minimum 6 hours of Orientation that is required and how to set up that training through the Association of Counties website.

***Adjourn***


There being no additional matters to be taken up by the Commission, Mr. Watson motioned that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 8.52pm.

Submitted by:

  
Secretary

5/10/2021  
Date

Approved by:

  
Chairman

5/10/2021  
Date