

PICKENS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

of

Monday, November 14, 2011

6:30pm

**PICKENS COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
Main Conference Room**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jim Wilkie, Chair
Bill Cato
Dr. DeWitt Stone, Jr.
"Hub" Smith
Weldon Clark
Dennis Reinert
Henry Wilson

STAFF PRESENT:

Chris Brink, Community Development Director

Welcome and Call to Order

Mr. Wilkie, presiding official, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Dr. Stone was asked to provide the evening's invocation.

Mr. Wilkie led the recital of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Introduction of Members

Each member of the Commission introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Wilkie asked for a motion regarding the minutes of the July 11, 2011 meeting. Changes were noted on page 3 by Mr. Reinert (omission of the word "request" from the end of a sentence at line 3) and Mr. Clark (clarification of action by Mr. Clark). A motion was made by Mr. Clark to approve, with corrections, motion seconded by Mr. Reinert. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments

Mike Rixman appeared before the Planning Commission to enquire about the status of the Warpath Landing project; if any permits had been issued or if any approvals have expired.

Mr. Brink gave a brief update of the project; that as it stands, there have been no permits issued from the county and Planning Commission approval of the project does not expire.

Public Hearings

Mr. Brink gave a brief explanation of the Public Hearing procedures.

Mr. Wilkie called for the first case to be presented:

- 1. LU-11-006 Recreation of 1.00 acre or greater (RV Campground) land use request for James Bagwell. Proposed site is located at 694 Little Crow Creek, Pickens. Tax Map# 4151-00-07-3585**

Mr. Brink gave an overview of the first case and provided the Planning Commission with the staff recommendation.

Mr. Wilkie asked the applicant if he liked to speak.

The applicant, Mr. James Bagwell, appeared before the Planning Commission and gave a description of his request; that planning staff had explained it well; that he was proposing to develop a small RV campground on a small portion of his property, approximately one (1) acre; that they would be used primarily during outages at Oconee Nuclear Station; that he was going to initially have around four (4) RVs.

Mr. Bagwell also had a question regarding the size of his RV campground and if he would be allowed to expand it in the future.

Mr. Brink explained that the request was for a one (1.00) acre RV campground; that that is how it was noticed in the paper and the agenda; that that is how the Planning Commission has to consider it. If, in the future, the applicant wishes to make the campground larger, then he would have to appear before the Planning Commission once again; that staff recognized the potential for expansion and conditioned the request accordingly by allowing up to ten (10) units on the initial one (1) acre.

There being no further discussion or questions, Mr. Clark made a motion to approve with the recommended conditions by staff. Those conditions being:

1. Use shall be limited to the area depicted on the applicant submitted site plan
2. No more than 10 RV sites may be provided
3. Individual units may not be separately metered; only one meter for the distribution of water and only one meter for the distribution of power to the campground is to be provided

Mr. Reinert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wilkie called for the second case to be presented:

**2. LU-11-007 Communication Tower land use request for American Towers/AT&T.
Proposed site is located at 3376 Walhalla Highway, Six Mile.
Tax Map# 4049-00-34-5818**

Mr. Brink gave an overview of this case; that staff was in receipt of a request to withdraw the application; that during the review of the application by staff, issues arose with the siting of the proposed tower in relation to adjacent residential properties and that Mr. Jonathan Yates has requested that the application be withdrawn from consideration. Mr. Brink asked that if withdrawal was considered by the Planning Commission that that withdrawal is conditional so that the application fee would be allowed to be refunded, minus any administrative cost incurred by the county for processing the application.

Mr. Yates, representing the applicant, American Towers, appeared before the commission and reaffirmed his request that the application be withdrawn from consideration; that there were numerous issues with the application that were not discovered until after the application was filed; that those issues would prevent the Planning Commission from taking action on the request as presented; that they need additional time to address those issues and bring the request back at a later time.

Mr. Wilkie asked if there were any additional questions from the Commission or additional input from the applicant. There being none, the floor was opened for anyone wishing to speak in regard to the original request or to the withdrawal.

Mr. Tom Smith appeared before the commission and addressed concerns he had with the state of the current development on the property; that, as it currently sits, the property fails to meet current county ordinances related to erosion and stormwater; that no additional development should be allowed on the property until the current owners were made to make changes to the site and come into compliance with all county ordinances.

Mr. Elbert Crenshaw also appeared before the commission and addressed the concerns he had with the boat storage property and its owners; that his property has been impacted from the development related to water runoff and erosion and silt settling in his front yard; that at one point the property owner hauled away silt out of his yard but water still flows across his yard and still silts up at times; that the owner should be made to comply with county standards before he is allowed to do anything else on his property; that even the landscaping requirements of the county have not been met.

There being no further comments, Mr. Clark asked staff to explain once again, the nature of the requested condition.

Mr. Brink stated that because administrative cost have already be expensed by the county in processing the application up to this point, such as copying cost, advertisements, signs, and the like, that the entire application fee of \$200.00 could not be refunded; that from an accounting standpoint, he would like to refund the balance to the applicant rather than hold on to it and apply it to a new application.

There being no additional comments or questions, Mr. Clark made the motion to accept the withdrawal and allow a partial refund of the application fee as requested by staff. The motion was seconded by Mr. Stone. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wilkie called for the third case to be presented:

3. LU-11-008 Communication Tower land use request for American Towers/AT&T. Proposed site is located at 172 Merck Road, Central. Tax Map# 4065-09-07-0292

Mr. Brink gave an overview of the first case and provided the Planning Commission with the staff recommendation.

Mr. Wilkie asked the applicant if he liked to speak.

Mr. Yates, representing the applicant, explained that there is an increase in demand for wireless support, especially in southern Pickens County, and American Towers is proposing this site near Central on property owned by the Merck family; that this 77 acre tract has been owned by the same family for many generations, that the site lends itself to permit complete tree cover of the base of the facility. Mr. Yates went through each of the requirements under the UDSO sections 311 and 1205(f) to demonstrate compliance. He said that coverage from this location will be able to fill a relatively large gap in coverage in this area of the county by AT&T; that, along with the proposed site at Big Boy Toyz, ATT would have great coverage in this area of pickens County. Additionally, the tower will provide effective service for EMS and first responders and promote economic growth. A tower has almost no impact on public services or roads. American Towers typically visits and services their towers twice a year.

Mr. Yates explained that the tower company will lease a relatively small area, approximately 14,000 square feet that will be completely fenced and will include the tower and all the equipment.

Mr. Wilkie asked if there were any questions or comments from the members of the commission.

There being none and no one from the public present to speak, Dr. Stone made the motion to approve, which was seconded by Mr. Smith. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Mr. Wilkie stated that several commissioners had contacted him regarding items to discuss and that later on those things could be brought up under the Commissioner and Staff Discussion period.

Mr. Wilkie asked if there were any new items to be brought before the commission.

Mr. Cato brought a matter before the commission and offered a motion to amend the By-Laws of the Planning Commission, specifically section 5.2 as it relates to amending the by-laws. Dr. Stone seconded the motion for point of discussion of the request.

Mr. Cato presented his proposed amendment and explained his desire to amend this section of the By-Laws; that as he reads it, it is very confusing and if he cannot understand then more than likely no one else can either; that this section can be improved.

Mr. Wilkie asked staff to read the current section 5.2 of the adopted By-Laws. The section was read in its entirety.

The current wording of the By-Laws was discussed and debated by members of the commission as to its purpose and meaning; most of the discussion centered around the required two subsequent meetings required before any amendment could be adopted, the need for a simple majority rather than a vote of two-thirds of the commission, and the required mailing of the proposal to members of the commission.

There was no additional new business to come before the commission.

Commissioners and Staff Discussion


Mr. Wilkie brought up the need or desire to have a working session in the near future; that county council would like for the Planning Commission to be more involved and more proactive in planning; that perhaps a working session could be held to talk about how the commission could become more active and involved in areas such as transportation, utility infrastructure, economic development.


Staff stated that, with the exception of the By-Laws amendment, no additional items are scheduled for the December meeting and that would be a perfect time to have a working meeting.

The commission decided to use the meeting in December as a working session and to continue this line of discussion then.

Adjourn

With no additional business before the commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm.


Chairman


Date