

MINUTES
LAURENS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2016 – 5:30 P.M.
CHURCH STREET OFFICE COMPLEX

ATTENDANCE: **MEMBERS PRESENT** - Kay Weeks, Chair; Commission Members Posey Copeland and Beth Holmes.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commission Members Bob Brewington, Sylvester Grant, Samuel Peden and Michael Smith (resigned).

COUNTY STAFF: Chuck Bobo, Laurens County Building Codes Official; Betty Walsh, Laurens County Clerk to Council, Jon Caime, County Administrator and Rob Russian, Public Works Director.

COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: County Councilman Garrett McDaniel.

GUESTS: No Guests

PRESS – No Press

SCHEDULED AGENDA ITEMS – **1.)** Call to Order; **2.)** Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance; **3.)** Approval of Agenda June 21, 2016; **4.)** Approval of minutes from May 17, 2016; **5.)** New Business: **A.)** Overview of Laurens County Ordinance #522 – “International Building Codes” – Chuck Bobo, Codes Officer; **b.)** Nuisance Ordinance, beginning review; **6.)** Old Business: a.) Status update of proposed Junkyard Ordinance – Kay Weeks, Chair; **7.)** Public Comment; **8.)** Administrative Reporting; **9.)** Commission Member Comments; **10.)** Adjournment.

CALL TO ORDER – Chairwoman Weeks called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 5:32 P.M. in the Conference Room of the Hillcrest Square, Administrative Offices on June 21, 2016.

Chairwoman Weeks asked for all to stand for the invocation delivered by Commissioner Holmes and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance by everyone.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – The June 21, 2016 agenda was approved with a MOTION from COMMISSIONER HOLMES and a SECOND from COMMISSIONER COPELAND; VOTE 3-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – The May 17, 2016 minutes were approved with COMMISSIONER HOLMES making the MOTION with COMMISSIONER COPELAND SECONDDING: VOTE 3-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

a.) **Status update of proposed Junkyard Ordinance** – Chairwoman Weeks began the review by asking each member if they had any questions or comments about any of the changes made since the last review.

Codes Officer Bobo directed their attention to Section #2 – e: **Grandfathered Junkyard Procedures** and asked if the verbiage of “the outbound side of the fence” should not be removed because we are not requiring fences on grandfathered junkyards. Commissioner Copeland replied that it states a natural barrier or the use of fencing.

Commissioner Copeland questioned why page nine (#9) under Section 4-c Fencing and Screening says all junkyards and under Section #2 Grandfathered Junkyard Procedures it too states all junkyards and could be a bit confusing. Chair Weeks replied that Section #2 refers to Grandfathered Junkyards and Section #4 is general provisions for new junkyards.

Administrator Caime questioned **Section 5. Operation – b.** No junk shall be stacked, stored or maintained for an extended thirty (30) day period of time at a height no greater than eight (8) feet above the adjacent

grade; and determined by the County Building Official. Chair Weeks replied that higher than the eight (8) feet is a safety hazard along with the topography of the land and visibility.

Chair Weeks asked Mrs. Walsh if Council had received a copy of the revised Ordinance. Mrs. Walsh replied that they had not due to being instructed by the Chairman that it will not come before Council until he says to bring it forward.

Administrator Caime stated that the Planning Commission is a separate authority according to state law. Commissioner Copeland replied that the Planning Commission has no authority according to Mr. Wood and all is subject to his approval and County Council. Administrator Caime replied that that was not true as to his approval but more in line with the full Council.

Administrator Caime read the powers and duties of a Planning Commission from Section 6-29-340; B) *“In the discharge of its responsibilities, the local planning commission has the power and duty to:*

(1) prepare and revise periodically plans and programs for the development and redevelopment of its area as provided in this chapter; and

(2) prepare and recommend for adoption to the appropriate governing authority or authorities as a means for implementing the plans and programs in its area:

(a) zoning ordinances to include zoning district maps and appropriate revisions thereof, as provided in this chapter;

(b) regulations for the subdivision or development of land and appropriate revisions thereof, and to oversee the administration of the regulations that may be adopted as provided in this chapter;

(c) an official map and appropriate revision on it showing the exact location of existing or proposed public street, highway, and utility rights-of-way, and public building sites, together with regulations to control the erection of buildings or other structures or changes in land use within the rights-of-way, building sites, or open spaces within its political jurisdiction or a specified portion of it, as set forth in this chapter;

(d) a landscaping ordinance setting forth required planting, tree preservation, and other aesthetic considerations for land and structures;

(e) a capital improvements program setting forth projects required to implement plans which have been prepared and adopted, including an annual listing of priority projects for consideration by the governmental bodies responsible for implementation prior to preparation of their capital budget; and

(f) policies or procedures to facilitate implementation of planning elements.”

Continuing Administrator Caime said, “County Council gave the Planning Commission a directive of looking at all of the enforcement ordinances. As to the Junkyard Ordinance, the Planning Commission has spent time with it and made revisions; with it now finished and ready for County Council.” Commissioner Copeland replied that the Planning Commission was completed several months ago with Council already having had two (2) readings. Mrs. Walsh added that a public hearing notice had been published and set with Council to hold a Public Hearing and third reading; with the Council Chairman cancelling it all. Chair Weeks added that Council Chairman Wood said that it would not be brought back up until he agreed with the Ordinance. Public Works Director Russian agreed with the two (2) readings by Council and that now it has to start all over again with first reading because of the changes.

Mrs. Walsh disagreed and stated, “An ordinance can be changed up to the third reading / public hearing without reverting back to another first reading. The full Council was asked to provide changes that they wished to be made. Only two (2) Council Members replied and both almost had the same comments. Those requests were looked at and modified within the Ordinance per Council instructions, with a revised copy being provided to the full Council to continue with the approval process”.

Administrator Caime said that the Planning Commission now needs to get on the Council agenda referring to the requested changes and asking Council to proceed with the approval process.

NEW BUSINESS:

Overview of Laurens County Ordinance #522 – “International Building Codes” – Chair Weeks opened the dialogue by saying that she had read over the minutes from the last meeting and understands that it is illegal with certain parts of it.

Mr. Bobo, County Codes Officer, provided a draft from the County Attorney of changes needed and said, The Ordinance was set up for it to become perpetual with State Codes as they come in every three (3) years. The situation is that with adoption of the appendices A through J was not allowed for us but only for Greenville County as it relates to radon. We need to have the most recent version once it is adopted by South Carolina so to have it covered legally and technically. Our ordinance needs to make reference to Chapter One which is the administration of each code that allows one to write tickets. The State said that if we do not reference Chapter One, then we cannot use it.

Chairwoman Weeks asked all to review the document provided with further discussion at the next Commission meeting.

NUISANCE ORDINANCE REVIEW - This was put on hold until the Planning Commission can get an updated directive from County Council.

Before moving on to the next agenda item, there was a broad range of conversation held regarding enforcement ordinances, zoning and land use.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Chairwoman Weeks opened the floor for any public comments. Having none, she continued with the agenda items.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTING - Chairwoman Weeks opened the floor for any comments.

County Administrator Caime opened this segment by telling the Commission Members present that he wished to hold an open dialogue with them and asked if they had any questions and / or concerns about their duties and responsibilities as a member of the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Copeland stated, “If we are to work as a Planning Commission, then we do not want to be given a riot act by the Chairman of County Council. I was highly disturbed with some conduct of a Member of Council at the last meeting of the Planning Commission implying that it was his highway or no highway. That is not the way we operate in this Country. We certainly get paid a lot of money for doing this job on the Planning Commission. I drive from the lowest point of this County to Laurens for these meetings. Mr. Peden drives in from Simpsonville. I asked my County Councilman to put me on this Commission so that I can provide my expertise to help the County. I don’t need someone to tell me it’s my way or no way”.

Commissioner Holmes said, “I agree with Mr. Copeland’s comments, as we did have a hard time at the last meeting. I have served on several boards and commissions and there are rules and organized ways to handle meetings. This “good-ole-boy” system does not work for me. Like the saying, if you always do what you have always done, you will get what you always got.”

Administrator Caime said, “You are a Commission of this County appointed by the County Council and you do have certain duties and powers as per state law. You work for the citizens of Laurens County not County Council.”

Chair Weeks said, “I get really discouraged when you try really, really hard to do what we all have been doing. All the staff helped us through this revised ordinance to only get blown apart.”

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS – Commissioner Copeland requested that the Commission not meet in July based on the information forthcoming from the County Council.

ADJOURNMENT - Having no further business, there was a CONSENSUS to adjourn at 6:51 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Betty C. Walsh
Laurens County Clerk to Council