

CALLED EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
Joint Meeting with Planning Commission and Edgefield County Water and Sewer Authority
July 30, 2019
6 PM
County Council Chambers

Instrument Book Page
201900003182 OR 1755 274

The Edgefield County Council held a called meeting at 6:00 P. M. Tuesday, July 30, 2019 in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street, Edgefield, SC. Notice of this meeting was provided to Edgefielddaily.com, The Edgefield Advertiser and others as requested.

County Council Members present

Scott Cooper, Chairman
Albert Talbert, Vice Chairman
Arthur Biggs, Councilman
Dean Campbell, Councilman
Dr. Jacqueline Kennion, Councilwoman

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OR Book 1755 Page 274 - 279

Planning Commission Members present

James Burt, Chairman
Frank Gabriel, Commission Member
James Johnson, Commission Member
James Oliver, Commission Member
John Pettigrew, Commission Member

Others present

Tommy Paradise, County Administrator
Hart Clark, Building and Planning Director
Kevin Singletary, County Planner
Jennifer Gilley, Clerk to Council
Ginny Wall, Clerk for Planning Commission
John Ford, Ford and Company
and others as per list attached

Planning Commission Members absent

Faye Adams, Commission Member
George Thornton, Vice Chairman

Chairman Cooper called the meeting to order. He then gave the invocation and The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited.

Topics of Discussion

1) Opening Remarks – Scott Cooper

Chairman Cooper opened the meeting with the following remarks:

“I want to thank each and every member of both boards, as well as the Edgefield County Water and Sewer Authority for investing your time to be here this evening. I also appreciate John Ford and his associates from Robert and Company being here this evening.

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I want to recognize each member of the Planning Commission, as well as county staff, who diligently labored on our Comprehensive Plan, which County Council passed in its third reading in June, over the course of the last 15 months. The average citizen really has no idea how much time you invested in study, brainstorming as well as execution on what County Council and staff believe is a great plan.

Some members of Council followed this effort very intently, but not all of us. Therefore one of the purposes of tonight is to bring all three boards, Planning Commission, County Council and the Water and Sewer authority up to speed on what our goals should be as we move forward for the next 12 months, building on the Comprehensive Plan we just passed to create Land Use Ordinances to ensure our historic county grows in an aesthetically pleasing way, which retains our quality of life, while also at the same time ensuring we don't limit economic growth and protect private property rights.

The second purpose of tonight is to ensure the Planning Commission has some clear direction as we move forward. When looking at our County, and how it is positioned in a region which is growing and changing rapidly, I believe each of us here tonight believe this is one of the most important items on our agenda for the next year, that is why we are investing the time.

While individuals are selected to speak on certain topics, the purpose of tonight is to be a discussion, where everyone can get questions answered. I just ask that when you have a point or question, that you raise your hand, and be as succinct as possible, so we can cover as much ground as possible.

With that, I would like to turn it over to our County Administrator to start point 2."

2) Planning Commission's Role and Responsibilities

Mr. Paradise told everyone the Planning Commission is the voice for the community and citizens. He said the Planning Commission provides insight on anticipated growth and how to management that growth to County Council. He said the County has just recently finished the Comprehensive Plan and the staff will begin working with Robert and Company very soon on the Land Management Ordinance. Mr. Paradise asked what the Planning Commission expects to come up in the next year. He asked what County Council can do to guide the Planning Commission in the upcoming year and if there are any road blocks expected by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Pettigrew said that he thinks it would be beneficial to have someone from the Edgefield County School District attend this meeting and others like it. He said they will also face hurdles with growth, especially with over 700 new homes been approved within the last year. Chairman Cooper said the he has been in contact with Kevin O'Gorman, Superintendent, and they have discussed some ideas regarding the growth.

3) Importance of Comprehensive Plan

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Instrument Book Page
201900003182 OR 1755 276

Mr. Ford told everyone that he was involved in the public hearings, steering committee meetings as well as comments from the public and County Council with the Comprehensive Plan. He said the Comprehensive Plan is only a starting point and is never completely finished. He explained the Comprehensive Plan will always be changing and adapting to what is best for Edgefield County. He went on to say the Land Management Ordinance will be more detailed and focused on how to implement the Comprehensive Plan. He said the Comprehensive Plan gave a launching point for the LMO. Mr. Ford also said that he believes staff will learn more about the county during the LMO process. He said staff will have to figure out how to plan the growth that is coming. He said staff will need to find a balance with zoning regulations that allows property owners to be able to use their properties in the ways they see fit while preserving the feel and appearance of the community.

4) Review the Land Management Ordinance Development Plan

Mr. Ford reviewed the LMO Planning Process that was outlined in the handout he provided. It read:

August 2019 – Organization and Preparation of Planning Schedule

- Task 1 – Confirm requirements, participants and schedule
- Task 2.1 – Prepare Community Participation Plan
- Task 2.2 – Advertise Public Outreach Kickoff and Listening Meetings

September 2019 – Steering Committee Meeting #1 & Public Outreach Kickoff

- Task 3 – Complete Branding Plan & Publicity Release
- Task 4.1.1 – Issues Meeting with Elected, Appointed, & Interested Stakeholders (50%)
- Task 4.2.1 – Schedule Public Listening Meetings

October 2019 – Issues Public Outreach Meeting #1 and Steering Committee #2

- Task 4.1.2 – Hold Public Listening Meetings at four locations in County
- Task 4.2.1 – Identify Issues with Elected, Appointed, & Interested Stakeholders (50%)
- Task 5.1 – Consultants prepare Initial Draft Annotated Outline

November 2019 – Steering Committee Meeting #3 & Big Ideas Meeting with Council

- Task 5.2 – Review Annotated Outline with Steering Committee
- Task 6.1.1 – Identify LMO Scenarios for Text and Maps
- Task 6.2.1 – Big Ideas Meeting with Committee and Council

December 2019 – Steering Committee Meeting #4 & 2nd Big Ideas Meeting with Council

- Task 6.1.2 – Concepts Draft of Land Management Text & Maps (With Multiple Scenarios)
- Task 6.2.2 – Follow-up Big Ideas Meeting and Compare with Draft Annotated Outline

January 2020 – Public Outreach Meeting #2 and Steering Committee Meeting #5

- Task 6.1.3 – Review Draft Land Management Text & Recommended Scenarios

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Instrument Book Page
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February 2020 – Public Workshops (Meetings #3 + #4) and Steering Committee Meeting #6

- Task 6.1.4 – Review Draft Land Management Text & Recommended Maps

March 2020 – Final Steering Committee Review Draft with Staff & 1st Reading by County Council

5) Zoning/Rezoning Issues

Chairman Cooper asked Mr. Hare to speak about how this will affect the Edgefield County Water and Sewer Authority. Mr. Hare said the growth at the lower end of Edgefield County is their main focus. He said they expect to be servicing approximately 1,000 new homes in the near future. He said they also need to expect to upgrade or replace the existing system due to its age. He said an upgraded or new system would allow them to effectively serve the citizens and handle the expected growth. Mr. Hare also noted the ECWSA does not receive tax money so they will have to fund the new or upgraded system with the income they get from the water and sewer that is provided. He did say the ECWSA has a reliable water source with the Savannah River. He explained they are permitted to pump 20 million gallons a day and currently pump less than half of their maximum. He said on average they pump approximately 4 million gallons a day. He said in the summer they typically pump 7 million gallons a day and in the winter they typically pump 3 million gallons a day. Mr. Hare closed his comments by saying they also have to be sure they're compliant with the EPA and DHEC guidelines which can be costly.

Councilman Campbell said that because the Comprehensive Plan was so important and the Land Management Ordinance is also just as important he asked the Planning Commission to really do a "deep dive" to understand this as well as possible. He explained that he believes if they really study and research this, they can have the best copy possible come to Council for approval in the future. He said he would like to see everyone involved go above and beyond. He said everything should be transparent and open to the public. He said he would like to see everyone be inclusive so it is a very diverse ordinance. He explained he would like everyone to go beyond the requirements and be sure the citizens understand the "why" behind all of the choices. He said there is no penalty for doing more than what is required and he thinks if everyone, Council included, thinks this way the LMO will serve Edgefield County well. Councilman Campbell noted that he isn't singling the Planning Commission out, he said he expects all parties involved to do these things including Council but he knows that the Planning Commission has to approve it before sending the LMO to Council.

Mr. Pettigrew asked if the LMO is where the conditions are set for the zoning classifications. Mr. Ford said the LMO is used to establish the uses for each zoning class. He went on to say that the LMO is also used to enforce the zoning guidelines. He said staff will use the process of developing the LMO to determine not only who/what will be allowed to come to Edgefield County but also who cannot be brought to Edgefield County and why. He said staff can work on things that they find to open the county up for additional economic development opportunities.

Mr. Clark said that Paige Hadley would keep updates flowing as they come in and he would be sure to keep everyone updated. He also said there are many current ordinances that are old and

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disorganized and he believes this process will help clean some of those up. Mr. Singletary added that a lot of the county's current ordinances are brought in from other counties and he would like to see the LMO be written specific to Edgefield County.

Mr. Ford said they would develop the zoning and uses depending on how the County wants to control the growth. He also said they would develop overlay districts to help keep areas of the County retain the rural feel while still allowing growth.

6) Development Concerns

Mr. Oliver said he has concerns about the development being too dense and unplanned. He said he wants to see more focus on areas that may cause traffic congestion. He also expressed concerns about when and how to handle growth.

Mr. Burt expressed concerns regarding development in the Merriwether area and Northside.

Mr. Paradise said that he came from Aiken where they have very strict regulations and he would like to see the Edgefield County regulations be tailored to Edgefield County and the different areas in the County.

Mr. Ford stated that he would also like to see the State regulations into account when staff is developing the LMO. He went on to say that he believes the best way to move forward would be to look at the current chapters and see what needs to change and what needs to remain intact. He also suggested getting feedback from the developers. He explained they would have good feedback and may be able to name specific things that are deal makers versus deal breakers.

Mr. Clark said that he would like to see some zoning "clean-up" be done along Hwy 25 but he expected push back from that area. Mr. Oliver agreed with Mr. Clark. Mr. Singletary said he believes Hwy 25 can handle the development that will be coming but that it will have to be organized and the areas identified.

Mr. Ford said that in his experience the majority of people are open to zoning as long as everything is explained and handled in a transparent matter.

7) Development of an Action Agenda

Chairman Cooper asked if anyone had anything to add to the calendar that Mr. Ford presented in topic #4. There were no additions made to the calendar. Mr. Ford asked if invitations to the public meetings need to be sent to any specific groups for their feedback. Chairman Cooper said that he thought the Edgefield County School District, Planning Commission, County Council, Edgefield County Water and Sewer Authority Board, developers in Edgefield County, Fire Board members and the Edgefield County Sheriff's Office should be notified of meeting dates. He went on to ask everyone in attendance to send available dates in October to Mr. Singletary, since he would be

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scheduling the meetings. Councilwoman Kennion said she would like to notify all of the churches of the public meeting dates. Councilman Campbell agreed with Councilwoman Kennion and said that he would like to see several variations of notifications used to try and reach as many of the citizens as possible, not just those online or that read the newspaper. Councilman Campbell noted that all members from the County Council cannot attend the meetings together, so staff would need to be sure to keep all of the County Council members informed. Councilman Campbell said that he would like to see all of the agencies work together like a partnership. He also noted the Comprehensive Plan and talked about implementing branding. He said he would like to see Council move on this in the near future. Councilman Campbell spoke briefly on the Comprehensive Plan, specifically pages 9.1, 9.2, and 9.4. Councilman Campbell asked Mr. Hare if he knew of anything Council could do to help the ECWSA. Mr. Hare said that he would like to know what utilities are available in each area including broadband service, Water and Sewer, cell service, etc. Councilman Campbell agreed and staff will also need to plan to participate with agencies that will have effects on the county soon. He noted Fort Gordon and the Cyber Project as an example. Councilman Campbell briefly spoke about page 9.3 on the Comprehensive Plan. He said he would like to see people assigned to some of the projects listed. He said there may need to be some ad hoc committees created but that progress wouldn't be made by simply talking about the items on the list. He went on to say he thought the ad hoc committees should have representation from the Economic Development Committee, staff, Council and others. Councilman Campbell closed his comments by noting page 9.6 in the Comprehensive Plan, saying he would like to see Council go ahead and move forward with setting up meetings with the Towns of Johnston, Edgefield and Trenton. He said staff needs to start working on getting specific plans on paper so that responsible parties can start carrying out these plans.

Prior to the adjournment, Chairman Cooper wanted to recognize John Pettigrew. He told everyone that Mr. Pettigrew was officially resigning from the Planning Commission. Chairman Cooper thanked Mr. Pettigrew for his hard work and dedication to Edgefield County and the Planning Commission.

Adjourn

Councilman Talbert made the motion to adjourn at 7:44PM, seconded by Councilman Biggs. Motion passed unanimously.

Edgefield County Council



H. Scott Cooper, Chair

ATTEST



Jennifer L. Gilley, Clerk to Council