

*Jasper County Planning Commission  
358 Third Avenue  
Ridgeland, SC 29936  
843-717-3650 phone  
843-726-7707 fax*

**Minutes of the September 13, 2022  
Regular Scheduled Meeting**

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

**Members Absent:** Mr. Arthur Rothenberg

**Staff Present:** Ms. Lisa Wagner

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/channel/UCBmloqX05cKAsHm\\_ggXCJIA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmloqX05cKAsHm_ggXCJIA)

**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. Jenkins motioned to approve the Agenda as published, seconded by Dr. Butler. The Commission Members present voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

**Approval of Minutes:** Dr. Bostick motioned to approve the Minutes of the **August 09, 2022** Meeting, seconded by Dr. Butler. Mr. Waite pointed out a clerical error on page 1 of the Minutes regarding the tax map number for the re-zoning request at 5787 Lowcountry Drive. The Commission Members present voted unanimously in favor of the motion with the correction being made to the tax map number.

**New Business:**

**Zoning Text Amendment- Article 7:5, Maximum Height:** Ms. Wagner said currently, Article 7:5 of the Jasper County Zoning Ordinance, has a maximum building height requirement of 35' measured from the average finished grade elevation at the building line to the mean roof height. In 2007 when the current Zoning Ordinance was adopted, Jasper County did not have firefighting apparatus available to fight fires in structures that were more than 35' in height, which was the reason for the building height limitation. Over the years, Jasper County has acquired new apparatus and while an increase in building height is not appropriate for all areas of Jasper County, especially the rural areas, the proposed zoning text amendment would allow for an increased building height in areas where there is a public water distribution system and where there is adequate firefighting equipment available which is capable of

fighting a structure fire to safely accommodate the increased building height. The Fire Chief would be required to review and approve any building height increase. Staff recommends approval of the proposed zoning text amendment as outlined above.

Dr. Bostick asked Ms. Wagner if the county currently has any buildings over 35 feet and if this amendment would include dry hydrants. Ms. Wagner said there are not any buildings over 35 feet in Jasper County and this amendment does not include dry hydrants. Dr. Bostick asked what triggered this amendment. Ms. Wagner said the County has received a couple of requests for variances to allow an increase in building height. She said in one case, the Fire Chief told one of the applicants they did not have a problem with the height increase.

Mr. Waite asked what the building height is in the City of Hardeeville and Town of Ridgeland. Ms. Wagner said Hardeeville's building height is 50' except in the Residential and Rural Agricultural Zoning Districts, which allows a 40' maximum building height.

Dr. Butler was concerned about allowing buildings to be 50' tall in residential areas. She asked why we aren't providing the same protection for residences as Hardeeville provides. Ms. Wagner said Hardeeville has a lot more zoning districts than the County does, and the County has a lot more rural areas than Hardeeville does.

Chairman Pinckney asked what areas in the County have the appropriate fire fighting apparatus and are located on a public water distribution system. Ms. Wagner said she thinks it is the Okatie area, Levy area, and Point South area although she is not completely certain about the fire apparatus.

After much discussion about some of the rural areas changing in the future, the types of structures that can be built in the residential zoning district, and whether or not the proposed ordinance should mirror Hardeeville's building heights, **Dr. Bostick motioned to accept Staff's recommendations to amend Article 7:5 Maximum Height, seconded by Ms. Ferguson. The Commission Members present voted unanimously in favor of the motion.**

#### **Discussion:**

**Sidewalk Regulations:** Ms. Wagner said at last month's meeting there was some discussion about sidewalks. Article 8 of the Jasper County Land Development Regulations are *General Subdivision Design Standards* and Section 8.9 contains criteria for sidewalks. The regulations give clear guidance for the DSR/Planning Commission to determine when sidewalks are necessary for the safety of residents within any subdivision.

**Open Discussion:** Chairman Pinckney asked Ms. Ferguson to give a brief update about the Affordable Housing Meeting that took place in Hardeeville. Ms. Ferguson said it was a fact-finding meeting to identify if people in the community felt there were resources available for affordable housing or if there were particular resources people would like to see offered. She said it was not just about housing, but also included other aspects of the community.

Chairman Pinckney said there will also be evaluations for Hampton, Beaufort and Colleton Counties. He said some of the things that the Financial Institutions take a look at include the aesthetics of an existing

community, credit scores, and debt ratio. He said there is a lot of heirs' property in Jasper County and families of these heirs' property needs to be made aware of how to take quiet title actions so they can build on their property.

Dr. Butler said she was contacted by someone who thought the Planning Commission may be the point of contact for encouraging color-coded street name signs. She said Beaufort County uses different colored road name signs for county roads, state roads and private roads so that people know who to contact when there is a problem with a specific road. Dr. Butler asked Ms. Wagner if she had a chance to look at this matter to see if it is something that is appropriate for the Planning Commission to pursue. Ms. Wagner said it would require an amendment to the Road Naming Ordinance, which comes from Emergency Services, but she thinks it is appropriate for the Planning Commission to suggest such an ordinance to Jasper County.

Dr. Bostick asked if there would be a large expense involved with changing the road signs to color coded signs and how much of a problem is that for Jasper County. Ms. Wagner said the signs for state roads would not change because they are always green. She said moving forward, new road signs could achieve the color changes without a problem, but the problem will be changing out county road signs and private road signs. She said she does not know the cost that would be involved, and she would have to look into that.

There was more discussion about affordable housing as it relates to income, mortgage insurance, and the difference between affordable housing and subsidized housing.

Dr. Bostick asked about the public meeting for the I-95 widening project. Ms. Wagner said it is September 15<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm.

There was more discussion about the road signs. Mr. Waite said a lot of people don't know who maintains the roads they live on, and he thinks the color coded signs would be a good idea, although there is an expense involved with changing the existing signs. Chairman Pinckney said an ordinance like this should go through the County Council, because all road names should be entered into the GPS system. He said some of the private roads in Beaufort County do not show up in GPS.

Dr. Butler asked if Article 19 of the Jasper County Zoning Ordinance, *Violations, Penalties and Enforcement*, needs to be re-examined because it talks about filing a report with the Deputy County Administrator of Development Services. Ms. Wagner said it should be re-examined. She said that particular ordinance was adopted in 2007 and has not been amended; however, the County amended Chapter 10 of the Jasper County Code of Ordinances, *Public Nuisances*, which talks about violations, penalties, and refers to the Code Enforcement Officer which is in place. Dr. Butler asked if the Planning Commission could get a report from the Code Enforcement Officer and Ms. Wagner said she would make a request.

Mr. Waite asked about impact fees. Ms. Wagner said she thinks the Planning Commission will be receiving a report soon, if not a presentation. She said the report has been completed and it will come to the Planning Commission prior to being forwarded to County Council for action.

**Adjourn:** Dr. Bostick motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Waite. The Commission Members present voted unanimously in favor of the motion. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Wagner