Minutes
Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
April 2, 2024 • 6:00 P.M.

Stephens County Historic Courthouse Courtroom

Present for Meeting: Vice-Chairman Scott Stroud, Commissioners Greg McFarlin, Mark Randall, and Cody Cobb; Planning Director Christian Hamilton; Planning Clerk Samantha Turner

Vice-Chairman Scott Stroud called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Cody Cobb opened the meeting with prayer.

I. Roll Call (Planning Chair Announcements on Table)

Mr. Hamilton called the roll with the following present: Scott Stroud, Greg McFarlin, Mark Randall, and Cody Cobb

II. Approve Agenda

A motion was made by Greg McFarlin, seconded by Cody Cobb, to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.**

III. Approve Minutes

1. March 5, 2024 – Regular Meeting

A motion was made by Cody Cobb, seconded by Greg McFarlin, to approve the minutes as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.**

IV. Hearing on Text Amendments, Rezoning, Map Amendments, Conditional Uses and Variances

1. Variance Request from James Rob and Christal Taylor, N. Broad River Road, Toccoa. Parcel 034 039. Property is currently zoned as residential multi. The proposed action to be taken is to grant a variance to allow for full sewer hook-up and extended stay.

   Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the request. Rob Taylor, Carl, Oliver, and Christal Taylor spoke in favor. Mr. Taylor shared a print out of the plan for the park. He stated that he is only asking for 50 % of the sites be made for extended-stay. Mr.

Taylor stated that there will also be restrooms and bath and laundry facilities on-site. Mr. Oliver stated that he is in favor of extended-stay for the park. Mrs. Taylor stated that she's in favor and has had others reach out to her requesting information for the park. She stated they, as the owners, will be asking why they need to stay for an extended amount of time at the time the reservation is made. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone would like to speak in opposition of the request. Sandy Wills, Lori Watkins, Sherrie Jeffers, and Charles Wills spoke in opposition. Mrs. Wills stated that she is in opposition of the park in general, not just against the extended-stay. Ms. Watkins stated that she is concerned about what kind of people this will attract and does have her mother living in her home and worries for her safety. She stated that she is also concerned of the pollutants that could enter the river form campsites. Mrs. Jeffers stated that pros to having the campground were more income to the community as well as a low-income housing solution. She stated that she is concerned that extended-stay sites would not be paying the appropriate taxes to the county. She is also concerned that the marshals will not be able to adequately monitor the length of stay for campers. And that extended-stay will greatly impact fire and police in the county. Mr. Wills stated that he is in opposition of the park. He shared some of the same concerns as others in opposition. Mr. Taylor was granted a three minute rebuttal. Mr. Taylor stated that he has been in contact with Shad Slocum at the Stephens County Health Department and does have meetings lined up to discuss the full sewer hook-up, as well as a meeting set up to meet with the EPD on site. Mr. Hamilton closed the public hearing.

2. Variance Request from Jason and Ginelle Kohl, 690 Chateau Village Drive, Martin, GA 30557. Parcel 065A 084A. Property is currently zoned as residential single. The proposed action to be taken is to grant a variance to allow for placement of a garage within the front yard setback.

   Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the request. Ginelle and Jason Kohl spoke in favor. Both stated that due to the orientation of the home, the garage will actually fall in the front yard setback. Because of the topography of the land, that is the only good place for the garage. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone would like to speak in opposition of the request. No one spoke in opposition. Mr. Hamilton closed the public hearing.

3. Variance Request from Robert A. Mullinax, 976 Highway 123, Toccoa, GA 30577. Parcel 041G 084. Property is currently zoned as commercial industrial. The proposed action to be taken is to grant a variance of 20 ft. to the 80 ft. front yard setback, for a total of 60 ft. front yard setback.

   Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the request. Robert Mullinax spoke in favor. Mr. Mullinax stated that he is looking to expand his business and needs additional floor space. He stated that he is not wanting to build on the existing slab close to the road, but behind it. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone would like to speak in opposition of the request. No one spoke in opposition. Mr. Hamilton closed the public hearing.

4. Variance Request from Alaina LaCount, 3337 Highway 17 Alternate, Toccoa, GA 30577. Parcel 043 301. Property is currently zoned as commercial general. The proposed action to

be taken is to grant a variance of 18 ft. to the required 30 ft. vegetative buffer on the left yard setback, for a total of 12 ft. required vegetative buffer.

Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the request. Alaina LaCount, on behalf of The Wright Credit Union, spoke in favor. She stated they are just trying to make sure there is adequate room to go around the building for a drive-thru. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone would like to speak in opposition of the request. No one spoke in opposition. Mr. Hamilton closed the public hearing.

5. Rezoning Request from Kyle Gilman, Golf Ridge Way, Toccoa, GA 30577. Parcel 056 124. Property is currently zoned as agricultural residential. The proposed action to be taken is to rezone to commercial general to utilize the property for retail trade, lodging facilities, and assembly hall space.

   Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the request. Kyle Gilman spoke in favor. Mr. Gilman stated they already have plans to mitigate any noise pollution from the event venue. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone would like to speak in opposition of the request. No one spoke in opposition. Mr. Hamilton closed the public hearing.

6. Conditional Use Request from Kyle Gilman, Golf Ridge Way, Toccoa, GA 30577. Parcel 056 124. Property is currently zoned as agricultural residential. The proposed action to be taken is to grant a conditional use permit for an event venue.

   Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the request. Kyle Gilman spoke in favor. Mr. Gilman stated they already have plans to mitigate any noise pollution from the event venue. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone would like to speak in opposition of the request. No one spoke in opposition. Mr. Hamilton closed the public hearing.

V. Committee Reports

VI. Old Business

VII. New Business

1. Variance Request from James Rob and Christal Taylor, N. Broad River Road, Toccoa. Parcel 034 039. Property is currently zoned as residential multi. The proposed action to be taken is to grant a variance to allow for full sewer hook-up and extended stay.

   A motion was made by Cody Cobb, seconded by Greg McFarlin, to approve the variance request to allow for full sewer hook-up and to deny the variance request to allow for extended stay. **Motion carried unanimously.**

2. Variance Request from Jason and Ginelle Kohl, 690 Chateau Village Drive, Martin, GA 30557. Parcel 065A 084A. Property is currently zoned as residential single. The proposed action to be taken is to grant a variance to allow for placement of a garage within the front yard setback.

A motion was made by Greg McFarlin, seconded by Cody Cobb, to approve the variance request. **Motion carried unanimously.**

3. Variance Request from Robert A. Mullinax, 976 Highway 123, Toccoa, GA 30577. Parcel 041G 084. Property is currently zoned as commercial industrial. The proposed action to be taken is to grant a variance of 20 ft. to the 80 ft. front yard setback, for a total of 60 ft. front yard setback.

   A motion was made by Mark Randall, seconded by Greg McFarlin, to approve the variance request. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4. Variance Request from Alaina LaCount, 3337 Highway 17 Alternate, Toccoa, GA 30577. Parcel 043 301. Property is currently zoned as commercial general. The proposed action to be taken is to grant a variance of 18 ft. to the required 30 ft. vegetative buffer on the left yard setback, for a total of 12 ft. required vegetative buffer.

   A motion was made by Cody Cobb, seconded by Mark Randall, to approve the variance request. **Motion carried unanimously.**

5. Rezoning Request from Kyle Gilman, Golf Ridge Way, Toccoa, GA 30577. Parcel 056 124. Property is currently zoned as agricultural residential. The proposed action to be taken is to rezone to commercial general to utilize the property for retail trade, lodging facilities, and assembly hall space.

   A motion was made by Greg McFarlin, seconded by Cody Cobb, to approve the rezoning request. **Motion carried unanimously.**

6. Conditional Use Request from Kyle Gilman, Golf Ridge Way, Toccoa, GA 30577. Parcel 056 124. Property is currently zoned as agricultural residential. The proposed action to be taken is to grant a conditional use permit for an event venue.

   A motion was made by Greg McFarlin, seconded by Cody Cobb, to approve the conditional use permit. **Motion carried unanimously.**

7. Election of Officers.

   A motion was made by Greg McFarlin, seconded by Cody Cobb, to appoint Vice-Chairman Scott Stroud as the Chairman of the Stephens County Planning Commission. **Motion carried unanimously.**
   A motion was made by Cody Cobb, seconded by Mark Randall, to appoint Brett Ivester as the Vice-Chairman of the Stephens County Planning Commission. **Motion carried unanimously.**

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, on motion made by Cody Cobb, seconded by Greg McFarlin, the regular meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Approved this 7 day of May, 2024.

Scott Stroud, Chairman

Samantha Turner, Planning Clerk

Stephens County Planning Commission Meeting

Sign-in Sheet

April 2, 2024

J. WOODFIELD		
Kyle Gilmore		
Christal Taylor		
Rob Taylor		
Dianne Taylor		
Ginelle Kohl		
Jason Kohl		
RON BUNNER		
Alaina LaCount		
Sherrie Jeffers		