

**RICHLAND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**February 6, 2017**

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*[Members Present: Patrick Palmer, Ed Greenleaf [in at 1:18], Beverly Frierson, Stephen Gilchrist, Christopher Anderson, David Tuttle, Wallace Brown, Sr.; Absent: Heather Cairns, Bill Theus]*

Called to order: 1:08 pm

[Recorder malfunction at start of meeting]

MR. BROWN: - officers, Mr. Stephen Gilchrist as Chairman and Ms. Heather Cairns as Vice-Chairman be re-elected.

CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, there's a motion –

MR. ANDERSON: I'll second.

CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Second? Alright. All those in favor of keeping the current officers in place please signify by raising your hand. All opposed?

*[Approved: Palmer, Frierson, Gilchrist, Anderson, Tuttle, Brown; Absent for vote: Greenleaf; Absent: Cairns, Theus]*

CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Let me thank my Commission Members for allowing me to serve as your Chairman this last year. You have certainly been very helpful to me and in the role that I've taken on as Chairman, and I certainly appreciate the opportunity to serve you again and look forward to serving in this role for another year. The Consent Agenda.

MR. TUTTLE: Mr. Chairman, if I may I'd –

CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, sir.

MR. TUTTLE: - like to make a motion that we approve the items on the Consent Agenda with the exceptions of items number 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6.

MR. ANDERSON: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. Moved and properly seconded. All in favor –  
2 does that include the Road Names as well?

3 MR. TUTTLE: Yeah the, obviously it's the Road Names and the Minutes.

4 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, great. Second? Is that right?

5 MR. ANDERSON: Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: All in favor signify by raising your hand.

7 *[Approved: Palmer, Frierson, Gilchrist, Anderson, Tuttle, Brown; Absent for vote:*  
8 *Greenleaf; Absent: Cairns, Theus]*

9 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Alright. Case No. 1. And Tracy, are there any  
10 amendments to the Agenda, other than what –

11 MS. HEGLER: No, sir.

12 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay.

13 **CASE NO. 16-041 MA:**

14 MS. HEGLER: Good afternoon, Chairman again, and the rest of the Commission.  
15 We have a new format we're gonna be presenting to you today, and you'll the  
16 presentation on the Board we're kind of excited to show to you. Our GIS Staff in-house  
17 have created these story maps for you so hopefully it'll be a little more interactive when  
18 you have questions about scaling in and out and zooming in and out it'll be a little easier  
19 to do, so you'll notice a little different format. Information all there kind of in one place.  
20 The first Map Amendment before you today is 16-041, the Applicant is Mr. Robert  
21 Fuller. Located on Clemson Road, 10.38 acres currently zoned Rural and the request is  
22 for Office and Institutional. This is a property parcel and a matter that's been to you  
23 before as recently as 2014 when County Council denied a General Commercial

1 rezoning request. The zoning district summary for Office and Institutional, of course, it's  
2 intended to accommodate just that, office, institutional, and certain types of residential  
3 uses. These are in areas where the characteristic is neither General Commercial nor  
4 exclusively residential. The site is surrounded by some commercial development but  
5 mostly residential developments to the southeast and west. It does contain frontage  
6 along Clemson Road which is a five lane undivided minor arterial. It's a few, maybe  
7 about half a mile from the intersection of Hardscrabble and Clemson Road. The  
8 Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 2015 identifies this area as Neighborhood  
9 Medium-Density in its future land use category, as well as it's within a Neighborhood  
10 Activity Center. Under the Neighborhood Medium-Density these are areas that include  
11 neighborhood medium-density residential districts and supporting neighborhood  
12 commercial scale uses. They should really be a transition between low density  
13 neighborhoods and those of mixed residential or higher density urban environments.  
14 Nonresidential development may be considered, particularly along main road arterials  
15 and within a contextually appropriate distance from the intersection of a major or  
16 primary arterial. Again, I mentioned this is also within a Neighborhood Activity Center.  
17 These are areas that should provide for commercial and institutional uses that are  
18 necessary for the day to day functions and demands of the surrounding neighborhood.  
19 It should also supply limited local office space. So given all of that the proposed  
20 rezoning would be, in Staff's opinion, consistent with the objectives of the  
21 Comprehensive Plan. It's in character with the local land uses and desired development  
22 pattern. The site is not located at the commercial development at the intersection, but it  
23 is a short distance away and, of course, being asked is the Office and Institutional, not

1 Commercial, so that would seem an appropriate transitional zoning moving east of the  
2 intersection. For these reasons Staff recommended approval.

3 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. Any additional questions for our Staff? Robert  
4 Fuller, the Applicant? And when you come to the podium please give us your name and  
5 your address for the Record, please.

6 **TESTIMONY OF ROBERT FULLER:**

7 MR. FULLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Robert Fuller, my office  
8 address is 1728 Main Street, Columbia. I am an attorney and am here representing an  
9 Applicant, potential developer of this 10.5 acre tract on Clemson Road. The property  
10 has been before this Council on one occasion before for a transition out of the Rural  
11 designation that was placed on it in 1977, but that was for a General Commercial  
12 project that was opposed substantially by neighborhood residents. This proposal that  
13 we're bringing to you today is for Office Institutional which as you have already heard is  
14 consistent with the Comprehensive Plan of the County. We have had discussions with  
15 the County Staff and we've also had publicly attended neighborhood meetings to review  
16 the possible plans and the potential plans for this, this site. It was under a consideration  
17 as part of the penny tax road development plan that a new entrance be located on a  
18 portion of this property which reduced the size of the property actually by a couple of  
19 acres to gain a new entrance into the subdivisions off of Clemson Road. This property  
20 would continue to front on Clemson Road at Hardscrabble but it is less intensive or  
21 intrusive to the residential properties that sit behind it. The probable use, the potential  
22 use and the use that has been asked for is to accommodate a residential community for  
23 seniors and memory care patients and residents on the property. About eight acres of it

1 would be accommodated, six or eight acres of it, would be accommodated by that,  
2 adjoined by a potential for some additional office/institutional in character with that low  
3 intensity use, and a section of the property is being reserved for containment of water  
4 and the infrastructure development that would assist with the development of the  
5 property and the protection of the adjacent properties. We have had various meetings  
6 with the neighboring people, the Councilmembers, and with the Staff to try to identify  
7 where difficulties may come from the people in the area and we have really received a  
8 pretty warm reception, certainly relative to many of the things I see it's certainly been,  
9 been one that was welcomed for accommodation. It is an out-of-state regional  
10 developer who has been in conversation with the, with the neighbors and has opened  
11 the invitation for additional discussions. These uses, as you well know, are very low  
12 intensity traffic producers. The older community residents and particularly the memory  
13 care residents do not operate automobiles or do not operate them in the traditional ways  
14 that we see them in residential communities and high commercial uses. The traffic is,  
15 that is created by the staff is on a 24 hour schedule so there's no impact on morning  
16 peaks or afternoon peaks in the traditional sense, it is a, a commodious interchange on  
17 the, on the traffic patterns in the vicinity. We present to you the idea that this is  
18 consistent with the community plans, with the Comprehensive Plans, and is one that  
19 would be a welcomed addition to the community. Mark Chilcott who is a principal of the  
20 company is here if you have questions about the actual presentation of the property in  
21 any way and could address those things if you have concerns about any of that. But this  
22 would be an upscale community asset that would be a credit to the community, and

1 ultimately would serve people who live in the area. It is, it doesn't draw from a wide  
2 range.

3 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Sure. Thank you, Mr. Fuller. Any questions for the  
4 Applicant? Mr. Mark Chilcott? Anything you'd like to add, sir?

5 MR. CHILCOTT: There's nothing I'd like to add.

6 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. Tom DeMint? Come to the podium, sir, if you  
7 wanna speak. If not –

8 MR. DEMINT: I represent the developer.

9 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. That's all we have signed up to speak.  
10 Questions, comments, motions?

11 MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Chair?

12 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, sir.

13 MR. ANDERSON: I'd like to make a motion that we send Case 16-41 to –

14 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Use your mic, we can't hear you.

15 MR. ANDERSON: I'd like to make a motion – can y'all hear me now?

16 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yeah.

17 MR. ANDERSON: To send Case 16-41 MA ahead to Council with a  
18 recommendation of approval.

19 MR. TUTTLE: Second.

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, it's been moved and properly seconded that we  
21 send Case 16-041 MA to Council with a recommendation of approval. All in favor signify  
22 by raising your hand. All opposed?

1 *[Approved: Palmer, Frierson, Gilchrist, Anderson, Tuttle, Brown; Opposed: Greenleaf;*  
2 *Absent: Cairns, Theus]*

3 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. One opposition. We are a recommending Body  
4 to County Council and they will meet again in these Chambers on February the 28<sup>th</sup>. So  
5 feel free to come back at that time. Thank you. Before we get into the next case I do  
6 want read a statement into the Record. Dear Mr. Gilchrist, I must request to be excused  
7 from participating or voting in discussions or voting on Agenda Item No. 16-042 MA  
8 regarding the rezoning at the corner of Rimer Pond Road, which is scheduled for review  
9 and discussion at today's Planning Commission meeting. It is my understanding of the  
10 Rules of Conduct, provisions of the ethics, Governmental Accountability Act, and  
11 campaign reform laws that I am related to the Applicant I will be unable to participate in  
12 this matter through discussion or voting. I would therefore respectfully request that you  
13 indicate for the Record that I did not participate in any discussion or vote relating to this  
14 item representing a potential conflict of interest. I would further request that you allow  
15 and direct this letter to be printed as part of the official Minutes, and excuse me from  
16 such votes or deliberations, and note such in the Minutes. Thank you for your  
17 consideration in this matter. Sincerely, Patrick Palmer. For the Record. Okay. Next  
18 Case.

19 **CASE NOL. 16-042 MA:**

20 MS. HEGLER: Case 16-42, the Applicant is Hugh Palmer, the location's the  
21 corner of Longtown Road East and Rimer Pond Road. It's 5.23 acres or a portion of a  
22 31 acre tract. Current zoning is RS-MD, the request is for RC, our Rural Commercial  
23 zoning. This was again, you've seen this before, it was part of a rezoning request back

1 in 2015 for also Rural Commercial. That was denied by County Council. There have  
2 been a number of other rezonings around that site, mostly for residential, including as  
3 recently as last year. The Rural Commercial district recognizes the need to provide for  
4 areas within Richland County where residents of the more isolated agricultural, and  
5 rural residential district might need some services and conveniences such as  
6 merchandising. The RC District is proposed to be within or adjacent to residential  
7 neighborhoods where large commercial uses are inappropriate but where small  
8 neighborhood-oriented scale uses are useful and desired. The district is further  
9 designed to be located at or near intersections of major collector roads so as to prevent  
10 the spreading of commercial uses down those corridors. The recently adopted Richland  
11 County Comprehensive Plan identifies this areas as neighborhood, medium-density,  
12 much like the last one. Those are areas where residential neighborhoods of medium  
13 density are preferred. Non-residential development may be considered for location  
14 along main road corridors and within a contextually appropriate distance from the  
15 intersection of a primary arterial. Staff felt that the property is located at such a place,  
16 it's at a traffic junction, it's also near and across the street from institutional uses. The  
17 intent of the RC district is to orient itself primarily to major traffic arteries or areas of  
18 commercial usage. So Staff is of the opinion that the request is in compliance with the  
19 objective of the commercial uses as outlined in the, in the Master Plan or the  
20 Comprehensive Plan, and is consistent with that. So for those reasons Staff  
21 recommended approval.

22 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Alright. Any questions for Staff?

23 MR. GREENLEAF: Mr. Chairman?

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, sir?

2 MR. GREENLEAF: I'd like to know, what was the Staff's recommendation the last  
3 time we saw this piece?

4 MS. HEGLER: It was for approval.

5 MR. GREENLEAF: Approval.

6 MS. HEGLER: Yes, sir.

7 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Any other questions? For Staff?

8 MR. GREENLEAF: Oh, one other question.

9 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, sir, Mr. Greenleaf.

10 MR. GREENLEAF: I notice in the documents provided to us – hold on one  
11 moment. The reference to – I'm sorry, I'm on the wrong one. Forgive me. The reference  
12 to it on page, this is number 9, page 9 of the documents we were provided. Underneath  
13 Zoning History for the General Area, first paragraph references a case, 16-044 MA?

14 MS. HEGLER: Um-hum.

15 MR. GREENLEAF: And that's the one we're voting on today.

16 MS. HEGLER: No, sir.

17 MR. GREENLEAF: Are we certain about that? As I look back into my documents

18 on page –

19 MS. HEGLER: Ahh, we might have the wrong numbers.

20 MR. GREENLEAF: - on page 21. There's reference to 16-044 MA.

21 [Inaudible discussion]

22 MR. GREENLEAF: They're the same numbers.

1 MS. HEGLER: Yeah, you're right. I have on the file that Rimer Pond Road is 16-  
2 42, this is the one Mr. –

3 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Correct.

4 MS. HEGLER: Came in on November 30<sup>th</sup>.

5 MR. GREENLEAF: Details matter.

6 MS. HEGLER: They do, so we, so it's in your –

7 MR. GREENLEAF: The document on page 21 says 16-044 MA and the  
8 reference to a previously approved parcel is the same number. Where's the rub?  
9 What's, what's, what gives?

10 MS. HEGLER: It should be 15-44 cause it was done in '15.

11 MR. GREENLEAF: '15, which one? Which one is 15-44?

12 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: On page 9, isn't that right?

13 MS. HEGLER: The one that's already been done on page 9, the residential one.

14 MR. GREENLEAF: Ahh, thank you. Thank you very much.

15 MS. HEGLER: So 16-44 is the one you'll be seeing next.

16 MR. GREENLEAF: Okay, gotcha. Can we correct on the Record going forward?

17 MS. HEGLER: Certainly.

18 MR. GREENLEAF: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: So noted. Thank you, Mr. Greenleaf.

20 MR. GREENLEAF: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: And for the Record, all of these should be '17 now?

22 MR. TUTTLE: No, I think it's, I think they're saying is when it was submitted.

23 MS. HEGLER: They were submitted in November.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. Alright. Any other questions? We have a number  
2 of persons signed up to speak today and, and I wanna ask you when you come to the  
3 mic that you share with us your name and your address for the Record. Please be  
4 mindful that because we have a number of folk here to speak that when you hear the  
5 little buzzer go off that means that your time is up so that we can give other people an  
6 opportunity to come and, and share their thoughts as well. So thank you for being here  
7 today and thank you for your patience. We do have the Applicant present, is the  
8 Applicant present? Okay, please.

9 **TESTIMONY OF BOYD BROWN:**

10 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name's Boyd Brown. I'm with  
11 Tompkins, Thompson & Brown, Government Affairs, our office is at 1331 Elmwood  
12 Avenue in Columbia. I live at 4323 Kilbourne Road in Columbia. We are here to speak  
13 on behalf of Mr. Hugh Palmer today who you have heard from in the past. And that is in  
14 regards to his rezoning request on Rimer Pond and Longtown Roads. Mr. Palmer has  
15 requested that this become Rural Commercial, and as you've heard the Staff read that  
16 we feel as though this is tailor-made for a Rural Commercial use. Honestly, if you were  
17 to take out the definition for Rural Commercial in the Richland County Land Use Plan  
18 you would feel like this was, it was written primarily for this specific parcel. Personally, I  
19 was a former member of the Richland County Legislative Delegation as well as a  
20 Member of the Central Midlands Planning Council, so have a little familiarity with, with  
21 this land use plan. But going forward from that, if you are looking at this, the tract of land  
22 that Mr. Palmer has asked to have rezoned and if you look to the east of it there's a 28  
23 acre tract that now has 100 home sites on it. The adjacent piece of property to that also

1 has 100, I think 100 home sites on it as well. There's been little to no opposition from  
2 the community on those 200 new homes and, and the traffic that is created with 200  
3 new homes as far as those rezonings have gone. Rural Commercial is designed  
4 specifically for zoning requests such as this, intended to be flexible districts to help  
5 communities just like this. I'll be happy to answer any questions from the Council, I'm  
6 sure there are some.

7 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir. Any questions for the Applicant?  
8 Questions? Thank you, Mr. Brown. You do, Mr. Greenleaf?

9 MR. GREENLEAF: I just wanna verify, just verify the land surrounding the  
10 property excluding the 100 or 200 homes, all this zoned is Rural, correct?

11 MR. BROWN: I would assume so. I think they all kinda fall in line with the zoning  
12 that was passed in 1977, Staff may have a better answer than that -

13 MR. GREENLEAF: Yeah, seems like -

14 MR. BROWN: - than I do.

15 MR. GREENLEAF: - seems like Longtown Road is the dividing switchover from  
16 residential to rural. Thank you.

17 MR. BROWN: It seems, you know, just to answer that or to address that, it  
18 seems like things south of Langford Road as far as the land use plan goes is really  
19 kinda open to developments such as this. When you get, when you get to Langford  
20 Road North it really gets into the Rural zoning.

21 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, Mr. Brown.

22 MR. BROWN: Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, we have Trey Hare? Is that right?

1 **TESTIMONY OF TREY HARE:**

2 MR. HARE: My name's Trey Hare, I'm at 252 Rimer Pond Road. You guys are  
3 all, and ladies, are all familiar with this property and the fact that this is the third time  
4 that we've come up here. More than three times we've showed up and it's been  
5 withdrawn and rescheduled for the week of Thanksgiving, conveniently. Just a quick  
6 reminder that there are no commercial properties on Rimer Pond Road. The only  
7 beneficiary to this zoning being changed is the Applicant who stands to make a large  
8 sum of money. There's hundreds of people that would like to be here today that can't be  
9 here at 1:00 on a Monday afternoon. It's the Applicant's job to show up and get his  
10 zoning changed because he stands to make a lotta money. I'm asking you, they're  
11 asking you to stand with the people that you're serving, stand with the community.  
12 We're highly opposed to it, we continue to show up in large numbers. It's not conducive.  
13 I'd say it was tailor-made to be exactly what it is, it's Rural, it's uniquely Rural. It's very  
14 close to Killian Road and all the surrounding commercial. We're less than three miles  
15 from anything that we want. We're not underserved. Being Rural is our choice, it's a  
16 rural community, it's residential, medium-density property that's in your plan, long-term  
17 plan to remain that way. The graphic that I put in front of you, if you received it, is a  
18 picture of property just like that's changed. We don't want it to look like that. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, Mr. Hare.

20 MS. FRIERSON: I'm sorry, what did he say his last name is?

21 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Hare, Trey Hare. Kathleen Richards.

22 **TESTIMONY OF KATHLEEN RICHARDS:**

1 MS. RICHARDS: I'm Kathleen Richards, my address is 209 Tallon Way in the  
2 Eagle's Glen subdivision, and I'm just here to respectfully request that you support our  
3 community in our, our begging you to retain the uniquely rural, uniquely residential  
4 character of the Rimer Pond Road area and leave it rural and residential. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, Ms. Richards. Elaine Estes?

6 **TESTIMONY OF ELAINE ESTES:**

7 MS. ESTES: My name is Elaine Estes, I live at 319 Longtown Road West,  
8 excuse me, which is less than a mile from where this property is. I have three  
9 grandchildren that I take to school within a mile of my house that I have to pass this.  
10 Here again, we don't want it, we don't need it. I make a lotta trips hauling my  
11 grandchildren around that area and I'm saying five miles maximum. And I could stop at  
12 a service station or convenience store once a week for probably three months and not  
13 have to go to one twice. The same thing if, if we wanted anything to eat, three Subways.  
14 If I needed tires, if this was car, you know, a car place, if I needed tires, if I needed oil  
15 change, within this five mile radius I have numerous options of where to go. This is not  
16 something any of us that live out there, that have chosen to live out there want or need.  
17 We have plenty. We would like to keep it residential. We'd like to keep it rural. And we'd  
18 like to keep our kids safe, because when you have these type of convenience stores  
19 and things like this, unfortunately you end up with an increase in crime. We don't need  
20 that. We don't want that in our, in our area. Thank you so much.

21 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, Ms. Estes. Jay Thompson.

22 **TESTIMONY OF JAY THOMPSON:**

1 MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, lady and gentlemen, my name is  
2 Jay Thompson, I reside at 224 Renfield Lane which is roughly a mile away from the  
3 subject property in question. I would like to speak to four points that are raised in the  
4 Staff Report. One is that the RC zoning is designed for areas that are beyond the limits  
5 of service of municipalities and can receive convenience of merchandising and services;  
6 that does not describe this area. Contrary to Mr. Brown's statement earlier this area is  
7 not tailor-made for this zoning. This area is tailor-made to be as it is as you've heard  
8 today. Second, this zoning is designed for where small neighborhood-oriented  
9 businesses are useful and desired. The proposed zoning change is not useful nor  
10 desired. It is aggressively opposed in the surrounding community. Mr. Greenleaf, you  
11 asked earlier if the surrounding parcels are also zoned Rural, they are not. Many of  
12 them, particularly to the south are residential, medium-density and residential, low-  
13 density. It does not meet the description of an RC zoning. There is also a statement in  
14 the Staff Report that says Staff is of the opinion that the request is in compliance with  
15 the objective for commercial uses as outlined in the suburban future land use  
16 designation. That is not correct. I am holding in my hands a map that says future land  
17 use in priority investment, this is from this Commission, it is available publicly on the  
18 Internet. And if you look at this map this area is right in the middle of neighborhood,  
19 medium-density, not rural. And right above that is neighborhood, low-density. That  
20 directly contradicts this proposed zoning for RC. It does not fit. Last point, the Staff  
21 Report states that approval of the rezoning request – my time is up and I will stop. But  
22 there is no RC anywhere in this area.

23 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

1 MR. BROWN: Mr. Chairman?

2 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, sir, Mr. –

3 MR. BROWN: Can we allow him to complete his point?

4 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Sure.

5 MR. BROWN: He had four points.

6 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Absolutely.

7 MR. THOMPSON: The last point I was gonna make, thank you sir, was that the  
8 Staff Report states that approval of the rezoning request would not be out of character  
9 with the existing surrounding development pattern and zoning districts for the area. I  
10 would challenge anyone to look in the area and find another RC zoned property. Maybe  
11 you find one that's the size of a closet, I think you will find none. And you can extend  
12 that for many miles in every direction, there is not one. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir. Yes, sir, Mr. Greenleaf.

14 MR. GREENLEAF: Mr. Chairman, can we find out the answer to his question? Is  
15 there any other RC in the area?

16 MS. HEGLER: I don't believe there is any. No, sir.

17 MR. GREENLEAF: Okay, thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. Steven Freedenburg?

19 **TESTIMONY OF STEVEN FREEDENBURG:**

20 MR. FREEDENBURG: Steven Freedenburg, 8 Ashville Lane. That's a big act to  
21 follow. I just, there were two, there was one word I heard when they were reading how it  
22 could possibly be approved and I think the word was isolated areas? I do not feel  
23 isolated, I don't know, maybe 10 years ago I felt a little isolated but not anymore. So

1 isolation doesn't exist. Also the gentleman who spoke in favor he said, we feel. Where's  
2 the whole we? We are here saying we don't feel. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir. Nicole Laferno?

4 **TESTIMONY OF NICOLE LAFERNO:**

5 MS. LAFERNO: My name is Nicole Laferno, I live at 136 Muirfield Court West in  
6 Blythewood and I've been a resident in Blythewood my whole life. And I've lived in Long  
7 Creek specifically for nine years, and in the past nine years around me I've noticed quite  
8 a bit of development, the Killian Road area. I do not feel underserved. Currently I have  
9 two small children, one of which goes to Roundtop Elementary. These roads, Rimer  
10 Pond Road, is not a County-maintained road, it's a State-maintained road. That road is  
11 inadequately serving our school at this moment and we do not have even sidewalks for  
12 our children for a safe path to school from our community. What would happen is if this  
13 were allowed to be rezoned it, if a gas station goes to that corner you're gonna have  
14 middle school students running across that road. Right now they walk on a road that  
15 has no shoulder, no safe sidewalks. Right, probably in the next 20 minutes they're  
16 gonna start their path from that middle school to the elementary school and all this is  
17 gonna do is create a safety hazard for our children, and for my children in particular  
18 since I'm a vested member of this community. I really feel like this adds no value to my  
19 community, if anything it takes away from the desirable neighborhood that I live in. And  
20 another thing is we are the last community before you enter Fairfield County. Where are  
21 we gonna stop with the, with – where're we gonna draw this line? We're gonna be urban  
22 all the way up to Fairfield County? Can you, like leave us, please, something? So, thank  
23 you.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you. Benny Sulton?

2 **TESTIMONY OF BENNY SULTON:**

3 MR. SULTON: Good afternoon. My name is Benny Sulton, I live at 201  
4 Runnymede Drive in Longcreek. I've been a resident and a property owner in  
5 Longcreek for 35 years and I just wanna say that all my neighbors who have come up  
6 here before me, I think they put it in words that, that should express to you that we don't  
7 want this. You know, when I bought that property out there in 1982 it was a place for my  
8 children to grow up and my grandchildren, and great grandchildren, and I'm about there  
9 now. And no, we don't want it, we don't need it. It's, it's really, to have a single entity  
10 "person" that's wanting us to, or wanting us to do this, I mean, it's just unbelievable. And  
11 as the lady before me, Nicole just said, I think a legal definition is an attractive nuisance.  
12 If this goes through those kids going across there, it's an attractive nuisance because  
13 they would be going across the street and, you know, posing a danger to them. So I beg  
14 this Commission, don't do this. This is, this is not something we need. You know, when  
15 I, when my wife and I purchased that property we were looking to live in a "rural" area.  
16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir.

18 MR. GREENLEAF: Mr. Chairman?

19 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, sir, Mr. Greenleaf.

20 MR. GREENLEAF: I have one for Mr. Sulton. Did you oppose the previous  
21 development when the 100 and 200 homes went in there?

22 MR. SULTON: No. I am not against residential. Commercial.

23 MR. GREENLEAF: I thought I heard you say about just traffic considerations.

1 MR. SULTON: No, absolutely.

2 MR. GREENLEAF: You're just concerned about the type of business or –

3 MR. SULTON: Absolutely.

4 MR. GREENLEAF: - what goes in the space.

5 MR. SULTON: Yeah, commercial [sic], we welcome commercial [sic, we don't  
6 have any – I don't –

7 AUDIENCE: You mean residential.

8 MR. SULTON: I'm sorry, I'm sorry, residential. I'm having a senior moment.

9 [Laughter]

10 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Mr. Sulton, how long have you been in Longcreek?

11 MR. SULTON: Okay, we bought the property March 1982. We built the house in  
12 1986. And I waited cause developers say one thing, so we bought the property and we  
13 waited to see what they were gonna do. Then we built the house.

14 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. Thank you, sir.

15 MR. GREENLEAF: Okay. Thank you very much.

16 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Kathleen Lacy.

17 **TESTIMONY OF KATHLEEN LACY:**

18 MS. LACY: Good afternoon, my name is Kathleen Lacy, I live at 5 Bang Hound  
19 Way in Longcreek in Blythewood. The land at the intersection of Rimer Pond Road and  
20 Longtown West should not be rezoned as requested by Hugh Palmer. Rezoning this  
21 land to Rural Commercial would serve no benefit to the residents of the area. Morning  
22 and afternoon traffic congestion at this intersection is already a significant problem for  
23 local residents. Adding commercial activity at the dense center of this congestion would

1 only worsen the problem dramatically. Residents have repeatedly spoken out at Council  
2 hearings against this rezoning proposal. It is very clear that this rezoning request is not  
3 motivated by the best interest of local residents. The owner of the property in question  
4 stands to profit from the proposed rezoning, thus repeated attempts to rezone the parcel  
5 while residents would be left with the unneeded commercial enterprise and worse traffic  
6 congestion. Rezoning the parcel in question would allow few to profit financially while  
7 negatively impacting the daily lives of hundreds or thousands of local residents. Please  
8 evaluate this proposal with focus on representing the best interest of our community, my  
9 community, and not the financial gain of a few individuals. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you. May Vocati?

11 **TESTIMONY OF MAY VOCATI:**

12 MS. VOCATI: My name is May Vocati, I live at 206 Plantation Parkway in  
13 Blythewood. I vehemently oppose this Rural Commercial gas station that's gonna go up  
14 on the corner of my daughter's school. I'd like to speak to the first sentence in the  
15 zoning district summary, the Rural Commercial District recognizes a need to provide the  
16 areas within Richland County where residents of more isolated agricultural and rural  
17 residential districts and residents located beyond the limits of services of municipalities  
18 can receive convenience merchandising and service. Within a four mile radius of my  
19 home in Longcreek I have four pizza restaurants, I have three dry cleaners, I have a  
20 dollar store, I have three large grocery stores, and I have at least five gas stations.  
21 Clearly, the resources in my neighborhood have nothing to do with being – they're  
22 available to me. I don't need another one in my neighborhood, it would only impact my  
23 lifestyle in a negative way. And I'd also like to mention that while a gas station on the

1 corner would certainly provide a few jobs for maybe our residents, most people who  
2 would work at that gas station don't live in our area and should they, they have a gas  
3 station 1.25 miles away from Longcreek on the corner, there're two gas stations.  
4 There's a gas station on the corner of Lee Road. So there's plenty of employment  
5 opportunities within four miles, there's really no need to add more. Thank you for your  
6 time.

7 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you. Mary Lee?

8 **TESTIMONY OF MARY LEE:**

9 MS. LEE: Mr. Chairman, Commission Members, my name is Mary Lee, I live at  
10 444 Rimer Pond Road, right in the middle of all this controversy. And there's really no  
11 need for me to repeat a lot of what's been said, however, several people have already  
12 mentioned that first line of that zoning district summary that's in there. And we're not  
13 underserved. You were asking the gentleman before, he'd be there 30 some years. I've  
14 been there 40 something, and I'm all for rural, that's why I'm out there, so if you take all  
15 this into consideration, and like I said it's like Deja vu, we've been here before,  
16 everybody here knows how we feel, and it's certainly not gonna change. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, ma'am, thank you. Brad Tollson.

18 **TESTIMONY OF BRAD TOLLSON:**

19 MR. TOLLSON: Brad Tollson, 230 Renfield Lane in Blythewood. Be a lot of  
20 reiteration, what you're gonna hear today. I think the bottom line is, is we all feel very  
21 strongly that this is just not needed. Longcreek, very peaceful community, used to be a  
22 very quiet community until the other development around the Clemson Road, which we  
23 understand. But we are a community, we are the Town of Blythewood. It would be a

1 complete eyesore. To reiterate some of the other voices talking about the schools that  
2 are nearby, again it's a nuisance. You start thinking about the traffic situation, trying to  
3 get in and out of a convenience store or what have you would be, to use the word  
4 cluster I think is a great way to describe what it would be. It's just not needed. And I'd  
5 ask yourself sitting there in those chairs, if you live in a neighborhood would you want  
6 this in your neighborhood? Would you want this near your children's schools? I think the  
7 answer would be no. Thanks.

8 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir. Nanette Howren?

9 **TESTIMONY OF NANETTE HOWREN:**

10 MS. HOWREN: I'm Nanette Howren, 102 Old Course Loop in Blythewood. I grew  
11 up in Columbia and I left for 30 years and went to Atlanta. I had an opportunity to come  
12 back and I was pretty excited because I always thought that Columbia was a, kind of a  
13 big country town. It had everything that I needed, but it also gave me my uniquely rural  
14 area. So when my husband and I started looking – when I left 77 wasn't even available  
15 and we would always joke, you know, you packed a lunch to go from the Lower  
16 Richland side all the way to Elgin. Well now you can get to and fro within 15 minutes. I  
17 don't need any more commercial out there. Someone has already said we have five,  
18 four or five pizza places. We've got gas stations. I'm not a grandmother, I don't have  
19 children that go to school here but I do do a lot with Special Olympics so I am a lotta the  
20 time in the traffic trying to get to events and that type of thing. And I can't imagine being  
21 these young parents that are trying to get their children to school and now having this  
22 garish thing that's gonna have all these lights on it at nighttime where we have a nice  
23 dark area. We can go out and nighttime and we can see stars. Please don't take that

1 away from us. We moved there for a reason and you slowly are taking those reasons  
2 away from us. And it's saddens me. And just like this gentleman before me, if this was  
3 going on in your neighborhood how would you really vote? I want you to think about  
4 that. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, ma'am. David Strom?

6 **TESTIMONY OF DAVID STROM:**

7 MR. STROM: Hey, good afternoon. Thanks for the opportunity to speak in front  
8 of you. My name's David Strom, I live at 47 Thistlewood Court in Blythewood. I also live  
9 in the Longcreek subdivision and it's uniquely rural. It, it's where we wanna be. I grew  
10 up in a, in a rural, or a, an urban area and I went to school in an urban area. When I  
11 moved to South Carolina I wanted to live in somewhere rural that I didn't have to deal  
12 with sitting in traffic for 45 minutes or dealing with seven different stores and seven  
13 different gas stations. As, as Mary, May said earlier we've got four gas stations within a  
14 mile of my house, we've got four convenience stores, maybe five, we have a Dollar  
15 General. We don't need this in our neighborhood. My, my wife's a stay at home mom  
16 and anything that my family needs she can easily go within five minutes of our house  
17 and get whatever we need. We've got three mega grocery stores, we just don't need  
18 this. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you. Ken Queen?

20 **TESTIMONY OF KEN QUEEN:**

21 MR. QUEEN: How you doin'? My name's Ken Queen, I reside at 575 Rimer Pond  
22 Road, have since 1999. I've been here before, obviously on both sides of this agenda.  
23 This particular issue, Patrick and I have spoken personally about and he understands

1 that we don't feel that – it's no offense, it doesn't serve what we need, it doesn't serve –  
2 we don't need it is the big gist of it. But my position is, the Palmers are the ones that  
3 came to Rimer Pond Road 10 years ago or so and changed this property to RS-MD. At  
4 that time nobody wanted it RS-MD, that's what the Palmers wanted, okay? They didn't  
5 come and discuss it with anybody, they didn't meet with anybody like Mr. Fuller on the  
6 previous zoning issue that just came before you. And this time they haven't met with  
7 anybody to discuss, to talk about what type of uses could be mutually agreeable. Kevin  
8 Steelman, however, on the next neighborhood down from this parcel which just got  
9 rezoned to RS low density did come and meet with the residents and talk to us. Okay?  
10 There was no opposition to the residential use, we understand that there's gonna be  
11 residential use. There's just no need for the commercial use. We don't have any, there's  
12 nothing they could put there that we don't already have within, you know, five, six  
13 minutes max. The situation is when they came and rezoned this RS-MD the residents  
14 opposed it and they were adamant about not wanting it at the time. That's my time.

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, Mr. Queen.

16 MR. GREENLEAF: Mr. Chairman, can I complete hearing Mr. Queen's  
17 testimony?

18 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: We can do that, Mr. Greenleaf, but let me say  
19 something to the Commission. We have a number of people signed up to speak today  
20 and so I wanna make sure I give everybody ample time to be able to speak.

21 MR. GREENLEAF: That's good.

22 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: If you have some questions for Mr. Queen that's be  
23 great.

1 MR. GREENLEAF: No questions, I just wanted if he was complete with –

2 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Alright. And if we have a question for you we can  
3 certainly call you back.

4 MR. GREENLEAF: Y'all just keep it to two minutes. Thank you. It's kinda hard, I  
5 know. I like to talk, too.

6 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Joe Jefferson? Is it Johnson? Johnson. Joe Johnson,  
7 okay.

8 **TESTIMONY OF JOE JOHNSON:**

9 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you ladies and gentlemen. I'm really gonna echo Mr.  
10 Thompson and Mr. Queen's comments. My name is Joe Johnson, I live at 121 West  
11 Lakeridge Drive, lifelong residents of Richland County, 25 year resident of Blythewood,  
12 13 in Longcreek Plantation. I'm glad you guys are familiar with the Comprehensive  
13 planning documents that you have published on your websites. The intent of the plan is  
14 to facilitate growth in a manner that is respectful of natural and cultural resources. A  
15 strip mall with a Pizza Hut is not respectful of natural and cultural resources. There's  
16 lots of time and taxpayer money that was used in developing that plan that is on your  
17 website. If you're not gonna follow the plan then you wasted a lotta taxpayer monies.  
18 You and, the Planning Commission and the County Council has got to be accountable  
19 for following the plan that you have adopted. Apparently the work group that keeps  
20 approving this venture is not that familiar with that. We keep talking about this limits of  
21 commercial services, any place on Rimer Pond Road can pick up the phone and have  
22 six different pizza parlors deliver pizza to their house. If, if you have pizza delivery you  
23 are not beyond the limits of [laughter] of commercial services. Only one person tends to

1 gain from this. We're tired of coming in here and fighting about this every year. I, I guess  
2 I have a proposal for Mr. Palmer, you know, I think he made some mistakes with this  
3 property which has got him in the position he is. I would commit if he would donate the  
4 property to Richland County I would commit to donate some money, and I'm sure our  
5 community would, to make it some sorta park that's good for the kids and good for all  
6 the neighborhoods that are around there. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir. Jane Jorgansen?

8 **TESTIMONY OF JANE JORGANSEN:**

9 MS. JORGANSEN: Good afternoon. My name is Jane Jorgansen. I live at 5  
10 Lakemoor Court in Blythewood, Longcreek Plantation. I just think you've heard a lotta  
11 voices this afternoon about what we really want for our environment. We, we wanna  
12 keep it uniquely rural, we do not need commercial in that space, it's an issue for our  
13 kids, safety, traffic, and really just aesthetics. I love the idea of donating the land and  
14 turning it into a park. I wanna second that and fourth it and fifth it and 100. It, it's really  
15 not meant to be anything more, I mean, if you see, I don't know that this really shows  
16 you how that tract looks. Of course, today you've got homes in that area now. It's been  
17 built out with some homes behind there. But it's, it's a tough intersection, I, I go past  
18 there several times a day. It can get quite congested. We don't need any more draw to  
19 that corner. I'd just love a safe environment for the kids, I'd like it to stay green and  
20 beautiful and undeveloped. Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, Ms. Jorgensen. Michael Watts.

22 **TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL WATTS:**

1 MR. WATTS: Michael Watts, 359 Adams Road, 421 Rimer Pond Road. Since  
2 we're talking about how long people have been there I live on land that's been in my  
3 family for five generations. I can trace it back to Fairfield County, when that was Fairfield  
4 County back in the 1800s. You've heard articulate reasons for the last three times we've  
5 been here of why we do not want this on this property. It seems to me that it's pretty  
6 simple. You got one property owner and you gotta a community full of people who are at  
7 odds. The community doesn't want it. The property owner I guess has made up his  
8 mind he's gonna keep coming back till he gets it, so it's in your hands now. Your hands  
9 to decide whether or not you're gonna stick up for the people or whether you're gonna  
10 stick up for a developer. Which doesn't look good for y'all. So we hope you're on our  
11 side. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir. Kenneth Moore.

13 **TESTIMONY OF KENNETH MOORE:**

14 MR. MOORE: Thank you Mr. Commissioner and Chair people, I appreciate it.  
15 Kenneth Moore, 29 Black Hawk Court, Blythewood, South Carolina. My wife and I have  
16 lived a lotta places, a lot of buildup stuff in Duluth, Georgia, and if any of you have ever  
17 been to Atlanta you know what I'm talking about. We moved here specifically to be in a  
18 rural area away from all of the commercialism of a gas station on the corner. As people  
19 have already said very eloquently today and I think very factually, there's a lot of stuff  
20 around us where we can get anything we want if necessary. So I see no need for this. I  
21 believe like everybody else has told you, there is no need for the people in our  
22 community to have this new addition. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir. Lorraine Moore? Okay, alright that's  
2 fine. If you hear someone say the same thing that you would like to say and you would  
3 like to say, hey I'll echo that, that's fine. And that moves us along so not a problem at  
4 all. Is this Elaine? Claire? Claire somebody? Feather Run Court? Okay, come right on  
5 up.

6 MR. TUTTLE: She said she seconded what everybody –

7 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Oh. Oh, alright very good. Fantastic. Stacy Young.

8 **TESTIMONY OF STACY YOUNG:**

9 MS. YOUNG: Okay. Hi, my name is Stacy Young, I stay at 422 Knollside Drive. I  
10 recently moved into this community two years ago so this is my first time. I hope this is  
11 my last time simply because I have a 5<sup>th</sup> grader at Roundtop and I have had children  
12 attend Blythewood Middle. It's already, as everyone has said, very, you know,  
13 congested in that area. And I'm really concerned about the safety of my children.  
14 Attending Blythewood Middle, he will be going there next year, there are, someone  
15 mentioned before there aren't any sidewalks. There's very little places for them to walk  
16 as it is. I think putting a gas station on that corner is only gonna attract things that are  
17 negative to the community. I took off work today because that was just that important to  
18 me to be here to say that it's just something that we don't want. The developer talks  
19 about we want it, we're saying we don't want it. And I just want that to be very clear that  
20 this is something that we do not want and don't feel like our community needs it. I have  
21 five boys, they eat me out of the house and home, but we can find a pizza place that will  
22 deliver any time of the night. So we are not going without food, we are not going without  
23 a pizza delivery, we aren't going without a gas station because we have one right at the

1 end of our neighborhood. So this is something that we just don't want, and I hope you  
2 hear that from all of us.

3 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you. Rhett Sanders.

4 **TESTIMONY OF RHETT SANDERS:**

5 MR. SANDERS: Rhett Sanders, 111 Craigwood Drive, Blythewood, South  
6 Carolina. As members of the Planning Commission you have accepted the civic  
7 responsibility of helping residents and property owners to articulate and achieve a vision  
8 for how they want their community to look and function in the future, so I thank you so  
9 much for listening to us. When I lived in Blythewood growing up in the '70s I felt  
10 isolated. As I moved back to Blythewood in 2010 the rural commercial zoning does not  
11 connect to us, we are not isolated. Just a couple miles north of this intersection is an  
12 IGA and restaurants and gas stations. Just south gas stations, convenience stores and  
13 a Dollar General. A lot of new homes are coming to the area and I believe a lotta people  
14 are fleeing Clemson Road and Hardscrabble Road, Two Notch Road in order to get  
15 away from the crazy and busy, as well as still have the conveniences around them. We  
16 do not want Rimer Pond Road to be anything other than residential, rural, for schools,  
17 houses, homes, and churches. The Planning Commission is tasked with the  
18 responsibility to oversee the strategic growth of our County, to keep the big picture in  
19 mind, and to not make decisions based on personal requests that are not in the interest  
20 of the community. So I, or we disagree with the summary conclusion that approval of  
21 this rezoning request would not be out of character with the existing surrounding  
22 development pattern and zoning districts. We believe it would be out of character with  
23 what's around us and what we want. So we are here to ask that you protect our wishes

1 as residents of our community that will be directly impacted by this zoning change. So  
2 thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir. Elizabeth Mull?

4 **TESTIMONY OF ELIZABETH MULL:**

5 MS. MULL: Good afternoon and thank you for letting me speak. My name is  
6 Elizabeth Mull and I live at 234 Westlake Farms Drive in Blythewood. I will keep my  
7 remarks brief and easily so because nothing has changed since the last time I stood  
8 before you pleading for the Planning Commission to vote against the zone change. We  
9 are still not an underserved nor isolated area of Richland County. We do not need nor  
10 want any of the commercial provisions planned for this intersection. As a resident who  
11 zooms around town on fumes much to my husband's dismay I have yet to find myself  
12 stranded and out of gas because of the prevalence and convenience of the multitude of  
13 gas stations that are already there. Dry cleaners, dollar stores, professional offices are  
14 all already there in abundance. In November of 2015 – a Blythewood High School  
15 student was tragically struck by a car as he walked in front of the high school. He died  
16 several days later. If this proposed zone changed is approved and anything resembling  
17 a convenience store is built there, how long do you think it will take for those middle  
18 schoolers to dart across the street to grab a Coke and a candy bar for their trek up  
19 Rimer Pond Road to Roundtop Elementary School to meet their younger siblings and  
20 catch their ride home? It is too disturbing and frightening to really even think about. We  
21 moved to this area in, of Columbia in 2011 specifically to enjoy the rural aspects it has  
22 to offer. My two beloved thoroughbred horses lived a long and happy retirement at a  
23 farm less than three miles from this intersection. However, on the rare occasion that I

1 chose to actually go shopping instead of trail riding, I travel the same distance in the  
2 opposite direction and I could find every commercial business easily accessible. Our  
3 neighborhood in this area of northeast Columbia is the epitome of uniquely rural,  
4 however, that profound description is not followed by, until someone wants to make it  
5 commercial. Please listen to us and vote against this proposed zone change. Thank  
6 you.

7 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you. Lisa Ramsey?

8 **TESTIMONY OF LISA RAMSEY:**

9 MS. RAMSEY: Hi, I'm Lisa Ramsey of 200 Longtown Road West and I sit directly  
10 next to the middle school on the corner there of Longtown Road and Longtown West.  
11 When we thought of moving back to the Blythewood area or Columbia area we were  
12 coming from Maryland, right outside of Philadelphia and yet outside of Baltimore,  
13 Maryland. When we came to that intersection to buy I thought, this is gonna be too  
14 much traffic, I can't handle it, until my daughter reminded us, mom it's not New York  
15 City. Since we've been there we have been awoken numerous nights of the accidents  
16 that occur at our corner and at the corner of Rimer Pond and Longtown Road. People  
17 do not obey the stop signs, the stop lights. They're in a hurry as they continue to throw  
18 their Bud Light cans down our road. I honestly do not believe that's anyone from our  
19 neighborhood that is doing this. We've got too much going on in our neighborhood as it  
20 is. It's becoming unsafe with what's occurring at the local gas stations off of Lee Road  
21 and Hardscrabble. The other things that are happening in Blythewood with the IGA, was  
22 a robbery there. We don't want this. We don't need this. We pray, absolutely pray that

1 you stand behind us and your community. Thank you. My husband was next to speak  
2 and he was not able to make it. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. So that was Paul Ramsey. Angie Finch?

4 **TESTIMONY OF ANGIE FINCH:**

5 MS. FINCH: Good afternoon. Thank you for allowing me to speak. My name is  
6 Angie Finch and I live at 309 Cartgate Circle in Windermere in Longcreek Plantation. I  
7 grew up in Blythewood in the '70s and yeah, we were an underserved community in the  
8 '70s, we were in the middle of nowhere. And after college I moved away, I got married  
9 and moved to New Jersey. I lived in New Jersey for 20 years and then when I came  
10 back here to, to relocate my family five and a half years ago, I, I couldn't believe the  
11 changes that I had seen in the, in the Longcreek area. Killian Road was not the Killian  
12 Road that it is today. We are not an underserved community. We are a community that  
13 is praying to keep our safety from all of these difference incidents that go on around us  
14 from gas stations. We're trying to keep our children safe. We're trying to keep them safe  
15 on the roads, we're trying to keep them safe in our neighborhoods, and we don't, we're  
16 not underserved. We don't need another gas station, we don't need any more  
17 commercial properties. Please hear all of us, it's 1:00 on Monday and we're out here in  
18 force to let you know that this is important to us. Thank you for your time.

19 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you. Jamie Eddy?

20 **TESTIMONY OF JAMIE EDDY:**

21 MS. EDDY: Hello, I'm Jamie Eddy, I live right down the road from Angie at 325  
22 Cartgate Circle in Windermere. I would say that I'm a little bit unique compared to the  
23 people sitting here. I've lived here only for a year and a half. We moved here from New

1 York and my husband works in Charlotte right now. He wanted to be here very much  
2 but he couldn't. We love this area, so much that my husband drives to Charlotte every  
3 day and all the way back because of this area specifically. I can't express to you how  
4 much – I have 10 year old kids that are gonna be going to Blythewood and it scares me  
5 the thought, like Nicole was saying about the kids traveling across the road, that's  
6 terrifying. I love this area so much. We wanna stay here, we wanna grow here, and we,  
7 we know things are gonna change but just please keep it residential and not commercial  
8 and we would really appreciate it. And thank you for your time by the way.

9 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you. Vanessa Soyto?

10 **TESTIMONY OF VANESSA SOYTO:**

11 MS. SOYTO: Hello, thank you for letting me speak today. My name is Vanessa  
12 Soyto and I live at 112 Muirfield Court West in Blythewood. I am also kind of unique to  
13 this situation, I've only lived here six months from Massachusetts. But I just wanted to  
14 say that when we first moved here everyone talked about Chapin and Lexington and all  
15 these other towns and we went to them and they weren't like where we, where I live  
16 now and where all of us live. It's a great community. I plan on living there for as long as I  
17 can with my three children. Please don't change it. And it really is a special place.

18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you. Jerry Riga?

20 **TESTIMONY OF JERRY RIGA:**

21 MR. RIGA: Good afternoon, thank you. I'm Jerry Riga, 112 Bardwell Way in  
22 Blythewood. And I'm gonna apologize if I offend anyone with my comments, but this is  
23 the third time this issue has come up and I am very disappointed that the Staff of this

1 Commission continues to approve or recommend this issue. They're looking at maps  
2 and books and things, but if you just drive through this area, like you heard, they  
3 mentioned isolated area. You've heard this is not an isolated area. It's highly residential.  
4 They mention institutional use. The institutions they're talking about are a middle school  
5 and an elementary school with high congestion. Go look at that area at 8:00 in the  
6 morning or 7:30 in the morning. I have to laugh, the agent that represented Mr. Palmer  
7 talked about the 100 or so homes, a year ago when this came up the owner of the  
8 property said this area was not, could not be developed for homes. Well, now we have  
9 100 and something homes going up right there within 100' of what this property is. And  
10 he says no one in that area has opposed this. Well, there's nobody in those homes. It's  
11 hard to oppose something when there's nobody there. We were here a year ago, this  
12 room was full. We actually presented a position to the Council with over 200 signatures  
13 and a room full of people. Don't tell us that this is, you know, not supported by the area.  
14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir. Michael Burney?

16 **TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL BURNEY:**

17 MR. BURNEY: I'm Michael Burney at 10 Sly Fox Run and I may hold the record  
18 for the least time in the neighborhood. We just moved in about a month ago. And we fall  
19 into that area that was talked about earlier of wanting to get away from the congestion  
20 on Two Notch Road where we lived and raised our kids. And wanted to find a pocket, a  
21 pocket that was comfortable and was rural that we could live and retire in. And much to  
22 my chagrin I get on our Facebook page and find out about this. So I just stand in

1 opposition of it, it certainly wasn't in the cards for what we expected when we purchased  
2 property out in that area, and I hope you'll vote against it.

3 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir. Debbie, is that – 50 Harvest? Okay.

4 **TESTIMONY OF DEBBIE BARTH:**

5 MS. BARTH: My name is Debbie Barth, I live at 50 Harvest Moon Court in  
6 Blythewood. We have been there about 20 years. We moved, made the big move from  
7 Plantation Park over to Crescent Lake because we love it, wanna be there. A couple  
8 things, I felt bad that Mr. Queen couldn't finish his comments. One thing that he pointed  
9 out to me was that he actually knows of several people that are waiting to hear from this  
10 if they go to the rural commercial zoning to file for commercial zoning for things right  
11 near there. So this is just another step, we've seen it with development of  
12 neighborhoods, which now is great and everybody's a part of the community, but it, it  
13 really is always just a stepping stone. And the two words that strike me that I hear when  
14 I came last time and I heard again was isolated and desired. I think it's fairly evident,  
15 we're neither isolated nor is this desired, and I think that that should be taken into  
16 account. And, you know, Mr. Palmer made an investment, it's not panning out the way  
17 he hoped, we've all had that happen to us. Maybe he needs to come up with another  
18 avenue for pursuit of developing it into something that people actually want. And consult  
19 with us about that. That's all I got.

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you. Sean Hawk?

21 **TESTIMONY OF SEAN HAWK:**

22 MR. HAWK: Sean Hawks, 525 Rimer Pond Road. I actually get to watch Mr.  
23 Palmer's last push down our throat change to zoning when he got his medium

1 residential. It was pushed down our throat then, it was in opposition to a point then, this  
2 has come up multiple times and is still being put down our throat by whatever means  
3 there is internally to his connections or whoever he works for or with, that this is now  
4 being delivered again, another year down the road we're still talking about the same  
5 thing. I don't need to go over how many gas stations, I'll leave that right out, I think  
6 we've got that covered. But one thing that does really worry me and it was just  
7 mentioned earlier is the fact that this will open the floodgates to putting more and more  
8 of this rural commercial in there using this case as an example. Alright, literally across  
9 the street from there is one of those sites that they're talking about putting a gas station.  
10 Alright? And then down at the end of Hardscrabble and Rimer Pond Road where traffic  
11 is an absolute nightmare any time between school hours, is another site that is waiting  
12 on this to go through. Alright? Those kind of changes in Rimer Pond Road, as they said,  
13 State-maintained, no sidewalks, no shoulders, this is not a place to increase traffic. This  
14 is not a place that requires additional support from any kind of businesses. We have  
15 everything we could desire. I've lived there for four years, we had delivery pizza and I  
16 live a quarter mile off the road, I literally have to call them every time and tell them how  
17 to get down to my house, okay? And I get to pull out of my driveway and look at medium  
18 residential and pray that they don't put some Dollar General or some other store at the  
19 end of that road. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir. David Poole?

21 **TESTIMONY OF DAVID POOLE:**

22 MR. POOLE: Hello. My name's David Pool, I live at 425 Old Course Loop in  
23 Blythewood. I'm about a half a mile from this intersection that we're discussing today.

1 And I want to just again oppose this change like the rest of the neighbors that have  
2 spoken. I'm just, I'm just a little bumfuzzled by – this is my fourth meeting, everybody  
3 else has said three but I actually went to a meeting that was at the elementary school  
4 that I believe was hosted by the previous chairman, not Mr. Palmer but before that. And  
5 there was about 200 people in that, in that location at Rimer, at Roundtop Elementary  
6 School. And so we had a whole room full of people that didn't want this to go through  
7 even three years ago. But my, my confusion here is we have these discussions, we  
8 voice our disapproval, and last year still the folks who were basically developers on the  
9 Commission all voted in favor of sending this forward, it was a tie vote. Mr. Palmer had  
10 to recuse himself or it would've gone through. And then it went to the, the Council and it  
11 was a tie vote again. And all the developers voted with each other again. And so I'm just  
12 concerned about the appearance of evil. I'm not saying evil, I'm not saying cronyism,  
13 but the appearance of it is a little hard to swallow sometimes. And so, you know, if we  
14 sit here and look at kinda whose interested and whose not and whose saying, well we  
15 just kinda have this plan that was approved for us and so we're going through the  
16 motions, then that kinda looks like what's going on here. So thank you for your time.

17 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Mr. Pool, thank you. That is all I have signed up to  
18 speak.

19 MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Chair?

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, sir.

21 MR. ANDERSON: I'd like to make one comment, and just for the Commissioners,  
22 so we, we go through this all the time and we can't see stuff like gas stations. Our  
23 decision can't be made on what a piece of paper says in front of us.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Correct.

2 MR. ANDERSON: So let's be clear about that. But as far as, I just wanna get this  
3 outta the way cause I understand, completely understand everybody's, you know, not  
4 wanting to move forward with this. I'm gonna back the same position I had when it came  
5 to us beforehand, which is based on the parcel, based on Staff's recommendation,  
6 based on the Comprehensive Plan that we worked countless, countless, countless  
7 hours on. It's within the Comprehensive Plan. So I have to agree with Staff. So I would  
8 actually like to make a motion that we send this forward with a recommendation of  
9 approval.

10 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: It's been moved and – Ms. Frierson and Mr.  
11 Greenleaf? It's not, there's no second yet.

12 MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, there's no second.

13 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yeah, so Ms. Frierson and Mr. Greenleaf.

14 MR. ANDERSON: No, I don't think – did we get a second?

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: We did not get a second.

16 MS. FRIERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No. No, I was not raising my hand to  
17 second by no way. Mr. Chairman, I pay attention to the definitions before us because  
18 they're out guiding principle. How, I also have respect for our Staff because I don't think  
19 that they would intentionally mislead us, but when I have personal knowledge that the  
20 definitions before us, for example on page 10, the one that characterized this as beyond  
21 the limits of service of the municipalities can receive convenience merchandising, an  
22 service, when I personally know that that is an alternative fact. And when I [laughter] no,  
23 I'm serious, I mean, it is. And when I listen to the fine residents of the area who've taken

1 the time out of their schedules and their lives to give us factual testimony, and I too live  
2 near that area, and from personal knowledge my antennae because this is not right. It  
3 does keep coming before us and as many times as it does I will oppose this. I care  
4 about [applause] I will. I know what uniquely rural means, I'm gonna request my  
5 colleague and let him speak, but I am not fooled by slick statements, lawyers or  
6 whomever, I go by what I know is to be truthful.

7 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Mr. Greenleaf.

8 MR. GREENLEAF: Mr. Chair, I'm, I'm different than most of the folks on this  
9 Commission. I'm new so I did not participate in the development of the plan, but I know  
10 what I know. And this is what I know. First of all it unnerves me greatly, the reason why  
11 I'm on this Commission is that we have huge tracts of developed land that's now brown  
12 field space where people have up and moved and gone further and further out. I'm  
13 totally against that. That is sprawl, I'm against it, and as long as I'm on this Commission  
14 I will fight for it and I will fight for the people. I will not be voting for this or like the  
15 previous proposal before it, I will not vote for expanded development, period. [Applause]

16 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, sir, Mr. Tuttle?

17 MR. TUTTLE: Suddenly this has turned into a political body which it is not.

18 MR. GREENLEAF: That's not political. It's not political.

19 MR. TUTTLE: This has turned into a political body and it is not a political –

20 MR. GREENLEAF: That was not a political statement. That was, that was not a  
21 political statement.

22 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Mr. Tuttle has the floor.

1 MR. TUTTLE: - it is not a political body and I would like to defend Staff in the  
2 respect that if a property owner has a right to bring something forward, Staff is obligated  
3 to proceed with that. Whether it's one time or 100 times, the law is the law and they're  
4 only doing what they're charged to do. So I think Staff does a good job and has been  
5 fair. Now whether this Council determines whether it should go forward or not is a  
6 different matter, but I don't think we should come here and impugn the Staff so I just  
7 wanted to say that I appreciate what Staff does for us and for the County.

8 MR. ANDERSON: Agreed and we're – so let me just say this, and I do appreciate  
9 the Staff and I appreciate everybody coming out. But again, we are not a political body.  
10 We are put up here to look at a tract of land and that tract of land we have to look at  
11 does it belong there? Are we doing our job as planners? Not as emotional, okay? As  
12 planners. And if we're looking at parcels we have to take stuff out like gas stations. We  
13 cannot even think that that is going to be a gas station. Okay? It could be left completely  
14 empty.

15 Audience disruption

16 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Excuse me, guys.

17 MR. ANDERSON: Excuse me. When we look at a parcel of land we cannot  
18 automatically assume gas station. We have to say, does this fit within the current  
19 Comprehensive Plan. Sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn't. Okay? And that's what  
20 planning is when we do that. Sometimes, I mean, I've been here when there have been  
21 a line out of the room, okay? And, and I think that because the, the public's opinion has  
22 to be heard and I appreciate everybody's coming up and talking. But my position is the  
23 same that it was before is this is a tract of land that is sitting in an area at an

1 intersection, and we can go through the semantics of a lotta things, but it is sitting at an  
2 intersection and it meets the guidelines of our code, or excuse me, of our  
3 Comprehensive Plan that we all did work on. Now again, there are some guidelines and  
4 we have been looking at them, but that's to the, to fellow Commission Members, that's  
5 my personal opinion on this issue is we have to look at the parcel and see where it fits  
6 based on how we look to see the, the community grow. And we did lay a barrier and we  
7 voted on it and talked, good Lord, for a long time about it, and that was the Langford  
8 Road. That being the limit. That Langford Road, if I'm not mistaken, help me with this  
9 Tracy.

10 MS. HEGLER: It's a change in future land use designation.

11 MR. ANDERSON: Okay. Yes, that's right. And we worked hard with the  
12 community, with everybody here. We worked very, very hard on that. So again, my  
13 position is the same that it was last time. It fits merely from a planning perspective. So  
14 that's where I stand on it.

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Mr. Greenleaf. Did you have another comment?

16 MR. GREENLEAF: I just wanna make a statement. My commentary was not in  
17 any shape or form political. I am new to the Body, I did not participate in the  
18 development of the Comprehensive Plan. I just know what I know and I'm not in favor of  
19 expanded sprawl.

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, Ms. Frierson?

21 MS. FRIERSON: Mr. Chairperson and other Commissioners and community  
22 members as well, I'm not being political either. I'm looking at the definitions, being  
23 guided by that, and as I mentioned I have personal knowledge because I live in the area

1 and there's some inconsistencies. I have great respect for the Staff. I attend the  
2 trainings. I love doing that and I will continue to do so. But on this particular issue I will  
3 vote as I've done before because in my opinion there is a major contradiction between  
4 the printed information before us as it has already been explained and articulated very  
5 well by the community members, and what actually characterizes a rural area.

6 MR. ANDERSON: Well, and I, and I think we need to look at this particular area  
7 when we're looking at the Comprehensive Plan again. Because do we define this area  
8 as rural or do we define this area as suburban? Because, I mean again, we, we use, we  
9 use a very generalized, you know, statement when we say rural.

10 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Can you speak to that, Tracy?

11 MS. HEGLER: It's in your report, it's neighborhood, medium density is the future  
12 land use designation.

13 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yeah.

14 MR. ANDERSON: So it's not, when we use the word rural that is some of our  
15 zonings and, and I think, you know –

16 MR. GREENLEAF: Mr. Chairman, have we, have we called the question?

17 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: We, we're about to, I'm just making sure that  
18 everybody had an opportunity to participate in conversation.

19 MR. GREENLEAF: Thank you.

20 MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, I did, I had a motion.

21 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Would you repeat that motion for us?

22 MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, my motion is that we accept Staff's recommendation of  
23 approval and send this forward to Council with a recommendation of approval.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Is there a second?

2 MR. TUTTLE: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, it's been moved and properly seconded that we  
4 send Case No. 16-042 MA forward to Council with a recommendation for approval. All  
5 in favor signify by raising your hand? All opposed?

6 *[Approved: Gilchrist, Anderson, Tuttle; Opposed: Greenleaf, Frierson, Brown; Recused:*  
7 *Palmer; Absent: Cairns, Theus]*

8 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Split vote. So how do we deal with that Tracy?

9 MS. HEGLER: It just goes forward without a recommendation.

10 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Without a recommendation? So, so this will move  
11 forward to Council with, with a recommendation of no vote and they will meet back in  
12 these Chambers again on February the 28<sup>th</sup> so you feel free to be able to come back at  
13 that time.

14 *[Inaudible discussion]*

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Alright next case? Folks, if you want to have your  
16 conversations feel free and do that but we've gotta continue on with the meeting, so  
17 please help us out by having your conversations outside, please. Thank you. Alright,  
18 next case.

19 MS. HEGLER: Oh yeah, you wanna get Mr. Palmer?

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Oh yeah, somebody better get -

21 **CASE NO. 16-043 MA:**

22 MS. HEGLER: You ready for me to proceed? Okay. Case 16-43, Applicant is  
23 Carl Gibson at Montgomery Lane. It's 2 ½ acres, currently zoned Rural and the

1 requested rezoning is for Heavy Industrial, HI. As you probably know Heavy Industrial is  
2 intended to primarily accommodate uses of a manufacturing and industrial nature.  
3 Secondly, functions that help with that such as distribution, storage and processing can  
4 be considered. The area is surrounded mostly by residential or undeveloped uses.  
5 There is a light industrial or M1 use to the south of the property. The 2015  
6 Comprehensive Plan designates this area as Rural in its future land use element. Of  
7 course, rural areas are those where rural development and smaller agricultural  
8 operations are appropriate. Rural areas should be designed to maintain large tracts of  
9 undisturbed land, particularly areas of prime environmental value. The desired  
10 development pattern for these areas should be designed to accommodate single-family  
11 residential developments in a highly rural setting. Staff really felt that since the HI district  
12 is to accommodate of a manufacturing and industrial nature it would not comply and  
13 contradict the intent of the Comprehensive Plan with the desire to keep this area rural  
14 and residential in nature. So for those reasons we, we recommended disapproval.

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. Thank you. Any questions for Staff? We do have  
16 several persons signed up to speak. And again when we call your name please give us  
17 your name and address for the Record. The Applicant, Carl Gibson?

18 **TESTIMONY OF CARL GIBSON:**

19 MR. GIBSON: My name's Carl Gibson at 1014 Montgomery Lane. I just bought  
20 some property on 1014 Montgomery Lane. I been running a truck repair company there.  
21 The building's setting on a, the M1 property and I guess when I bought the property it  
22 has this addition to the land attached to the property that was not zoned as commercial.  
23 At the time of the purchase, I didn't find out about that till we kinda got into a little bit

1 from the attorney's office, so what I was trying to as of right now, most of the property in  
2 the surrounding area is mostly trees, the church across the street, and one individual  
3 stay on the far end of the property. I was thinking if I could do the rezoning can possibly  
4 put a buffer on the back end of the property if the, if someone got complaints far as any  
5 additional noise. But the thing about, the property that the building sets on is M1. The  
6 property I wanted rezoned is gonna be used for parking only, you know, just vehicle  
7 being parked on that additional property. And far as the area, they do have a church  
8 across the street which we do not operate on Sundays. That's not, that's basically what  
9 I was gonna speak for on behalf of, on that particular property. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir. James Davis.

11 **TESTIMONY OF JAMES DAVIS:**

12 MR. DAVIS: My name is James Davis, I live at 1116 Montgomery Lane, been  
13 there since '75. This property he's talking about right here was a compromise done here  
14 with Bernice Scott back in 1990. They built that building over there before they had it  
15 zoned. It was a big argument and a fight the whole time with it. So what they come to  
16 conclusion with, this piece of property right behind it, this, Curtis Hinson bought it, he  
17 was gone use it for a buffer between residential and that. That was part of the  
18 compromise they was gone make. And for the water runoff. He built that land up where  
19 them buildings are and that water will not, has to run somewhere. That's some low land  
20 on the, you know, really low land. But it was a deal made before that and Bernice Scott  
21 pushed that deal through because the man had already built the building before it was  
22 zoned, so they all got I guess feeling sorry for him about the building. But that is a  
23 residential, they'll tear the road up, them big dump trucks with a single road there. This

1 two-lane road right there, it's already tore up where the people enters that building.  
2 Actually when you turn off of Bluff Road into there you got to stop if there's a car coming  
3 and go around, the holes is already there. So we are opposing any change of  
4 commercial, I mean, any kinda commercial property in there on this part of it. We had to  
5 eat it the last time because of what happened, the way it, the way it happened. But it did  
6 do it and so it's been a pretty well – and we fighting anybody wanna commercialize that  
7 property cause it is residential property. Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir.

9 MR. BROWN: Mr. Chairman?

10 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, sir?

11 MR. BROWN: May I ask a question, please?

12 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Absolutely.

13 MR. BROWN: What is on that corner of Bluff Road and Montgomery Lane? I'm  
14 asking Staff.

15 MS. HEGLER: Is that a fabrication?

16 MR. DAVIS: Yeah, that's where the fabrication [inaudible]. It made a, when they  
17 built that what he did was fab stainless steel hoods and stainless steel kitchen stuff and  
18 signs, that type of thing. Now what they've done now, the boy that's got it now, it's got a  
19 septic tank service, so he's gone have septic tank trucks there to do it now, that's what's  
20 going on now. So the church across the street's already opposing this, it's the AME  
21 Church right there, we all came up here before. The church, the whole community was  
22 up here against this, about them doing that. But anyway we still had to eat it because  
23 that's what ended up happening, but the part of the compromise with this piece of

1 property he's talking about was gone be a buffer and, and it would absorb the water the  
2 way he built the buildings up to, to do that.

3 MR. BROWN: Where the septic tank business is now.

4 MR. DAVIS: That's right. It's right there now. Right on the corner of Bluff Road  
5 and Montgomery Lane is where he moved his – Triple A set the tank.

6 MR. BROWN: What I'm trying to understand, Mr. Chairman, and maybe you can  
7 help me out here.

8 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Um-hum?

9 MR. BROWN: Is this buffer that this presenter is talking about is the property in  
10 question?

11 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: That is correct.

12 MR. BROWN: Is that right?

13 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: That's right.

14 MR. BROWN: And that, part of that deal was for that to be, to absorb whatever  
15 was happening with the property on the corner of Bluff Road and Montgomery Lane?

16 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Um-hum.

17 MR. BROWN: Am I understanding that correctly?

18 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: I think, is that, is that –

19 MR. TUTTLE: Yes.

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: I think that's right.

21 MR. BROWN: I just wanna understand, make sure I understand what's being  
22 said.

23 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: That's what I understand, Mr. Brown.

1 MR. PRICE: We don't know anything about the reason of how, of any deals that  
2 were worked on for that development, we just know that that property, the front was  
3 rezoned. So we don't know what the deals are, what was worked behind the scenes on  
4 that.

5 MR. BROWN: I'm not suggesting Staff knows that, I'm just asking the question  
6 cause the gentleman raised it.

7 MR. PRICE: I understand, I was just pointing out that we, there's no way for us to  
8 document that.

9 MR. BROWN: No, no, I understand. That's why I didn't ask Staff.

10 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Right.

11 MR. DAVIS: This all took place in 1990, and it was a big hassle the whole time  
12 with everything, but when the – cause it did, it was gonna affect the community, the  
13 drainage, the whole shooting match. And we're trying to keep it, and it is a residential  
14 area, everything up in there is residential.

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, sir.

16 MR. BROWN: Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Wilbur Gordon?

18 **TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM GORDER:**

19 MR. GORDER: I live at 123 Rose Drive, which is in the edge of Columbia, but  
20 my family home place is at Joseph Wesley and Montgomery, and I'm talking for my  
21 sister, too, she lives there. And what it is, like Mr. Campbell or Davis said, when they  
22 built the place there was no retention ponds or areas at all for the place. And it started  
23 off with the one building, then he added another, then another one, then another one to

1 where now the 2 ½ acres is about 2 acres of buildings. And what isn't a building has  
2 been faced forward parking which consists of gravel, screenings and asphalt and all that  
3 to where water cannot soak in there also. So the water has, since the place has been  
4 built and he kept adding on to it, has just gotten worse and worse for the people that are  
5 down there. Plus, if they go in like they want to and add some more parking there's no,  
6 gonna be no buffer zone between that business and a couple of the houses that  
7 residents that are living down there. And that's my, my concern is the buffer and also  
8 the water. And I would just like that to be considered in your considerations.

9 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.

10 MR. GORDER: Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Um-hum. Can't pronounce this name but it's at 1120 –  
12 oh 1018? Okay, alright.

13 **TESTIMONY OF JAMES RICHBURG:**

14 MR. RICHBURG: My name is James Richburg, 1120 Montgomery Lane.

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay James, what's your last name, sir?

16 MR. RICHBURG: Richburg.

17 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Richburg, okay.

18 MR. RICHBURG: I own two houses out there, 1120 Montgomery Lane and 1128  
19 Montgomery Lane. And they zoned that shop up there behind our backs. We don't want  
20 that parking lot put in there. Cars can't stop the water from running, tear the roads up,  
21 what roads left they gone tear it up with more dump trucks running up and down there.  
22 That's all I got to say.

23 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, Mr. Montgomery [sic]. Mary Richburg?

1 **TESTIMONY OF MARY RICHBURG:**

2 MS. RICHBURG: My name is Mary Richburg, 1120 Montgomery Lane. That was  
3 my husband. He's lived there over 43 years. We don't have pizza delivery in our  
4 neighborhood. [Laughter] What can I say? And we'd like to keep it that way. But when I  
5 stop and think of how a similar street just down from us that ran between Bluff and  
6 Garners Ferry, same as what we're talking about now, one piece at a time you changed  
7 the zoning until it's all commercial. And the homeowners left. We don't want that. We  
8 don't wanna see it happen again. And when I see my husband head out on his tractor  
9 and he goes from this side of the road and he decides to plow over on this side, and  
10 here comes the big trucks. And by the way, I did see this morning when I drove past  
11 those, when he mentioned vehicles we're not talking your automobile or your personal  
12 little truck, no. And that big dump truck when it goes over the tractor because he  
13 might've been going too slow. That's what I don't want.

14 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you.

15 MS. RICHBURG: Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Absolutely. Mr. Byrd, alright.

17 **TESTIMONY OF ULYSSES BYRD:**

18 MR. BYRD: My name is Ulysses Byrd and I happen to live at 1018 Montgomery  
19 Lane. So that little 2 ½ acre tract you're looking at is right next to my 10 acre tract. So  
20 this 2 ½ acre tract that you're talking about it would be a major impact on my property.  
21 And next thing is everybody's already heard about the, from my, members of my  
22 community about these trucks. Well like he said, these are not just pickup trucks that's  
23 coming in, these are big vehicles that'll be coming in and out. And this property is,

1 excuse me, the entrance to this 2 ½ acre tract is coming out on Montgomery Lane,  
2 which is only, you know, one way traffic, like going in and out. So these trucks would  
3 create a big problem for traffic in that area. I mean, we have the people from  
4 Westinghouse coming in and out, going up and down Bluff Road and those big trucks  
5 pulling out and coming in to that little small acre tract right there would create a big  
6 problem. And I respectfully request that you all disapprove this request for rezoning. I  
7 have no problem with the gentleman wanting to come and conduct his business on that  
8 little tract that he has there previously, but I do have a problem with it being expanded to  
9 impact my personal resident, which I live on that tract. So again, I respectfully request  
10 that you disapprove it and I appreciate your time.

11 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, Mr. Byrd. That's all we have signed up to  
12 speak. Comments, questions, motions?

13 MR. BROWN: Mr. Chairman?

14 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, sir.

15 MR. BROWN: I move that the, this – 16-043 MA go forward to County Council  
16 with the recommendation of disapproval for the reasons stated by Staff.

17 MS. FRIERSON: I second.

18 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. Okay, all in favor of sending Case No. 16-43 MA  
19 forward to Council with a recommendation for disapproval please raise your hand? All  
20 opposed?

21 *[Approved to deny: Palmer, Greenleaf, Frierson, Tuttle, Gilchrist, Anderson, Brown;*

22 *Absent: Cairns, Theus]*

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: And we are a recommending Body to County Council.  
2 They will meet back in these Chambers on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Thank you all. Next case, 16-  
3 44.

4 **CASE NO. 16-044 MA:**

5 MS. HEGLER: Mr. Chairman, the real 16-44. Applicant is Gabriel McFadden,  
6 location is Dutch Fork Road, 1.21 acres, currently zoned Rural, request is for GC  
7 General Commercial. As you know the General Commercial District is intended to  
8 accommodate a variety of commercial and nonresidential uses that are characterized  
9 by, primarily by retail, office and service establishments that are oriented primarily to  
10 major traffic arteries. The 2015 Richland County Comprehensive Plan designates this  
11 area as neighborhood, low density. A lot like what we've talked about earlier today with  
12 medium density, this is primarily for residential, but low density development.  
13 Commercial development should be located within nearby neighborhood activity centers  
14 and may be considered for location along main road corridors and within a contextually  
15 appropriate distance from the intersection of a primary arterial. The desired  
16 development pattern is for lower density, single-family neighborhood developments.  
17 Again, small scale neighborhood commercial establishments could be located within  
18 neighborhood activity centers. This is not such a place, Staff is of the opinion that the  
19 proposed rezoning would not be consistent with the objectives of the plan. Particularly  
20 the plan recommends commercial development within a neighborhood activity center or  
21 along a primary arterial. The subject parcel's not at a traffic junction and it's not within  
22 the contextually appropriate distance of one. Staff also felt that this would encourage  
23 strip development and leapfrogging and therefore recommended disapproval.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. Questions for Staff? We do have a person  
2 signed up to speak. Is the Applicant available? Applicant's not available? Roger  
3 Lawrence? Okay.

4 **TESTIMONY OF ROGER LAWRENCE:**

5 MR. LAWRENCE: Roger Lawrence, 620 Willowood Parkway, Chapin, South  
6 Carolina. I'm kinda representing our Cedar Cove Property Owner's Association. If I  
7 could ask, we would just like to know what intent they have to build on this property,  
8 have they said?

9 MS. HEGLER: I, I can look at the file. Typically we – it's a rezoning request which  
10 would allow for a number of uses, but I can see what they said. If I can find the right  
11 one. Mr. DeLage, do you remember?

12 MR. DELAGE: [Inaudible] I think the bank just had a piece of property.

13 MS. HEGLER: Ahh, yeah this looks to be bank owned. So they did not list a  
14 proposed use of the property they just asked for this rezoning, which would allow for a  
15 lotta different things.

16 MR. LAWRENCE: I'm sorry?

17 *[Greenleaf out 2:50]*

18 MS. HEGLER: It's a bank owned request and they did not list a proposed use of  
19 the property. So they're asking for a rezoning of General Commercial which would allow  
20 for a number of potential uses.

21 MR. LAWRENCE: Well, I noticed on the thing, and I'm all new and you guys do a  
22 great job, I'm all new to this so first time. But see that you all disapproved of it, so I  
23 guess y'all see that it doesn't hold any use, so.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Well, this board will still have to vote to determine its  
2 pleasure, but the Staff has recommended disapproval to this Body.

3 MS. HEGLER: It goes from us to the Planning Commission, they'll vote next.

4 MR. LAWRENCE: Okay, well thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Lawrence. That's all we have  
6 signed up to speak. Motions?

7 MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Chair, I make a motion that we send Case No. 16-044 MA  
8 ahead to Council with a recommendation of disapproval.

9 MR. BROWN: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Alright, it's been moved and properly seconded that we  
11 send Case No. 16-044 forward to Council with a recommendation of disapproval. All in  
12 favor please signify by raising your hand. All opposed?

13 *[Approved to deny: Palmer, Frierson, Tuttle, Gilchrist, Anderson, Brown; Absent for*  
14 *vote: Greenleaf; Absent: Cairns, Theus]*

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: And again, we are a recommending Body to County  
16 Council and so they will meet back in these Chambers on February the 28<sup>th</sup>. Thank you.  
17 I think that's all we have.

18 MS. HEGLER: Nope, the sixth one.

19 MR. ANDERSON: I think that was Consent.

20 MS. HEGLER: No, the fifth case was Consent. Did you take 6 off too?

21 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, I don't have, I didn't have anyone signed up to  
22 speak on case number 6. I thought we said 6.

1 MS. HEGLER: We'll just have to quickly present it, I don't have it has having  
2 been removed. I have it –

3 MR. TUTTLE: Yeah, we did remove it.

4 MS. HEGLER: Okay.

5 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: So case number 6 was removed during –

6 MR. TUTTLE: Mr. Chairman, I make a motion that we send Case 17-02 MA  
7 forward to Council with a recommendation for approval.

8 MR. BROWN: Second.

9 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: It's been moved and properly seconded that we send  
10 Case No. 17-02 MA forward to Council for approval. All in favor?

11 *[Approved: Palmer, Frierson, Tuttle, Gilchrist, Anderson, Brown; Absent for vote:*

12 *Greenleaf; Absent: Cairns, Theus]*

13 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Alright.

14 MS. HEGLER: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Great. Okay, now if that's it on the cases. Other  
16 Business?

17 MR. ANDERSON: Can we fix my microphone?

18 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, we'll, we will get you – I guess.

19 MR. TUTTLE: Mr. Chairman, having been involved with this Body for a while, the  
20 words from the desk here are very important and from time to time they could be used  
21 in other contexts and litigation and other things. So I just caution us all as board  
22 members to remember that anything we say is recorded and has been and will be used  
23 against us when it's appropriate, and so we just have to always be careful what we say,

1 whether you know, it's a comment to somebody in the audience or if we disagree with  
2 Staff, etc., etc., we just have to be really careful. Cause I think that's important that  
3 we're – it carries a lotta weight and it can't come back to hurt us at some point in time.

4 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: That is certainly a worthy, I certainly learned that and  
5 being on this Commission, and I would certain applaud –

6 MR. TUTTLE: Yeah, you remember so I'm just saying that's an ordeal, so.

7 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, absolutely. So I certainly would echo those  
8 sentiments as well. And I have a few more comments to make about that in the  
9 Chairman's Report. But yes, ma'am, Ms. Frierson.

10 MS. FRIERSON: I have a question. In the past we've been talking about we're  
11 going to have a, I guess a meeting/conference or something to clarify definitions and  
12 certain things, and we haven't done it yet. You know what I'm talking about?

13 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. Sure.

14 MS. FRIERSON: When are we gonna do it cause that's very, very important. And  
15 it is consistent with some of what Mr. Tuttle just mentioned in my opinion.

16 MS. HEGLER: I'm so glad you brought that up, Ms. Frierson. Because I have sat  
17 here very quietly all day.

18 MR. ANDERSON: Did y'all have, like a pow-wow before this?

19 MS. HEGLER: Who's that?

20 MR. ANDERSON: Was that planned?

21 MS. HEGLER: Ms. Frierson and I? No. [Laughter] You know, we had this same  
22 dilemma a year ago now. I won't disclose anything, well we're in the room. We had this  
23 same conversation and, and it was Staff's recommendation at that time, because we

1 had such a different opinion of what we were reading, which is completely natural. We  
2 could read the same poem and take away a completely different inference. So Mr.  
3 Tuttle, I thank you for standing up for Staff, it's really unfair I think to sometimes criticize  
4 Staff because we read something some way, we're just, we've given the same book you  
5 are and we just read it a certain way. But it is your job to then reinterpret that. That is  
6 exactly what your position is and what your job is to do. So we suggested that we look  
7 at these definitions and that we consider them, because they are problematic. We also  
8 have a hard time enforcing them and implementing them because there is a problem. It  
9 probably was on your agenda for six or seven months and we either did not have  
10 enough of a body to really take it on or, you know, it was a long meeting and we were  
11 tired, or folks left halfway through, I mean, I'm just, I'm being completely honest. And we  
12 just, we just took it off the agenda. It just became something, it just clearly no longer  
13 seemed like a priority. So I could say either A, let's bring it up again which we're happy  
14 to do and y'all come back with some recommendations because we could do it until  
15 we're blue in the face but if it doesn't make sense to you as interpreters of this same  
16 language it's not very helpful. Or remember, we are getting ready to do the Code  
17 rewrite. We will be kicking that off either the end of this month or early next month and  
18 we could, you know, really try and focus on that at the frontend and try and get some  
19 traction there. Cause the Code rewrites gonna take a very long time, so maybe there's  
20 some ways we could do this kind of in pieces, parts and get that going. But I  
21 wholeheartedly agree, this is a problem that consists and it persists and we have not  
22 tackled it because we're just reading it different ways, and it lends itself to that. You  
23 know, a term like isolated and then you tell me you're rural, I just take that to mean you

1 feel isolated if you call yourself rural because it's not the same rural as some other rural.  
2 I mean, you can't, it's just the way you use those words can tend to be defined and  
3 interpreted differently. That's why there's this process, that's why we're simply the first,  
4 we're the first blush of a recommendation. Y'all are a recommending Body and then  
5 Council's the final say, that's a due process to help get through that and cut through that  
6 noise. But we, we do need to work on them so I, that is up to y'all how you wanna  
7 approach it. Staff is here, ready, we'll sit here until 6:00, 7:00, 8:00 at night if it helps us  
8 get to a better understanding of that language so that we can do better work in the  
9 future.

10 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, sir, Mr. Palmer.

11 MR. PALMER: To that point, Tracy, I think I made the recommendation before  
12 earlier when we kept kicking the can on that that if we're going to put it in Code in our  
13 ordinance it doesn't need to be a gray area, it needs to be a black and white. So putting  
14 a definition in, unless you're gonna go by a definition that's commonly accepted within  
15 the community as far as NIC codes or *Webster's Dictionary* or whatever it is that doesn't  
16 lend itself to interpretation, it doesn't belong in our Code, because then different people  
17 construe it different ways and you get confusion on issues which is what we have today.  
18 So that's gonna be my contention the whole time that if, if someone's going to take a  
19 look at, at something that's not intended to be Code and utilize it as Code, then we need  
20 to outline things that say, and I believe our Code does say this, these are meant for  
21 guidelines only, but however, people don't listen to that part and they turn a definition  
22 that is clearly not meant to be used as Code and apply it as Code. So that's where the  
23 problem comes in is not reading and understanding the whole process and picking and,

1 and pulling out each individual point which makes your case as opposed to the, the  
2 document as a whole.

3 MS. HEGLER: And to that point we did present to you, I think you could look at  
4 the entire section and make that recommendation and either take it out, move it  
5 somewhere else, or make that caveat more clear in each of those different zoning  
6 districts. So yeah, Staff supported actually really diving into the entire district summary  
7 which includes the more standard Code language. So certainly you could do that in the  
8 way that he's proposed.

9 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Somebody else? Mr. Brown?

10 MR. BROWN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, my concern is a little bit different than Mr.  
11 Palmer or Mrs. Frierson, and I would ask if you as Chair would do this.

12 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay.

13 MR. BROWN: We sit here as volunteers, we're not paid to be up here. And  
14 sometimes I wanna step over this platform and grab some of these people in the collar  
15 and shake 'em to let 'em know that we're not subject to some of that nonsense that they  
16 bring up.

17 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Sure.

18 MR. BROWN: And I think that they need to be told the Staff do their job and their  
19 job is to get the facts for us and then put those facts down, make the best  
20 recommendation to us, and then we have to decide whether we agree with them or not.  
21 And then propose to the County Council for their consideration, which they may agree  
22 or disagree. But all of this accusation stuff that comes up needs to stop.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: I totally would agree with that, Mr. Brown, and Tracy if I  
2 can move into my Chairman's Report to speak to that. I mean, because here is what  
3 happens in situations like that, because I think we, we too have to be careful not to  
4 excite that kind of inference.

5 MR. BROWN: And I agree, that's why I didn't say –

6 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yeah, and I think it's important for this Body to always  
7 recognize the position that we're in and I always defer to Staff so that when we, if and  
8 when we, somebody wants to get us in trouble for something, we defer to the people  
9 who are supposed to be the experts to give us the recommendations of what we need  
10 to have in order to make a decision. So I totally concur with your observation and, and  
11 Ms. Frierson as well, and Mr. Tuttle's comment because I think it's important for us to be  
12 reminded consistently of how important it is for our position to be one of which we  
13 debate and deliberate among ourselves about what we think is most prudent for an  
14 applicant that's coming before us, and our recommendation to Council. And I think you  
15 hear me say that after every case and I learned this from Mr. Palmer when he was  
16 chairman that we are a recommending Body to County Council, we don't determine  
17 anything, we are a recommending Body to County Council and Council is the last say-  
18 so for what we do. And I think we have to be just, continue to be reminded of that. Just  
19 two, along with that I wanna say to all the Commissioners, you know, thank you again  
20 for entrusting me to be your chairman for another year. I appreciate that and we look  
21 forward to working with you again. I thought we had a good year last year and looking  
22 forward to great year in 2017. But I do wanna ask all the Commissioners for something.  
23 We are, this is gonna be a very critical year when we start to engage in things like the

1 rewrite, when we start talking about looking at the definitions of our Code and all those  
2 kinds of things, and it's gonna be very, very important that we really all be kinda  
3 engaged in this from day one. So what that means is it's gonna be important for us to be  
4 in meetings when we can. I know, you know, everybody's busy and have things that,  
5 lots going on, but even when we're at these meetings it's important for us to stay here  
6 throughout. Case in point, we could've had an issue today where we would've had to  
7 remove a case or defer a case, primarily because we may not have had a quorum, Mr.  
8 Palmer had to recuse himself. So I just wanna just continue to emphasize that to all of  
9 us, and that includes me as well, that we, as we get into this very busy year looking at  
10 things like the rewrite and others that, that we really try to spend as much time as we  
11 can in the Commission meetings. I know we all can't make them all but at least as many  
12 as we can, and to remain in the meetings until such time as the meeting has ended.  
13 That's what the public expects from us, and I think it's important that we try to deliver  
14 that. So just, that's – yes, sir.

15 MR. ANDERSON: Can I make a quick comment -

16 CHAIRAN GILCHRIST: Absolutely.

17 MR. ANDERSON: - Mr. Chair? And thank you again for that. So here's just a  
18 thought or a suggestion. Sometimes after we get done with these meetings it's like we  
19 have this point and we're like, alright we're ready get outta here, my phone's, you know,  
20 blowing up. Back when I was on the Commission a long time ago we used to do just  
21 one to two hour little work sessions that seemed to work a little bit better because, I  
22 mean, definitely invited the public and we could – but our specific intent was to, you  
23 know, handle things that for some reason just couldn't fit on the agenda. And I just

1 throw that out there as something to think about, you know, maybe a month that we  
2 don't have a busy, you know, meeting schedule or week before, soft-serve ice cream?

3 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: I hear ya.

4 MR. PALMER: I can tell you that when we last rewrote, when was that Geo? With  
5 Van Dine and everybody that was on the board? Ten years ago? 2003 and 2004, Tuttle,  
6 maybe you were on as well, I don't know, but.

7 MR. TUTTLE: No, that was before my time.

8 MR. PALMER: But we had scheduled work sessions. We had our normal  
9 meeting and then we had scheduled work sessions, and I'm telling you it is a page by  
10 page and you come with your comments, you don't read it at the meeting, you read it  
11 before you get here, you come with your comments and we debated each issue and we  
12 moved forward as a Planning Commission. We disagreed on some stuff but if we came  
13 across an issue that we didn't agree on we took a vote and if you lost that vote,  
14 fantastic, you move on to the next one. But that's what the Planning Commission moved  
15 forward with. What I hate to see is that we've got a document that we as a Planning  
16 Commission are supposed to be presenting forward to the community as our plan that  
17 we are currently operating under. And we aren't doing that. We are making decisions  
18 that don't comply with the Comprehensive Plan without having a reason for doing so,  
19 and if we do that in the future that opens things up to absolutely like Mr. Tuttle said,  
20 litigation, in that the County puts forward a plan and says this is where we want to see  
21 the County grow and how we wanna see it grow. And then if we as a Planning  
22 Commission don't endorse that plan or don't have a very good reason per the state  
23 rules to go against the Comprehensive Plan, to go against Staff, that is what opens

1 things up to litigation and it gives this County a very bad reputation across the State as  
2 a County that doesn't know what they're doing and a County where people just fly by  
3 the seat of their pants and whatever happens, happens. And it gives us no guidance, it  
4 gives us no direction. So when we rewrite these things these words on these pages  
5 mean things and people move forward based on what those words say. And so I just  
6 wanna caution everybody that, that if you're not part of the process and you don't come  
7 to the meetings and you don't participate and you don't do your homework, at the end of  
8 the day you can't have a lot to say about it then. And whatever Planning Commissions  
9 in the past have done, if someone in the Commission is not seated on the Commission  
10 two years from now and they're handed a Comprehensive Plan and they're handed the  
11 document, that's what you're supposed to be looking at and enforcing just, even though  
12 you weren't part of it or even though you didn't like a specific portion of it, that's what we  
13 as a County are putting forward and that's what you're entrusted to do when the Council  
14 sits you on this Planning Commission.

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: No, I think that's a good point. And I, and I, but I also,  
16 you know, to piggyback on that, I think this is a unique opportunity for all of us,  
17 particularly, I've never been through a rewrite before, so this is my first time to actually  
18 go through this process and it helps you begin to at least understand exactly what Mr.  
19 Palmer is talking about. So I think we all have a unique opportunity to have some input  
20 in the process going forward and be a little bit more knowledgeable about what's going  
21 on. So, so I would hope that as we start preparing for this and, you know, maybe we  
22 can come up with a schedule of some potential work sessions consistent with the, the

1 rewrite so that we'll have more time to debate these issues rather than up on the dais  
2 here. Yes, ma'am, Ms. Frierson?

3 MS. FRIERSON: Mr. Chair, it was very helpful when Stacy [sic] and her  
4 committee gave us particular sections that we'd be responsible for, remember? And we  
5 would actually do some edits and turn them into you?

6 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Um-hum.

7 MS. FRIERSON: And so that's what I'd like to see us be able to do again.

8 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Sure.

9 MS. FRIERSON: And I have one more question and I asked this in the past, too.  
10 Not this Staff but remember you used to send us information about training that we were  
11 required to take and not just training that we were required to take but other trainings  
12 that we could take. And I like that but I haven't received it recently, and you explained  
13 why. Could we get that again soon?

14 MS. HEGLER: Yeah. Yes, we will look at trainings. And so are you asking me to  
15 send you the Rural Commercial, General Commercial and Neighborhood Commercial  
16 sections again just to start stewing over and –

17 MS. FRIERSON: I still have that. I'm talking about –

18 MS. HEGLER: Oh, when we do the Code rewrite. Yep.

19 MS. FRIERSON: And you used to give us specific portions that we'd be  
20 responsible for on a certain date. But I know that has to be worked out with the  
21 Chairperson.

22 MS. HEGLER: Yeah, makes sense.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Sure, yeah. So you certainly can do that. Tracy, so  
2 what's the timeline on the, on the rewrite?

3 MS. HEGLER: Yeah, we're gonna talk to the consultant this week. The contract  
4 was finalized last week. I'm gonna try and get them kicking off at Zoning Public Hearing  
5 at the end of this month, but that's a couple weeks turnaround. And then we would have  
6 something to probably start talking about in March with you. So let me talk to them  
7 about a potential schedule and see what we might present to you in March that you  
8 could sit down and say these would make good work sessions, they could be after or as  
9 Mr. Anderson said some other time after your regular meetings. We do, we can as Staff  
10 look ahead a little bit and say this is a light month, maybe you just wanna stay after. We  
11 will do our best with limited funds to try and keep you nourished in a way that helps you  
12 enjoy staying here a little longer. But I hope to come back to you in March maybe with a  
13 little bit of a schedule and an idea of how we're going to start so you guys can decide  
14 the best way for you to meet.

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Sure. Mr. Palmer?

16 MR. PALMER: One thing we did talk about, it's kinda kicked around from time to  
17 time, I mean, if, if people want to change the time of this meeting so, you know, it can  
18 be in the afternoon, I mean, like right now it's 3:00, do I go back to the office, do I, you  
19 know, try to work from home or, or what? It's just kinda right there in the middle of the  
20 gap. I mean, I take the whole afternoon off so I'm okay to stay for however long, but I  
21 mean, if it's only gonna be a two hour meeting or a one hour meeting, you know, it may  
22 be better to do it in the afternoon or closer to the end of the workday or something.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Well, that's certainly something we've talked about and  
2 I'm open to the idea of, of changing the time if that fits with folks' schedule. I mean, it's,  
3 I'd like to hear the pleasure of the Commission on this.

4 MR. TUTTLE: I know Mr. Palmer's push to Wednesdays because that tends to  
5 interrupt both weekends. [Laughter]

6 MR. PALMER: Also because I'm Baptist and we go to church every Wednesday  
7 night. [Laughter]

8 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Good comeback.

9 MS. HELGER: Case in point, the Board of Zoning Appeals did change their  
10 meetings from 1:00 to 3:00.

11 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: To 3:00?

12 MS. HEGLER: Yeah. I don't know if it has more public attendance, BOZA? Their  
13 cases aren't normal, yeah.

14 MR. PRICE: The Board changing theirs to 3:00, that was, I could argue that was  
15 one member who was very familiar with how we did it going back in the day when we  
16 had a lot more cases. Cause we've taken a lotta of those out. It, whether they had done  
17 it at 3:00 or they kept it at 1:00 it wouldn't have made a difference. Yours is a lot  
18 different as far as the cases you get, the discussion that you have. With the Board of  
19 Zoning Appeals we could go months without ever having a case.

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Right.

21 MR. PRICE: Yours is pretty consistent and I think you're gonna get a lot more  
22 like these.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Well that is something certainly I, you know, I'd love for  
2 us to entertain, and we can all think about it and have a conversation about it at our next  
3 meeting.

4 MR. PALMER: I'd be okay with a 4:00 start, that way if, you know, if it goes to  
5 5:00, great if not it goes to 6:00, it's okay.

6 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Just throwing it out.

7 MS. FRIERSON: I'm flexible.

8 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Alright. We'll decide next month. Alright? Come back  
9 next month.

10 MR. PRICE: And what I'll do is I will get with the Clerk's Office and I'll just ask  
11 them if we were to change that how would that affect their calendar.

12 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yeah. Okay. Alright.

13 MS. HEGLER: Done with your report?

14 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: I'm good, yes.

15 MS. HEGLER: Quickly from my report, I think last time we met I discussed briefly  
16 the organizational restructuring that our now hired full term Administrator Seals has  
17 proposed. And I don't recall who was here, I think I did it in November. Just quickly, the  
18 Administrator asked a few staff to consider how we could operate more efficiently and  
19 effectively and the real quick summary is that there were 26 direct reports to  
20 administration, direct departments, that doesn't include the elected officials. And just the  
21 sense that wasn't operating as smoothly as it could. So the desire was to consolidate in  
22 a way some of those departments. So a team was formed to consider how we could do  
23 that and we really looked at how to do it based on the core services that we provide as

1 a County government; infrastructure and the maintenance thereof, internal support, and  
2 that includes admin and all of those folks that do things for us on a daily basis internally.  
3 Public Safety, that's the detention center and animal care services and emergency  
4 services. And then community planning and development, so community services. And  
5 in the scope of that we have proposed 13 departments down from 26. The department  
6 probably most important to you is community planning and development and that is a  
7 merger of a lot of different departments and services that relate to anything that, that  
8 deals with land development, growth, community services, neighborhood work, includes  
9 assessors, the register of deeds, anything kind of development cradle to grave. And so  
10 that has been proposed as a single department. Council votes on that tomorrow night  
11 for their third reading so it's gone through two and they're in support of it so tomorrow  
12 night would be the third reading. And I can give you a copy of the structure that you can  
13 take with you, just to keep you in the know.

14 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Great.

15 MS. HEGLER: And last thing I just wanted to, you know, see how you liked the  
16 presentation. I thought it was good format and certainly recognize Brenda Carter as the  
17 lady here who helped put that together with Tommy DeLage. We are looking to do more  
18 technological work here, Mr. Seals is really into that so trying to up our game a little bit,  
19 so hope you enjoyed it.

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: It was good, that's great. Thank y'all for what you do  
21 and, and the work that you do, and keeping us on track. I mean, that's important and,  
22 and so we give deference to you for that, but that's exciting. So will those folk be coming  
23 to any of our Planning Commission meetings?

1 MS. HEGLER: Whose folks?

2 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: All those other staff people.

3 MS. HEGLER: Yeah, I'm not sure, the next step if it's approved tomorrow night,  
4 which we have no reason to believe it won't be, is to really get into the meat of what that  
5 department will look like, it's, like I said it's a merger of about eight or nine departments  
6 and a couple divisions so really looking at where we can create more efficiencies, where  
7 is there overlap and redundancies in services and personnel? And the idea is not to limit  
8 or to reduce personnel but to maybe re-scope folks to do something else that maybe  
9 we're not currently doing or that we could do better. And that'll take us a few months,  
10 but the directors have been named for each of those 13 departments. I have been  
11 named that one.

12 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Congrats.

13 MS. HEGLER: Yeah, you'll probably see some different faces.

14 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Good, good. Anything else guys? Motion to adjourn?

15 MR. TUTTLE: So moved.

16 MR. BROWN: So moved.

17 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Second. Thank y'all.

18

19

*[Meeting adjourned at 3:15pm]*