



Richland County
Development and Services Committee
MINUTES
November 21, 2024 – 5:00 PM
Council Chambers
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29204

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Chakisse Newton, Jason Branham, Allison Terracio, Gretchen Barron (via Zoom), and Cheryl English

OTHERS PRESENT: Don Weaver, Angela Weathersby, Anette Kirylo, Jackie Hancock, Aric Jensen, Michael Maloney, Michelle Onley, Kenny Bowen, Stacey Hamm, Leonardo Brown, Ashiya Myers, Synithia Williams, Kyle Holsclaw, Michael Byrd, Jennifer Wladischkin, and Patrick Wright

1. **CALL TO ORDER** –Chairwoman Chakisse Newton called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 PM.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. October 22, 2024 – Ms. English moved to approve the minutes as distributed, seconded by Mr. Branham.

In Favor: Branham, Terracio, Barron, English, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** – Ms. English moved to adopt the agenda as published, seconded by Ms. Terracio.

In Favor: Branham, Terracio, Barron, English, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

4. **ITEMS PENDING ANALYSIS: NO ACTION REQUIRED**

a. Direct the Administrator to research and present to Council current laws and benefits of enacting impact fees in Richland County. The purpose is to help reduce the tax burden on residents by not having to pay the complete cost of development in Richland County. [MALINOWSKI/NEWTON, BARRON, and PUGH, January 3, 2023]

On October 22, 2024, Council held a work session with Mr. Carson Bise from Tischler Bise, during which they presented and discussed impact fees. As an outcome of the subsequent Development & Services Committee meeting, Council members requested that staff further research the applicability of impact fees in Richland County and provide a report to the Committee at a later date.

b. I move that County Council direct the County Administrator to research and provide to Council (1) ways to secure title to subdivision roads that were developed but never had ownership transferred to the County and (2) to recommend changes to county ordinances and/or protocols to better assure that future development of subdivision roads includes conveyance of title to the county (unless there is an understanding between the developer and the County that the subdivision roads will intentionally remain privately owned and maintained.) [BRANHAM, ENGLISH, and NEWTON, July 2, 2024]

Staff from the Community Planning and Development Department, the Department of Public Works, and the County Attorney's Office met on October 28, 2024. The team discussed various ways to handle conveyance of the roads back to the County. The team agreed that the next steps should be:

- *Finalize the list of roads that need to be conveyed to the County;*
- *Continue to research the legal obligations of the owners of road parcels;*
- *Once the list is complete, notify the owners of those roads of their responsibilities as the owner of a road and make the offer to transfer that responsibility to the County;*
- *Consider possible condemnation based on the number of roads.*

c. I move to direct the County Administrator to commission an analysis of the County's residential development permitting processes and standards related to noise, flooding, air pollution, and other environmental impacts, in order to ensure that the County has adopted and is following the most current industry best practices to reduce negative environmental impacts. This may include recommendations for improving and enhancing the County's Land Development Code, Land Development Design Manual, Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Map, and

Richland County adopted the updated Land Development Manual (LDM) in 2022. The LDM incorporates practices to mitigate environmental stormwater impacts that are above industry standards. For example, the new design standards require a site to infiltrate the runoff from a majority of storm events, show that there is an 85% reduction in the annual total suspended solid loading, or demonstrate the post-development pollution loading does not exceed pre-development pollutant loading. The LDM also incorporates water quality buffers to protect waterways during and after construction.

To qualify for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), a federally backed flood insurance program, the County has adopted and enforces a Floodplain Management Ordinance to regulate development in flood hazard areas, protect human life and health, minimize property damage, and encourage appropriate construction practices. The County's Floodplain Manager position is currently open, and the Floodplain Manager duties are were added as additional duties to the County's Zoning Administrator. Having a full-time Floodplain Manager who can oversee the Floodplain Management Program and make recommendations for ways to further improve the County's ranking in the NFIP program could strengthen this program.

The new Land Development Code adopted in March 2023 included thorough vetting and input from the public and stakeholders. The new Code includes updated industry standards related to zoning and new development but is not in perfect alignment with the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. The update of the Comprehensive Plan in 2025 will generate an updated future land use map which may result in the need to make future revisions to the Land Development Code to meet the goals in the Comprehensive Plan.

One of the requirements of the Comprehensive Plan is to have a natural resources element. The Comprehensive Plan will include an inventory of existing conditions, a statement of needs and goals, and provide implementation strategies with time frames. The strategies for natural resource protection may result in recommendations of ways to further improve the County's ordinances or policies.

The County does not issue air quality permits for business or industries. That is a service provided by the SC Department of Environmental Services. However, Section 10-3 of the Richland County Code of Ordinances: Open burning on the premises of undeveloped properties for the purpose of land clearing or right-of-way maintenance prevents open burning associated with land clearing or in the right-of-way during ground-level ozone season (April 1 - October 30). Ground-level ozone is a pollutant that forms when certain chemicals react in heat and sunlight. Ground-level ozone can cause breathing problems for people with respiratory illness, children, or the elderly. It is unclear if this ordinance is currently being enforced, but enforcement of the ordinance can reduce air pollution related to burning associated with land clearing during construction.

County Ordinance 18-3 regulates noise; however, noise generated by any construction, demolition equipment, or mineral extractions is exempt from the regulation. If a complaint about noise from a construction site is received by Community Planning and Development staff, the Building Official will contact the contractor and notify them of the complaint, and, in some cases, if the work is being done in a neighborhood, the contractor will try to start work later in the day and end before it gets dark.

The above-mentioned strategies can be completed with internal staff; however, if a more in-depth review of all County ordinances and regulations is required, staff recommends that an outside consultant is solicited to do an environmental analysis of County Ordinances. This is not currently budgeted and could be considered for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2026 budget.

NEXT STEPS:

- *Utilizing the results of the County's Stormwater Annual Report, continue to monitor the benefits of the updated water quality standards.*
 - *Proceed with hiring a full-time Floodplain Manager to ensure proper implementation and enforcement of the Floodplain Management ordinances. Task the new Floodplain Manager with a goal of identifying ways to improve the County's rating in the National Flood Insurance Program.*
 - *Complete the Comprehensive Plan update and make changes to the County's zoning and land development codes based on the Plan's recommendations for future land use and natural resource protection.*
 - *Enforce ordinance 10-3 to reduce air pollution associated with land clearing burning during construction.*
 - *Consider budgeting to have an outside consultant provide an environmental assessment of all County ordinances.*
- d. I move that the Administrator explore the possibility and present a draft ordinance to place a moratorium on demolition and new construction in the Olympia area of Richland County [TERRACIO and ENGLISH, September 17, 2024]
- e. For the purpose of preserving the historical character of the Olympia neighborhood, I move to within 12 months to create a neighborhood character overlay in tandem with an update to the neighborhood plan for the Olympia neighborhood. During this time a moratorium on new construction, rezoning, demolition, and substantial rehabilitation (50% or more of lot area, building square footage, change in use) will be in place [TERRACIO and ENGLISH – October 15, 2024]

On October 7, 2024, the Planning Commission approved proceeding with conducting public meetings about the proposed Olympia Mill Village Design Guidelines. The purpose of the guidelines is to provide a shared understanding of the principal design characteristics that shape and define the neighborhood. The guidelines aim to identify important physical characteristics of the neighborhood, conserve cultural and historic buildings, and boost compatible development while maintaining property values.

Community Planning and Development (CP&D) staff are invited to attend the "We Are Olympia" meeting on November 18, 2024, at St. Luke Church at 5:30 p.m. More community meetings may be necessary based on feedback at the public meeting.

Proposed changes to the guidelines based on public feedback will go back to Planning Commission for their review and recommendation to County Council for approval.

A moratorium on new construction, rezoning, demolition, and substantial rehabilitation will require the passing of an ordinance that specifies its purpose and duration.

NEXT STEPS:

- *Present the recommended guidelines at the We Are Olympia meeting on November 18th.*
- *Notify property owners in the area via direct mailings or an additional public meeting of the proposed changes.*
- *Bring input from the public back to the Planning Commission for review and consideration.*
- *Meet with the County Attorney's Office concerning next steps in creating an ordinance concerning a moratorium on new construction, rezoning, demolition, and substantial rehabilitation (50% or more of the lot area, building square footage, change in use) for twelve months.*

6. **ADJOURNMENT** – Ms. Terracio moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. English.

In Favor: Branham, Terracio, Barron, English, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:19 PM.