Effingham County Georgia
Planning and Zoning Services

EFFINGHAM COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2025
804 South Laurel Springfield, Ga 31329

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ryan Thompson at 6:01 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present:

- Chairman Ryan Thompson, District I
- Vice Chairman Jake Patrick, District 2
- Neal Kessler, District 4
- Walter Bokyin, District 3
- Lyndsay Smith, District 5

Members Absent:

N/A

Staff Present:

- Chelsie Fernald, Planning Manager
- Kimberly Barlett, Planning Board Clerk
- Jennifer Rose, Planner I
- Pamela Melser, Director of Development Services
- Michael King, Assistant County Manager

III. INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Mr. Jake Patrick

IV. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present and led by Mr. Jake Patrick

V. AGENDA APPROVAL
Motion: To approve the agenda as presented/amended.
Made by: Mr. Walter Boykin
Seconded by: Mr. Neal Kessler
Vote: Unanimous

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Motion: To approve the minutes from the September 9, 2025, meeting.
Made by: Mr. Walter Boykin
Seconded by: Mr. Neal Kessler
Vote: Unanimous

Motion: To approve the minutes from the August 12, 2025, meeting.
Made by: Mr. Jake Patrick
Seconded by: Mr. Walter Boykin
Vote: Unanimous

VII. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION
Walt Lawson, Jamie Tucker, Michael Johnson, Noi Tran, Theresa Kirkand, Doug Kirkland, Loretta Johnson, Beverley Boyles, David Hildebrandt, Matt Anderson, Dave Burns, Robert McCorkle, Ben Goldberg, Jeff Gunn, Lex Gunn, Mitcham Walker

VIII. NEW BUSINESS
Charman stated that all items presented during this portion of the meeting will be presented at a future Board of Commissioners Meeting as a Public Hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING (1)
Applicant: Planning Board Clerk Barlett
Request: Consideration to approve moving the November 11, 2025, Planning Board meeting to November 12, 2025.
Public Comment: No one present to speak in favor or against this request.

The board engaged in discussion about having a quorum for this new meeting date.

Board Action:

- **Motion:** Approve
- **Made by:** Mr. Neal Kessler
- **Seconded by:** Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (2)

Applicant: Suzette Schmetz as agent for Beverley Boyles requests to rezone +/- 5 acres from AR-1 to B-3 to allow for veterinary services in B-3. Located on Hwy 17. [Third District] [Map # 296 Parcel 46C01]

Request:

Planning Manager Fernald explained that the applicant has requested to rezone the total 5 acres to B-3 (Major Commercial District). Initially, the applicant applied for a Conditional Use in AR-1 for veterinary services. At the Board of Commissioners meeting on August 19, 2025, the board discussed the option of zoning this parcel as B-3 for the proposed veterinary services and suggested that the applicant apply for rezoning.

Staff has reviewed the application, and the application is complete with the following conditions:

1. A site plan must be approved by the Board of Commissioners.
2. Any encroachments onto Pound Road must be approved by the County Engineer and any encroachments onto Highway 17 must be approved by GDOT.

Public Comment:

Applicant not present.

No one was present to speak in favor of or against this request.

The board held discussions about a site plan, permitted uses in B-3, and potential noise concerns.

Board Action:

- **Motion:** Approve
- **Made by:** Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Jake Patrick

- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (3)

Applicant: Matt Anderson as agent for Robbie Lee Postell Executor of Holiday Postell Estate requests to rezone +/- 6.6 out of 26.4 acres from AR-1 to AR-3 to allow for permitted uses in AR-3. Located on Mt. Hope Road. [Third District] [Map # 268 Parcel 19A]

Request: The Planning Manager, Fernald, explained that the applicant would like to rezone the 6.60 acres to AR-3 (Agricultural—Residential, 2.5 acres or more) and subdivide the two parcels into 3.30 acres each.

Staff has reviewed the application, and the application is complete with the following conditions:

1. Development Services must review and sign the plat. Then, the plat must be recorded so the zoning can take effect.
2. Any encroachment permit must be reviewed and obtained from Effingham County for access to Mt. Hope Road.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:

Mr. Matt Anderson stated that he is representing the family in the estate, and 26.4 acres will be divided, with each family member receiving 1/8 or approximately 0.33 acres. The request is for two family members who want to split their acreage and rezone to AR-3.

Speaking in objection: No one present

The board discussed the positive aspects of AR-3 and the larger lots.

Board Action:

- **Motion:** Approve
- **Made by: Mr.** Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by:** Mr. Neal Kessler
- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (4)

Applicant: Teramore Development, LLC as agent for Carey F. Graham requests to rezone +/- 2 out of 36.36 acres from AR-1 to B-2 to allow for commercial retail in B-2. Located on Old Tusculum Road. [Third District] [Map # 366 Parcel 48]

Request:

Planning Manager Fernald explained that the applicant has requested to rezone 2 out of 36.36 acres to B-2 (General Commercial District) for a commercial retail establishment. The application material states that the development of a commercial retail establishment will have a building of approximately 10,640 sq. ft., and it will be on a private well and septic system.

Staff has reviewed the application, and the application is complete with the following conditions:

1. A Site Plan must be approved by the Board of Commissioners
2. Any encroachment onto Old Tusculum must adhere to the Effingham County Access Management Policy and obtain an encroachment permit.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:

Mr. Josh Yellin explained that this property has a signalized intersection at the corner of Old Tusculum and Highway 21, which makes it a more suitable location for business. The proposed business is a Dollar General.

Mr. Carey Graham is the property owner and is in favor of the project.

Speaking (Neutral):

Mr. Douglas Kirkland states that he lives on Wallace Drive, and his question is: What are the future plans for the remaining acreage? He also expressed concerns about the increase in property taxes.

Mr. Josh Yellin stated there are no current plans for the remainder of the land. It will be subdivided. He also expressed that the City of Springfield's comprehensive plan shows this area as a future growth area, although the county does not.

Speaking in objection: No one present

The Board discussed the Future land use map, concerns about the precedence of more commercial development in the area, the possibility of providing a convenience store to the people in that area, and concerns about spot zoning.

Board Action:

- **Motion:** Approve
- **Made by:** Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by:** Mr. Jake Patrick
- **Vote:**4 to 1- Ms. Lyndsay Smith voted to deny

PUBLIC HEARING (5)

Applicant:
David Hildebrandt as agent for Theresa Hildebrandt requests to rezone +/- 6.35 acres from AR-1 & AR-2 to AR-3 to allow for permitted uses in AR-3. Located on Little McCall Road. [Fourth District] [Map # 391 Parcels 17 & 18A]

Request:
Planning Manager Fernald explained that the applicant wants to rezone 6.35 acres to AR-3 (Agricultural-Residential, 2.5 acres or more).
Staff has reviewed the application, and the application is complete with the following conditions:

1. Development Services shall review and sign the plat. Then, the plat shall be recorded so the zoning can take effect.
2. Any new encroachments onto Little McCall Road must obtain an encroachment permit from Effingham County and meet the requirements of the Access Management Policy.

Public Comment:
Speaking in favor of:
Mr. David Hildebrandt stated that his mother passed away, and he is splitting the land between the family. Opposition N/A

Speaking in objection: No one present

The board engaged in discussion on being in favor of AR-3 and the larger lots.

Board Action:

- **Motion: Approve**
- **Made by: Mr. Neal Kessler**
- **Seconded by: Mr. Walter Boykin**
- **Vote: Unanimous**
-

PUBLIC HEARING (6)

Applicant: Kern & Co., LLC- Chad Zittrouer as agent for R B Baker Properties, LLC requests to rezone +/- 114.79 acres from R-1 to LI to allow for permitted uses in Light Industrial. Located on Old Augusta Road S. [Fifth District] [Map # 476 Parcel 4A]

Request: Planning Manager Fernald explained the proposed zoning is LI (Light Industrial). At the October 1, 2024, Board of Commissioners meeting, the board denied the rezoning. Specifically, they felt that allowing industrial zoning up to Chimney Road did not fit the area. A DRI was completed for this development in 2024, and the Department of Community Affairs found that the development was consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan. The development will be served by Effingham County water and sewer.
Staff have reviewed the application, and the application is complete with the following conditions:

1. A Site Plan must be approved by the Board of Commissioners
2. All buffers must adhere to the Effingham County Board of Ordinances, **Section 3.4** – *Buffers*
3. Site development plan must comply with the Effingham County Water Resources Protection ordinance, the Stormwater Management Local Design Manual, and **Chapter 34** – *Flood Damage Prevention.*
4. Based on the parcel's location, extra Best Management Practices (BMPs) and requirements must be followed as agreed upon between Effingham County and the City of Savannah.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:
Mr. Robert McCorkle stated that he is representing the owner and expressed that the surrounding properties are industrial. Based on the Future Land Use map, this parcel is expected to be industrial as well. They plan for the residential properties that border to have a 150-foot undisturbed buffer. The request is for a 60 sqft to 250,000 sqft, and the potential build-out will be done in phases. The warehouse is going to be built for JIT warehousing and Logistics. JIT is a local, family-owned company, and they plan to relocate from Savannah. He mentioned that this request was previously denied, but they have made changes. Based on the new zoning ordinance, they are no longer building spec warehouses; instead, they are being built to suit. Additionally, the parcel across the street has been recently rezoned to industrial.

Mr. Chad Zittrouer of Kern & Company stated that he met with staff and some commissioners regarding the application, addressing the concerns of speculative buildings. He read a letter from an adjacent property owner named Mr. Josh Cribbs, who is in favor of the request. He expressed that with all the warehouses and truck traffic, there will be no added noise impact.

Mr. Ben Goldberg is the owner of JIT Warehousing. He stated that this is a family-owned company, and he would like to expand the company to Effingham County, which would create jobs.

Mr. Walter Boykin asked about the entry at the future roundabout at Chimney Road.

Chairman Ryan Thompson expressed a need for clarification on whether the access road would potentially cut into the 150-foot buffer.

Mr. Chad Zittrorer stated that they wanted to reserve the access for future development, and currently, the access is only to the south. They do plan to adhere to the buffer standards.

Speaking in objection:

Mr. Jeff Gunn states that he lives on Holly Lane and wants to know if he will receive the same buffers as everyone else, based on the potential roundabout.

Mr. Lex Gunn is also concerned about the buffers.

Ms. Lyndsay Smith expressed concerns about the buffers.

The board had discussions about the site plan and the orientation of the loading docks, as well as concerns regarding the buffers and adjacent residential homes.

Board Action:

- **Motion: Approve with conditions** – The loading docks will face the posterior side of the buildings, and a revised site plan specifying the future additional entrance with additional buffer clarification.
- **Made by**: Ms. Lyndsay Smith
- **Seconded by:** Mr. Jake Ptarick
- **Vote: 4 to 1-** Mr. Neal Kessler voted to deny

PUBLIC HEARING (7)

Applicant: Neil McKenzie as agent for Cassie Michele Hinely requests to rezone +/- 247.2 acres from PD-R to PD-R to allow for a Planned Development Text Amendment. Located on Sand Hill Road. [First District] [Map # 298 Parcel 9]

Request:

Planning Manager Fernald explained that the applicant is requesting to amend the PD text, as the original PD text accounts for private well and sewer systems. However, based on conversations with Effingham County, a will serve letter for both

water and sewer has been obtained by the county. Due to the change in utilities and the increasing density, the PD text must reflect these changes.
Staff have reviewed the application, and the application is complete with the following conditions:

1. A Preliminary Plat must be approved by the Board of Commissioners.
2. All site development plans must comply with the Water Resources Ordinances, the Local Stormwater Design Manual, and Chapter 34 – Flood Protection.
3. Site development plans must adhere to the Effingham County Code of Ordinances, Section 3.4 – Buffers.
4. No lots shall back up to Sandhill Road.
5. The total percentage of Cottage lots will not exceed 50%.
6. The minimum square footage of the home must be 1500 sq. ft.
7. Site development plans must include covered bus stops.

Public Comment:
Speaking in favor of:

Mr. Neal McKenzie stated the original plan had 30 acres set aside for the land application system, but through talks with he county to bring utilities to the area. Using water and sewer would give them the option to add 80 more lots. The higher-density plans will still meet the open space requirements. He spoke about the flood study, wetlands, and the mitigation steps that were taken.

Speaking in objection: No one present

The board had questions about the Flood Plain and wetlands—concerns about places for children to play, amenities, green space, and open space.

Mr. Walter Boykin expressed concern that the excess acreage could be used to create larger lots instead of adding more homes and additional parking.

Mr. Brett Bennett discussed possible plans for amenities.

Board Action:

- **Motion: Approve**
- **Made by: Mr. Jake Patrick– Motion dies**
- **Motion: Deny**
- **Made by: Mr. Neal Kessler**
- **Seconded by: Mr. Walter Boykin**
- **Vote: 3 to 2, Chairman Ryan Thompson & Mr. Jake Patrick- voted to approve**
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PUBLIC HEARING (8)

Applicant: Noi Tran requests to rezone +/- 2.52 acres from R-1 to AR-2 to allow for permitted uses in AR-2. Located at 7016 Ga Hwy 17 South. [First District] [Map # 354 Parcel 46]
Request: Planning Manager Fernald explained that the applicant has requested to rezone the total 2.25 acres to AR-2 (Agricultural – Residential, 1 acre or more) for Religious Housing. The parsonage will be a mobile home, but the R-1 zoning district does not permit mobile homes within its boundaries.

Public Comment:
Speaking in favor of:

Ms. Sandy Tran stated that she would like to rezone the area for a small church to provide housing for older and low-income individuals. The plan is to add a kitchen to provide meals for about 12 or 15 people.

Chairman Ryan Thompson asked for clarification on the type of housing.

Speaking in objection: No one present

The board discussed the location of the mobile home. The existing home is being used as a church, and the adjacent properties are as well.

Board Action:

- **Motion:** Approve

- **Made by:** Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by:** Mr. Neal Kessler
- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (9)

Applicant: Adam Wilkinson as agent for JAW Services, LLC requests to rezone +/- 5.00 acres from AR-1 to AR-2 to allow for permitted uses in AR-2. Located at 200 Clyo-Shawnee Road. [Third District] [Map # 313 Parcel 3]

Request:

Planning Manager Fernald explained the applicant is proposing to rezone +/- 5 acres to AR-2 (Agricultural – Residential, 1 acre or more) to subdivide the parcel into four (4) lots. Private wells and private septic systems will serve these lots.

Staff has reviewed the application, and the application is complete with the following conditions:

1. Development Services must review and sign the plat. Then, the plat must be recorded so the zoning can take effect.
2. Any encroachments onto Old Dixie Highway S, Clyo-Shawnee Road, or Springfield Road must be approved by the County Engineer.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:

Mr. Adam Wilkinson clarified that the previous application wasn't denied, but rather withdrawn to address the concerns of the Commissioners. He explained that due to the well, septic system, and usable uplands, he can only develop four lots. He stated that he had obtained information on traffic at the intersection and didn't see any incidents within the two years preceding the intersection. He states there are adjacent properties that are already one acre and zoned AR-2.

Mr. Neal Kessler asked bout the driveways. The board discussed shared driveways.

Mr,. Walter Boykin inquired about considering the use of AR-3, which is not an available zoning district.

Speaking in objection:

Mr. Dave Burns asked if AR-3 is now an available option; why isn't the decision being made to use AR-3 districts in the areas designated to remain agricultural and rural?

Mr. Walter Lawson presented pictures to illustrate the roads, the effects of rain, and the curves of the streets based on their direction. He expressed his concerns about drainage. He also expressed concerns about the intent of AR-2 and AR-3, as well as their importance. He thinks AR-3 would be a better fit for the area.

The board discussed the future land use map and the application of AR-3 to the rural parts of the county.

Board Action:

- **Motion:** Deny with recommendation that it be changed to AR-3 and split into two lots.
- **Made by:** Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by:** Mr. Neal Kessler
- **Vote:** Unanimous

Mr. Adam Wilkinson inquired about the zoning reason for the denial.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.
Made by: Mr. Neal Kesssler
Seconded by: Mr. Walter Boykin
Vote: Unanimous

Ryan P. Thompson

CHAIRMAN OF PLANNING BOARD
EFFINGHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA

11/20/2025

DATE

Kimberly Barlett

PLANNING BOARD CLERK

11/13/25

DATE

Signature: Ryan P. Thompson
Ryan P. Thompson (Nov 20, 2025 10:46:12 EST)

Email: ryantugaecpb@gmail.com

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Final Audit Report 2025-11-20

Created:	2025-11-13
By:	Kimberly Barlett (KBarlett@EffinghamCounty.org)
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Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAASzMTg2q8FdV5psqFhmVacteUlFEpNnxA

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