EFFINGHAM CO. BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

EFFINGHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
March 19, 2024

The Board of Commissioners of Effingham County, Georgia, Mr. Forrest Floyd, Mr. Roger Burdette, Mr. Jamie Deloach, and Mr. Phil Kieffer met in a Work Session at 4:00 pm on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 in the Commissioners Meeting Chambers at the Effingham County Administrative Complex located at 804 South Laurel Street Springfield, Georgia 31329.

STAFF PARTICIPATION

Mr. Tim Callanan – County Manager, Ms. Stephanie Johnson – County Clerk, Ms. Tasheena Shiggs – Deputy County Clerk, Mr. Steve Candler – Development Services Director, Mrs. Sarah Mausolf – HR & Risk Management Director, Ms. Alison Bruton – Procurement and Capital Projects Manager, and Ms. Maraya Durham – IT Specialist, Mr. Greg Hood – Chief Code Enforcement Officer, Mr. Jeffrey Lonon – Assistant Director of Recreation and Mr. Jonathan Hulme – County Engineer.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Michelle Johns, Sharon Moyer, Sharee McKenzie, Noah Frimat, and Rex Inman.

I- CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Corbitt called the session to order at 4:05pm

II – WORK SESSION

Discussion of a Code Enforcement Policy and Procedure Manual (1):

Greg Hood, Chief Code Enforcement Officer, developed a policy and procedure manual for code enforcement, which he presented to the Board for feedback.

Considering the department's growth, precedents and policies need to be established. There are several ways that we receive complaints, including through Commissioners, constituents, OpenGov, and phone calls. Complaints are filtered through one person, who follows up on them.

A system is being developed which will allow people to report code violations, whether it is public works code enforcement, sanitation, water sewer, or even law enforcement non-emergencies. There is no restriction on anonymous complaints, but the city prefers that you provide a name and phone number. The complaints will be processed through one system, ensuring that they are independent, properly tracked, and addressed in a timely manner.

The County Manager Callanan explained a tracking system has been established to track both internal and external concerns and complaints. It will be used to log when constituents call with complaints, as well as to ensure that the system is consistent throughout the County.

Other topics discussed related to sketch plan and permitted uses within Industrial Districts.

Senior Planner Fernald explained that a site plan ordinance will be implemented for non-residential developments soon. Residential plans will continue to be considered sketch plans, and commercial and industrial plans will still be reviewed and approved.

According to County Manager Callanan, if someone wants to rezone a property for speculative purposes without a site plan. The city should gain a clear understanding of what they are doing regarding buffers, encroachments, drainage wetlands, and other issues.

County Manager Callanan continued the discussion regarding conditional uses. Two conditions have been put in place since 2020: export of junk cars and container storage yards. Staff wanted to determine if other uses would be incompatible. An external condition, general proximity to dense residential areas, may require that we consider that particular use for a conditional use, and we would expand the list of conditional uses accordingly. In deciding whether to approve a conditional industrial use for a particular property, the board can take into consideration the factors listed in the conditional use zoning ordinance. A small warehouse may be appropriate in certain areas, but a heavy steel mill may not be. Ready-mix concrete is not a conditional user, but it may warrant a closer examination to determine whether industrial zoning is appropriate.

Board members continued to discuss conditional and industrial uses.

During the work session, Sharee McKenzie asked what the County can do to ensure businesses are following the correct procedures even after a fire or explosion has occurred.

Fire Chief Hodges responded, each existing industry, large or small, is being visited by the county fire inspector, and many violations are being found. Initially, the fire inspector must perform the tasks, but once inside, anything is possible. In cases where the inspector is unable to handle a violation directly, it can be passed along to the person who can handle it. Industrial processes are difficult to determine since it is difficult to examine the machine's internals.

III – ADJOURNMENT

At 4:58 pm, being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Wesley M. Corbitt, Chairman

S. Johnson

Stephanie D. Johnson, County Clerk