Effingham County Georgia
Planning and Zoning Services

EFFINGHAM COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Meeting Minutes
October 13, 2026
804 South Laurel St., Springfield, Ga 31329

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jake Patrick at 6:00 p.m.

IV. ROLL CALL

Members Present:

- Jake Patrick, District 2
- Walter Boykin, District 3
- Troy Smith, District 1

Staff Present:

- Pamela Melser, Director of Development Services
- Michael King, Assistant County Manager
- Akela Wright, Planning Manager
- Kimberly Barlett, Senior Planner
- Tricia Hammock, Planning Board Clerk
- Tianchi Xu, Planner I
- Tim Callanan, County Manager
- Lee Newberry, County Attorney

V. INVOCATION

Chairman Jake Patrick gave the invocation.

VI. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

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

VII. AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion: To approve the agenda
Made by: Mr. Walter Boykin
Seconded by: Mr. Troy Smith
Vote: Unanimous

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: To approve the minutes of the September 8, 2026, meeting.
Made by: Mr. Troy Smith
Seconded by: Mr. Walter Boykin
Vote: Unanimous

IX. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: Joshua Austin, Joyce Sowers, Chad Zittrouer, Kathleen Seitz, Susan Lancaster, Keith Lancaster, Troy McCreery, Joseph Mann, Sherry Park, Deatia McFarlin, Greg McFarlin, Michael Daffner Sr., Michael and Barbara Walters, Jesse Newmyer, Amber Brooks, David Miller, Aaron Fordland, Richard Allen, William Bell

X. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Jake Patrick 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. (11/03/2026)

PUBLIC HEARING (1)

Deatia McFarlin requests to rezone +/- 5.684 acres out of 10.784 acres from AR-1 to AR-2 to allow permitted uses in AR-2. Located at 352 Lower Ferry Road [Third District] [Map # 424 Parcel 15]

Request

Senior Planner Barlett explained that the applicant requested to rezone 5.684 acres from AR-1 to AR-2 to allow creation of four residential parcels, with the remaining acreage staying AR-1. Staff stated the limited increase in density remained compatible with rural surroundings.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:

Ms. Deatia McFarlin and Greg McFarlin said they want to build on the larger tract that is not on Exley Spur Roadside.

Speaking in opposition: No one present

The Board discussed that it is one parcel with three homes, and the applicants want to split it into four parcels. The Board discussed that the easements were already in place.

Board Action:

- **Motion: Approved**
- **Made by**: Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Troy Smith
- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (2)

Joyce Sowers requests to rezone +/- 0.60 acres out of +/-1.60 acres from AR-2 to AR-1 to allow for permitted uses in AR-1. Located at 2293 Rincon-Stillwell Road [Fifth District] [Map # 461 Parcel 66]

Request:

Senior Planner Barlett explained that the applicant requested to rezone 0.60 acres from AR-2 to AR-1 to allow realignment and combination with an adjoining parcel. Staff confirmed no additional lots would be created and the request aligned with rural land-use goals.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor: Ms. Joyce Sowers and Justin Sowers said she wants to add the 0.6-acre to the 7.2-acre parcel to make it a better-looking parcel and straighten the property lines. Ms. Sowers also said that if she decides to downsize in the future, she could have a 2-acre parcel and build a smaller home.

Speaking in opposition: No one present

The Board discussed that the remaining 1-acre parcel will remain AR-2.

Board Action:

- **Motion: Approved**
- **Made by**: Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by**: Troy Smith
- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (3)

Joshua Maynard requests to rezone +/- 2.43 acres from AR-1 to AR-2 to allow for permitted uses in AR-2. Located on Clark Road [Third District] [Map # 235A Parcel 6C]

Request:

Senior Planner Barlett explained that the applicant requested to rezone 2.43 acres from AR-1 to AR-2 to divide the property into two residential lots. Staff explained that the rezoning was required because the lot is nonconforming.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor: Mr. Joshua Maynard expressed that the lot currently stands as a nonconforming AR-1. He would like to change it to AR-2, split it, and use it for appropriate AR-2 uses. Each lot will have a well and septic.

Speaking in opposition: Ms. Sherry Park expressed concerns about whether this change to AR-2 would make a tax difference. Her property is zoned as AR-1.

The Board discussed that the lot is nonconforming and that nothing could be done with it without rezoning.

Board Action:

- **Motion: Approved**
- **Made by**: Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Troy Smith
- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (4)

Kern & Co. LLC- Chad Zittrouer, as agent for Joseph Mann, requests to rezone +/- 98.92 acres from AR-1 to AR-3 to allow for permitted uses in AR-3. Located on Springfield Tusculum Road [Third District] [Map # 318 Parcels 18, 20, & 20A]

Request:

Senior Planner Barlett explained that the applicant requested rezoning of 98.92 acres from AR-1 to AR-3 for a 21-lot rural subdivision using private wells and septic. Staff noted the increased density remained consistent with rural character, though wetlands would require additional review.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor: Mr. Chad Zittrouer, with Kernan Company, said the property consists of three separate tax IDs. He explained that the

rezoning application covers a total of 98 acres. The minimum lot size they have shown is 3 acres, with the largest at 6 acres. It averages out to 21 lots. After taking out the roads, the average lot size will be approximately 4.5 acres. Acknowledged that covenants will need to be established for the stick-built homes.

Stan Mann wanted to make sure everyone knew a national builder was trying to obtain this property and build about 300 homes. His son was able to obtain the property with the intention of keeping the rural aspect, low density, and mini farms for these properties.

Keith Lancaster stated that he was neither for nor against this development. He asked about the AR-3 and whether they could reduce the lot size.

Speaking in opposition:
James Everett expressed that he had the same concern as Mr. Lancaster. He said he was more against than in favor. He asked whether more than one dwelling would be allowed on the lots, what it would do to property taxes and traffic, and how the infrastructure would handle the traffic.

James Hall expressed his concerns about the power grid and flooding. He is afraid that if the property is built up, it will flood his property.

Michael Daffner Sr. expressed his concerns about this bringing in more traffic and what it will do to the area.

Michael and Barbara Walters expressed concerns about traffic and the potholes already on the road. Bald eagles are nesting in the area, and they asked what impact this will have on them. Concerns over the water table.

Jesse Newmyer added her concern about children when there are a lot of people in the area who shoot firearms.

Amber Brooks expressed concerns that their property is very low,

and she doesn't know how this will affect it. She is worried about what this will do to the area's water.

David Miller expressed concerns about pollution, noise, crime, and water.

Aaron Fordland expressed concerns over the wetland tracts.

Freddy Madden expressed concerns about the wetlands and what covenants will be in place.

Richard Allen expressed concerns over the power grid and the watershed.

Mr. Chad Zittrouer acknowledged that this is a rural location and believes it will be a good fit, including the lot sizes. Acknowledges that they will sign an agreement with Georgia Power to come and install the power as part of the development. Georgia Power will also need to complete their load studies and any other required work.

Mr. Boykin asked if this would be overhead or underground power.

Mr. Zittrouer stated that this would be underground.

Mr. Patrick asked about the wetland data.

Mr. Zittrouer stated that they have not done a delineation, but their survey crew has been out there. He believes that the rear lots will be left natural.

Mr. Smith asked whether they would oppose additional buffers on the backside.

Mr. Zittrouer stated that they would be willing to go 50ft out.

The Board discussed that it's definitely the intent behind the AR-3.

Additional work will be needed regarding the wetlands. Georgia Power and the additional buffer were discussed.

Board Action:

- **Motion: Approved with conditions**
- **Made by**: Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Troy Smith
- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (5)
Joshua Austin requests to rezone +/- 1.07 acres from AR-1 to B-1 to allow for permitted uses in B-1. Located at 207 Goshen Road [Second District] [Map # 466B Parcel 8]

Request:

Senior Planner Barlett explained that the applicant requested to rezone 1.07 acres from AR-1 to B-1 for potential small-scale commercial use.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:
Mr. Joshua Austin explained that, with growth on Goshen Road, converting this to a small office could support a medical office or a lawyer's office. Mr. Austin said that he would not like to see a tobacco or CBD shop at the location.

Speaking in opposition:
Mr. Troy McCreery stated that this lot is part of Westwood Farms, and the covenants do not allow business. He has concerns about the traffic.

The Board discussed commercial use on both sides of Goshen Road along Hwy 21.
Mr. Patrick stated that he does see a use for a B-1 neighborhood

use.

Mr. Smith asked Mr. Austin if there were any covenants.

Mr. Austin is not aware of active covenants and explained that the closest house was 450 ft away with a wooded buffer.

Mr. Newberry advised that the Board may want to postpone until the next meeting on November 10, 2026, and have the applicant investigate the covenants. Advised having a lawyer do a title search and confirm whether the covenants exist.

Board Action:

- **Motion: Tabled**
- **Made by**: Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Troy Smith
- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (6)

William Bell requests to rezone +/- 0.881 acres from AR-1 to B-3 to allow for permitted uses in B-3. Located on US Hwy 80 [First District] [Map # 355A Parcel 8A]

Request:

Senior Planner Barlett explained that the applicant requested to rezone 0.881 acres from AR-1 to B-3 to expand an existing portable building sales operation consistent with surrounding uses.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:

Mr. Randall Bell explained that he would like to make it commercial, since both sides of the land are already commercial and sell handy houses. He asked to waive the sidewalks if possible, stating that there are no sidewalks on either side.

Planning Manager Wright explained that waiving the sidewalks

would not be possible and that he would have to pay in lieu or build the sidewalks.

Speaking in opposition: No one present

The Board discussed that it appears to fit, is the most intense use, and has B-3 surrounding the lot. The Board discussed that he will need to submit a site plan.

Board Action:

- **Motion: Approved**
- **Made by**: Mr. Troy Smith
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (7)
Consideration to make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners regarding proposed adoption of the Zoning Ordinance of Effingham County, Georgia, and proposed adoption of the Official Zoning Map of Effingham County.

Request:

Effingham County Manager Tim Callanan presented updates to the Zoning Ordinance and Official Zoning Map, largely procedural, and adding review requirements for conditional uses.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of: No one present

Speaking in opposition: No one present

The Board discussed that everything adopted last time, plus the addition of conditional uses in industrial and business areas, will

return to the Planning Board before the commissioners' meeting.

Board Action:

- **Motion:** Approved
- **Made by**: Troy Smith
- **Seconded by**: Walter Boykin
- **Vote:** Unanimous

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Board Action:

- **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 7:19 PM
- **Made by:** Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by**: Troy Smith
- **Vote:** Unanimous

Jake Patrick

Jake Patrick (Nov 13, 2026 06:59:36 EST)

Nov 13, 2026

CHAIRMAN OF PLANNING BOARD **DATE**
EFFINGHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA

Patricia Hammock

11/12/2026

PLANNING BOARD CLERK **DATE**

Pbm_10132026

Final Audit Report 2026-11-13

Created:	2026-11-12
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