Effingham County Georgia
Planning and Zoning Services

EFFINGHAM COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ryan Thompson at 6:03 p.m.

II. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN- Planning Board Clerk, Barlett, requested nominations from the board. Mr. Walter Boykin made a motion to nominate Mr. Jake Patrick as Chairman. The vote was unanimous. Mr. Jake Patrick, District 2

III. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN- Chairman Jake Patrick requested nominations from the board. Mr. Ryan Thompson nominated Mr. Walter Boykin as vice-chairman. The vote was unanimous. Mr. Walter Boykin, District 3

IV. ROLL CALL

Members Present:

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

Members Absent:

- N/A

Staff Present:

- Kimberly Barlett, Planning Board Clerk
- Jennifer Rose, Planner I

- Pamela Melser, Director of Development Services
- Michael King, Assistant County Manager

V. INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Mr. Walter Boykin

VI. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present and led by Mr. Walter Boykin.

VII. AGENDA APPROVAL

Planning Board Clerk, Barlett, explained that there are changes to the agenda. Item three will be moved to be heard as item one.

Motion: To approve the agenda with the changes.
Made by: Mr. Walter Boykin
Seconded by: Mr. Neal Kessler
Vote: Unanimous

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Neal Kessler stated that on page four, his opposing vote on item one was not mentioned.
Motion: To approve the minutes from November 12, 2025, meeting with revisions.
Made by: Mr. Ryan Thompson
Seconded by: Mr. Walter Boykin
Vote: Unanimous

IX. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Ms. Margaret Benton, Mr. Jon Nance, Ms. Brenda Nance, Mr. Alex Walker, Ms. Alice Hurst, Mr. Doug Husketh, Mr. Dee Husketh, Mr. Bryan Davis, Mr. Scott Edge, Ms. Tina Edge, Mr. Phil Keiffer, Mr. Eddie Hodges, Ms. Cathie Hodges, Ms. Dana Ciccarelli, Ms. Sandra Eastmam, Mr. Mark Vandzura, Mr. Brian Eastman, Mr. Chris Lewis, Mr. Tim Jones, Mr. Douglas Kirkland, Mr. David Smith, Mr. Dallas Claxton, Ms. Jackie Dyches, Mr. J.D. Dyches, Mr. Luis Tovar, Ms. Debra Tovar, Mr. Daniel Busbee, Mr. Waylon Pickard, Gordon Hughes, Ms. Bonnie Bowers, Ms. Jill Nixon Baker, Mr. Charlie Bowers,

Ms. Sidney Thompson, Ms. Susan Dobson, Mr. Kirk Thruman, Ms. Amita Hughes, Mr. Lamar Benton

X. NEW BUSINESS

Charman 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. (2/17/26)

PUBLIC HEARING (3)

Applicant: GW Investments/Gary Wiggin as agent for Joyce R. Johnson requests to rezone +/- 135 out of 146.06 acres from AR-1 to R-5 to allow for residential development in R-5. Located on McCall Road. [Fourth District] [Map # 413 Parcel 8]

Board Action:

- **Motion:** Recuse Mr. Ryan Thompson
- **Made by:** Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Neal Kessler
- **Vote:** Unanimous

Request

Planner I Rose explained that the applicant seeks to +/- 135 acres out of 146.06 to R-5 (Single-Family Traditional Neighborhood) to develop a single-family detached and townhome subdivision. Per the R-5 ordinance, up to 25 percent of the total number of dwelling units may be developed as R-2.

Staff has 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. Site Development must adhere to the R-5 zoning district requirements.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:

Mr. John Girodano stated that 10 acres will remain AR-1 as an estate-size lot, with access to the easement in the Timbergate subdivision. The neighborhood will access McCall Road. They are proposing 342 dwelling units, including 270 single-family homes and 72 townhomes. They are offering 55% open space, including enhanced buffers and trails, pocket parks, overflow parking, mail kiosks, and covered bus stops. Effingham County should provide water and sewer. They plan to use a large wetland system to buffer the denser development from the adjacent neighborhood.

The board asked questions about density, covered bus tops, wetland impacts, house sizes, garage sizes, overflow parking, and the consideration of larger lots.

Mr. Gary Wiggins stated he wants to provide smaller, less expensive lots for first-time home buyers, ranging from about 1,800 to 2,400 sq ft.

Speaking in objection:

Mr. Daniel Busby of 113 Timbergate expressed concerns about traffic flow, infrastructure, watershed, and the safety of children.

Mr. Frank McGee of 389 McCall Road expressed concerns about traffic, dump trucks, and truck traffic, small lot sizes, and house sizes- the need for larger lots and larger houses- home values.

Mr. John Nance expressed concerns about access to the estate lot and its size.

Mr. Alex Walker of 233 Timbergate expressed concerns about children's safety and excessive traffic, and their desire for larger lots.

Mr. David Smith of 216 Timbergate Trail expressed concern regarding the small lots, too many homes, and traffic.

Mr. Michael Sansale of 112 Timbergate expressed concerns about trails, animal safety, and flooding in the area.

Ms. Margaret Benton expressed concerns about the wetlands.

Luis Tavara of 117 Timbergate expressed concerns about a decrease in property value and children's safety. - Property value will decrease. Quiet the neighborhood.

Mona Underwood, City of Rincon Council, expressed concerns about the estate lot and whether it's been cut out. If it connects to the subdivision, will it be built to the same standards? She says there are two responsibilities to the community: to protect their property values and to protect their community's culture. She states that McCall is a truck route and doesn't support this many houses.

Mr. John Giroando stated that a traffic study will be done. The estate lot is the only lot accessed through Timbergate. They will do a stormwater management study.

Board discussions-
Mr. Walter Boykin expressed concerns about the lot size and possibly flooding.
Mr. Neal Kessler appreciates the open space but expressed concerns about the 5-acre subdivision next door, the traffic and truck route, the increase of children in the schools from what was already approved, the lot sizes, and the wetlands.
Ms. Lyndsay Smith would like to see larger lot sizes and stated that we are no longer in a housing shortage.
Mr. Jake Patrick expressed concerns about traffic and would like to see a less dense neighborhood, but does appreciate the greenspace.

Board Action:

- **Motion:** Denied – traffic and schools
- **Made by:** Mr. Neal Kessler
- **Seconded by**: Ms. Lyndsay Smith
- **Vote:** 3 to 1 (1 opposed – Chairman Jake Patrick)

Board Action:

- **Motion:** Mr. Ryan Thompson to return to the board
- **Made by:** Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Neal Kessler

- **Vote:** Unanimous

Chairman Jake Patrick excused himself from the remainder of the meeting for a personal matter at 7:00 pm.

PUBLIC HEARING (1)

Applicant: Alice Hurst, as agent for Sandra Skipper, requests to rezone +/- 1.8 acres out of 6.18 acres from AR-1 to AR-2 to allow permitted uses in AR-2. Located at 1572 Low Ground Road. **[Fourth District] [Map # 393 Parcel 20]**

Request:
Planner I Rose explained that the applicant seeks to rezone 1.18 acres to AR-2 (Agricultural-Residential, 1 acre or more) to subdivide the parcel. The applicant will retain the 1.18 acres for their homestead and sell the remaining 5 acres. Because the 1.18 acres falls below the AR-1 zoning threshold (5 acres or more), it must be rezoned to AR-2.

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 for the zoning to take effect.
2. Any new encroachments onto Low Ground Road must obtain an encroachment permit from Effingham County.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:

Mr. Alex Long spoke on behalf of Ms. Alice Hurst, who had to leave. Ms. Skipper would like to sell five acres and keep 1.18 acres for herself.

Speaking in objection: No one present

The Board discussed that there are AR-2 around it—plenty of smaller lots.

Motion: Approve with staff recommendations

- **Made by:** Mr. Neal Kessler
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Ryan Thompson
- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (2)

Applicant: Robert McCorkle as agent for Estate of Ida Hagin, Carolyn Lucas Executor requests to **rezone** +/- 5.63 acres from **AR-1 to B-2** to allow for permitted uses in B-2. Located at 3135 United States Highway 80. **[First District] [Map # 378 Parcel 13]**

Request

Planner I Rose explained that the applicant seeks to rezone the total of +/- 5.63 acres to B-2 (General Commercial) to develop a flex office project. Per the application, the flex space will provide office and storage space for local businesses and contractors. B-2 (General Commercial) does have a square foot maximum of 50,000 square feet.

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. Site development must adhere to the B-2 (General Commercial) zoning district and requirements.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:

Mr. Bryan Davis stated is a listing agent on the property. The goal is for office warehouses for local businesses and contractors. They felt that the commercial was the highest and best use for the property.

Mr. Ryan Thompson had questions about the buildings' sizes and whether this is the intended use.

Mr. Neal Kessler asked questions regarding g the size of the buildings and meeting the buffer requirements.

Planning Board Clerk, Barlett, mentioned that Flex space is a conditional use in B-2.

Speaking in objection:

Mr. Kirk Thurman of 127 Johnson Street expressed concerns about drainage, setbacks, and flooding, traffic, and access to the property.

Mr. Charlie Bowers of 199 Clever Drive expressed concerns about traffic and the road frontage to the subdivision behind the property.

Mr. Bryan Eastman of 162 Pine View Drive expressed concerns about traffic and the ingress and egress. Traffic lights. Not accessing out onto Thompson Street.

Ms. Dana Chiperelli of 210 Pine View Drive expressed concerns about the number of buildings. Safety and security concerns. Concerns about commercial with residential.

Mr. Jimmy Thompson of 122 Thompson Street and Ms. Jill Nixon of 188 Thompson Street expressed concerns about traffic, views, drainage and flooding, property values, and the potential uses of B-2.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked about considering zoning only a portion. He also mentioned that the proposed buildings would not meet the requirements for B-2 due to their square footage.

Mr. Neal Kessler asked about increasing the buffer.

Mr. Douglas Suska of 106 Bradford Drive expressed concerns about the uses in B-2.

The board discussed increasing the buffer along the residential portion of the back of the property.

Board Action:

- **Motion:** Approve with an increased planted buffer of 50 feet from the line of the commercial corridor away from Hwy 80- future subdivision does not allow for anything more than 50,000 sqft, no additional access to Thompson Street and Woodlawn Ave.
- **Made by:** Mr. Ryan Thomspon
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Neal Kessler
- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (4)

Applicant: Courthouse GSL requests to rezone +/- 15.33 acres from R-6 to R-1 to allow for residential development in R-1. Located on Courthouse Road. [Fourth District] [Map # 390 Parcel 1D]

Request

Planner I Rose explained that the applicant seeks to rezone the total of +/- 15.33 acres to R-1 (Single-Family Residential) to subdivide for home sites. The City of Springfield will provide water, and private septic systems will be used. The parcel was initially zoned R-6 at the July 19, 2022, Board of Commissioners meeting.

Staff has reviewed the application and found it complete.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:

Mr. Alex Long stated that he is making ½-acre lots because Springfield doesn't have sewer capacity at this time. So they will have septic tanks. The R-1 zoning will allow for fewer houses than the current zoning.

Speaking in objection:

Mr. Don Hewitt of 313 Courthouse Road expressed concerns about runoff and water displacement from a new subdivision and increased traffic.

The board discussed downzoning to a lower density.

Board Action:

- **Motion:** Approve with staff recommendations
- **Made by:** Mr. Neal Kessler
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Ryan Thompson
- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (5)

Applicant: Chelsie Fernald as agent for Effingham County Board of Commissioners requests to rezone +/- 5.06 acres from AR-1 to R-4 to allow for permitted uses in R-4. Located on Burke Drive. [Third District] [Map # 366 Parcel 49]

Request

Planner I Rose explained that the applicant seeks to rezone the total of the +/- 5.06 ac to R-4 (Planned manufactured home community districts. The proposed rezoning of approximately 5.06 acres from AR-1 (Agricultural Residential) to R-4 is intended to enable a land swap that will support planned traffic improvements to McCall Road and Courthouse Road. This will help facilitate roadway enhancements to improve traffic flow, safety, and accessibility for area residents.

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

1. Any new encroachments onto Wallace Drive or Burke Drive must obtain an encroachment permit from Effingham County and meet the requirements of the Access Management Policy.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:

Director of Development Services, Melser, stated that the request is to facilitate a land swap between the county and a landowner off Courthouse Road. To decrease the traffic issues around Baker Pond and facilitate the roundabout at McCall and Dasher subdivision. The land swap will be south of Bevilles trailer park, to dead-end courthouse, and rerouting to the roundabout.

Speaking in objection:

Douglas Kirkland of 307 Wallace Drive expressed concerns about living across from a trailer park. He is concerned about the number of mobile homes and how that would affect his property value. He is also concerned with water usage from the city and the precedence of approving R-4.

Speaking in favor:

Mr. Chris Lewis, owner of Beville Mobile Home Park, stated that he has been working with the county to have his land used for the road. The swap will allow him to continue developing the mobile home park.

The board discussed adding extra vegetation and an extended buffer, adding conditions to the map, and the precedence of R-4 zoning approvals.

Board Action: R-4

- **Motion:** Approve with the condition of additional buffers of 30 feet- vegetation along Wallace Drive and on both sides of the parcel.
- **Made by:** Ms. Lyndsay Smith
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Ryan Thompson
- **Vote:** Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING (6)

Applicant: Stephen Lanier requests to rezone +/- 0.209 out of 5.431 acres from AR-1 to AR-2 to allow for permitted uses in AR-2. Located at 506 Sisters Ferry Road. [Third District] [Map # 386 Parcel 43]

Request
Planner I Rose explained that the applicant requests to rezone 0.209 acres of the 5.22 acres to AR-2 (Agricultural-Residential, minimum 1 acre) to incorporate the area into the adjacent property located at 506 Sisters Ferry Road (Parcel: 386-43A) and to increase the available front yard setback area. The remaining acreage will stay at AR-1 (Agricultural-Residential, minimum 5 acres).

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

1. **Plat Approval and Recording**. The plat must be reviewed and approved by Development Services. Following approval, the plat must be recorded before the zoning action takes effect.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of: No one present

Ms. Susan Dobson asked what was happening on the property.

Mr. Neal Kessler spoke about the email concerns that were submitted to the board.

Opposition emails were submitted from neighboring properties.

Board Action:
- **Motion:** Approve with staff recommendations
- **Made by:** Mr. Neal Kessler
- **Seconded by**: Ms. Lyndsay Smith
- **Vote:** Unanimous

Board Action:
- **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at
- **Made by:** Mr. Ryan Thompson
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Neal Kessler

- **Vote:** Unanimous

XI. ADJOURNMENT 8:48 pm

Walter Ryan Boykin — 2/11/2026

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

Kimberly Barlett — 02/10/2026

PLANNING BOARD CLERK **DATE**

Signature: Walter Ryan Boykin (Feb 11, 2026 13:14:23 EST)

Email: boykin009@aol.com

Pbm_01132026

Final Audit Report 2026-02-11

Created:	2026-02-11
By:	Kimberly Barlett (KBarlett@EffinghamCounty.org)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAWxvvorF6HLAEMW5QxrOoDaG3m5B1rj11

"Pbm_01132026" History

Document created by Kimberly Barlett (KBarlett@EffinghamCounty.org)
2026-02-11 - 2:02:30 PM GMT

Document emailed to boykin009@aol.com for signature
2026-02-11 - 2:03:22 PM GMT

Email viewed by boykin009@aol.com
2026-02-11 - 6:12:02 PM GMT

Signer boykin009@aol.com entered name at signing as Walter Ryan Boykin
2026-02-11 - 6:14:21 PM GMT

Document e-signed by Walter Ryan Boykin (boykin009@aol.com)
Signature Date: 2026-02-11 - 6:14:23 PM GMT - Time Source: server

Agreement completed.
2026-02-11 - 6:14:23 PM GMT