Effingham County Georgia
Planning and Zoning Services

EFFINGHAM COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2026
804 South Laurel St., Springfield, Ga 31329

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jake Patrick at 6:01 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

V. INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Chairman Jake Patrick

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 August 11, 2026, meeting.
Made by: Mr. Walter Boykin
Seconded by: Mr. Troy Smith
Vote: Unanimous

IX. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: Ada Carter, Joe Guion, Boltin Teeter, Joshua Gibbons Sr., Jimmy Blakey, Sharon Walthour, Tim Hutchings, Robert McCorkle, Andrew Smith, Michael Roach, Alec Miduri, Amie Dickerson

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. (10/06/26)

PUBLIC HEARING (1)

Applicant: Timothy Hutchings requests to rezone +/- 5.71 acres from R-1 to AR-1 to allow permitted uses in AR-1. Located at 4028 Blue Jay Road. [First District] [Map # 351B Parcel 10]

Request

Planner I, Xu explained that the applicant is requesting to rezone ±5.71 acres from R-1 (Single-Family Residential) to AR-1 (Agricultural Residential). The purpose of the request is to align the zoning classification with the property's existing rural character, lot size, and surrounding agricultural-residential development pattern. The

applicant seeks greater flexibility to expand existing agricultural activities, including keeping livestock and chickens and potentially selling eggs. Applicant would also like the option to establish an additional dwelling in the future. No immediate plans are proposed for subdivision. Property currently contains single family residence, accessory shop and a pond.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:

Mr. Timothy Hutchings expressed that he wanted to make sure the zoning lined up for what he uses the property for.

Speaking in opposition: No one present

The Board discussed and liked the plan.

Board Action:

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

PUBLIC HEARING (2)

Applicant: William Cox requests to rezone +/- 1.00 acres from AR-1 to AR-2 to allow for permitted uses in AR-2. Located at 890 Herbert Kessler Road [Second District] [Map # 395 Parcel 1C]

Request:

Planner I, Xu explained that the applicant is requesting to rezone approximately **±1.00** acre of a 15.35-acre parent tract from AR-1 (Agricultural Residential-1) **to AR-2 (Agricultural Residential-2).** The purpose of the request is to allow the applicant to subdivide the property and convey the proposed parcel to children for future residential use while retaining the remaining acreage under the existing AR-1 zoning designation. Property currently contains a single-family home. County mapping identifies wetlands, FEMA

consists primarily of agricultural tracks, rural residential homes. Staff do not anticipate an adverse impact on public health, safety or welfare. Staff finds that the request is compatible with the surrounding land use pattern consists with the intent of the AR2 zoning. It also consists of the agricultural residential designation of the future land use map.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:

Mr. William Cox would like to rezone one acre from the ± 15.37 acres for one of his children to build a home. Survey and wetland delineation have been completed.

Speaking in opposition:

Ms. Ada Carter owns 3 acres in front and was told it couldn't be built on because it's wet. A pond was put in to help with the water, and Mr. Cox wants to build right behind it. Concerned about what this will do to her property and the wetlands.

The Board discussed it and asked about easement and if there was an agreement? Well and septic will make it hard for the easement. Concerns about wetlands. Possibly needs a wetlands delineation.

Board Action:

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

PUBLIC HEARING (3)

Applicant: Joshua Gibbons Sr. requests to rezone +/- 2.14 acres from R-1 to B-1 to allow for permitted uses in B-1. Located at 604 Goshen Road. [Second District] [Map # 451D Parcel 1]

Request

Planning Manager Wright explained that the applicant requests to rezone approximately ±2.14 acres from R-1 (Single-Family Residential) to B-1 (Neighborhood Commercial) to allow the operation of a funeral home without a crematorium. Existing building was used as church, would be renovated to include expanding with an office and carport. The use would increase the property's intensity. Activity would generally be concentrated around a schedule, funeral and memorial services. Adequate parking, safe access, buffering, light controls, and confirmation from environmental health regarding the septic system and disposal of embalming related wastewater will be required. Staff finds that the proposed funeral home is consistent with the intent of the B1district. However, the rezoning is not consistent with the agricultural residential future land use designation and it's not compatible with the surrounding zoning pattern which is predominantly residential and agricultural residential.

Public Comment:

Speaking in favor of:

Mr. Johua Gibbons explained that this once was served as a church for sacred use and he wants to carry it on for a second use as a funeral home. There is no funeral home in the city of Rincon. There is one in Springfield and Pt. Wentworth.

Speaking in opposition:

Ms. Sharon Walthour opposed. There is only one exit and entrance onto a two- laned road. Concerning traffic from the funeral services and processions could create a significate traffic congestion and potential safety issues. Continuing a church is more compatible.

Speaking in opposition:

Mr. Jimmy Blakey pointed out that this same property came up before to be rezoned as a business and was denied. There are homes next door. A funeral would cause a lot of traffic problems.

Speaking in favor of:

Gibbons said that he had spoken to residents next door, and they did not have a problem with the proposed funeral home.

The Board discussed septic systems and chemicals. Public water and sewer would make it easier. Not sure if this is a good fit for this area. Area is entirely residential. Concerning the business fitting on that lot. Tight with the parking spots.

Board Action:

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

PUBLIC HEARING (4)

Applicant: Boltin Teeter as agent for Mark Cooper requests to rezone +/- 99 acres from AR-1 to LI to allow permitted use in LI. Located on Old River Road. [First District] [Map # 304 Parcel 10]

Request:
Planning Manager. Wright explained that the applicant is requesting to **rezone ±99 acres** of a ±280.50-acre parent tract from AR-1 (Agricultural Residential) to **LI (Light Industrial)** to allow for the construction of an approximately 1,000,000-square-foot industrial warehouse for distribution and storage. The remaining acreage is proposed to remain zoned AR-1 and, according to the applicant, will be donated to Effingham County. The site currently contains several residences and accessory structures. Wetlands and FEMA zone AE flood plans are present, and wetland delineation level

Three soil, traffic and DRI studies have been completed. Adequate roadway capacity, turn lane, safe truck access, storm water controls, and required buffers and screening will be necessary to mitigate impacts on nearby residential and agricultural properties. Staff find that the request is consistent with the intent of the LI district and the transitional designation of the future land use map retaining the conservation design portion under AR1 zoning would support the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas and provide separation from surrounding properties.

Public Comment:

Chairman Jake Patrick asked about access to the property that is to be donated to the county.

Planning manager Akela Wright confirmed that there is access to the wetland area.

Speaking in favor of:

Robert McCorkle, on behalf of the petitioner, proposes a warehouse. Choose to have light industrial, the least intense of all the industrial options. It is limited in permitted uses. Out of the 280 acres only 99 acres will be rezoned. So, it's about 35% of the total property. There will be zero impact

to the wetlands and preserving the remainder of site. The remainder 180 acres have a private access road that comes off from Sandy Hill Road. Will be bringing in public water utilities to the site, which will be available to the public. Compatible with the area. Will come back for a buffer variance to the AR-1 property.

Michael Roach, civil engineer with Thomas and Hutton, explains the compatible use for the transitional designation. Traffic study was included in the packet. Lined up access with Bay Road to help with traffic. Extend water lines along Old River Road. There would be zero impact on wells. Only rezoning the portion of the property that will

be developed.

Speaking in opposition:

Ms. Stacy Jones lives adjacent to the property and raises traffic questions, environmental issues, and concerns about donating unusable property. Caught off guard.

Speaking in opposition:

Mr William Hartstock will increase the large amount of traffic. Concerned about buffers. Afraid that the donation of property will sway the decision. 304-27B Berm doesn't solve the traffic problem.

Speaking in favor of:

McCorkle did do mailbox notices and would like their information and would like to speak to them.

The board discussed the Ixe and the zoning and asked about transitional. The area is growing and sewer is nearby. Don't know how industrial got pushed into a residential area. There are a lot of residential areas around where the industrial. Concerns about the buffer with no current trees to protect the neighbors. Industrial standpoint: to get to I-16 is a good thing. Operation hours? Consideration of rezoning the back portion to conservation?

Michael Roach potentially provides a berm along the southern portion of the property.

McCorkle can work out a buffer and berm combination, whether there are trees.

Walter Boykin asked if the 300 ft buffer cleared?
It looks like it has been cut on the arial photos.

Troy Smith asked would they be willing to agree to additional

protection for the neighboring properties?

Discussed an additional 15ft berm. Berm in the wetlands.

Board Action:

- **Motion:** Approve with additional requirements of buffer and berms to protect adjacent landowners.
- **Made by**: Mr. Troy Smith
- **Seconded by**: Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Vote:** Unanimous

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Board Action:

- **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 7:16PM
- **Made by:** Mr. Walter Boykin
- **Seconded by**: Troy Smith
- **Vote:** Unanimous

Jake Patrick
Jake Patrick (Oct 15, 2026 08:16:03 EDT)

Oct 15, 2026

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

Patricia Hammock

10/14/2026

PLANNING BOARD CLERK **DATE**

Pbm_09082026

Final Audit Report 2026-10-15

Created:	2026-10-14
By:	Patricia Hammock (PHammock@effinghamcounty.org)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAjShquTBPDCy3R281saK8DQqDzZdWrHhi

"Pbm_09082026" History

Document created by Patricia Hammock (PHammock@effinghamcounty.org)
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