Effingham County Georgia
Board of Commissioners

Damon M. Rahn, Chairman at Large
Forrest F. Floyd, District 1
Roger Burdette, District 2
Jamie Deloach, District 3
Elizabeth Helmly, District 4
Phil Kieffer, District 5

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
MAY 6, 2025

The Board of Commissioners of Effingham County, Georgia, Mr. Damon Rahn, Mr. Forrest Floyd, Mr. Roger Burdette, Mr. Jamie Deloach, Ms. Beth Helmly and Mr. Phil Kieffer met in work session at 4:00 pm on Tuesday, May 6, 2025 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 Administrator, Mr. Edward Newberry – County Attorney, Ms. Stephanie Johnson – County Clerk, Ms. Tasheena Shiggs – Deputy County Clerk, Ms. Chelsie Fernald – Planning Manager, Ms. Kimberly Barlett – Planner I, Ms. Elizabeth Sapp – Land Use Planning Analyst, Ms. Maraya Durham – I.T. Support Specialist, and Mrs. Sarah Mausolf – HR and Risk Management Director

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Ryan Thompson

I - CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Rahn called the session to order at 4:03pm

II- WORK SESSION TOPICS

DISCUSSION OF AR-1, AR-2, AND THE NEW PROPOSED AR-3 ZONING DISTRICTS. (1):

County Manager Callanan began the discussion stating that the Zoning Steering Committee presented proposed changes to the County's zoning classifications.

Planning Manager Fernald outlined the overall changes for the proposed AR-1 Zoning District (Agricultural Residential, Five Acre Minimum): The minimum lot size will remain five acres. A maximum of two (2) residential units will be allowed per lot, either as two (2) principal dwellings or one principal dwelling and one accessory dwelling unit. Existing setback and height requirements will remain consistent. Agricultural accessory structures will still require setbacks but will not have a height restriction. Two (2) mailing addresses will be permitted. Both site-built and mobile homes will be allowed as principal dwellings.

Ryan Thompson explained the committee invested significant time refining the

definition, which is well-crafted. However, permitting a second unit on a small one-acre AR-2 lot would not justify any associated proposals.

Planning Manager Fernald continued with the changes for the proposed AR-2 Zoning District (Agricultural Residential, One Acre Minimum): The minimum lot size will be one acre. Only one principal residence will be permitted, either site-built or mobile. Setback and height restrictions are defined within the existing ordinance. Subdivision will be allowed solely for family or estate purposes. Only one mailing address will be permitted.

Planning Manager Fernald then addressed the proposed AR-3 Zoning District (Agricultural Residential, Two and a Half Acre Minimum): This new district will allow a maximum of two residential units on a 2.5-acre lot, similar to AR-1. Specific setback requirements will be defined in the ordinance. The maximum principal building height is proposed at 40 feet. The minimum rear yard setback is proposed at 35 feet.

DISCUSSION OF B-1, B-2, B-3 ZONING DISTRICTS. (2):
Planning Manager Fernald and County Manager Callanan explained B-1, B-2, and B-3 Zoning Districts (Commercial). Accessory structure regulations for these districts were reviewed.

Ryan Thompson discussed covered green space and potential future considerations for parking and sidewalk requirements in commercial areas.

Buffer requirements in commercial areas were also discussed.

DISCUSSION OF LIGHT INDUSTRIAL AND HEAVY INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICTS. (3):
Planning Manager Fernald explained Light Industrial and Heavy Industrial Zoning Districts: Proposed standards for light industrial zoning were presented, including regulations on hazardous materials, lot size, setbacks, height, and a new 15% green space requirement.

The distinction between light and heavy industrial zoning was noted.

DISCUSSION OF ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (4):
Planning Manager Fernald discussed Accessory Dwelling Units. The definition of accessory dwelling units across AR and residential districts was addressed, allowing more flexibility in larger AR properties.

DISCUSSION OF THE TABLE OF PERMITTED USES (5):
County Manager Callanan explained that the table of permitted uses was amended to replace "rural residential business use" with a separate "rural business use," requiring conditional use approval. Amendments to the table of permitted uses, including the addition of definitions, were noted. Ongoing discussions regarding the definition of warehouse and trucking facilities were mentioned.

The Board will review these proposals further, with the Planned Development (PD) zoning district to be refined after the AR districts are finalized. The updated information will be made available to the public online.

III – ADJOURNMENT

At 4:59 pm, there being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Damon Rahn, Chairman

Stephanie D. Johnson, County Clerk

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MAY 20, 2025