Effingham County Georgia
Board of Commissioners

THE PLANNING BOARD OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY, GA
September 10, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dave Burns called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

II. INVOCATION

Mr. Ryan Thompson gave the invocation.

III. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

Mr. Ryan Thompson led the pledge.

IV. AGENDA APPROVAL

Chairman Dave Burns asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Ms. Kimberly Barlett stated that there were changes to the agenda. Item 14 and Item 16 have been postponed to the October 8th meeting. The Rahn Station Road item is also not on the agenda tonight. Mr. Peter Higgins made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Alan Zipperer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Dave Burns asked if there were any corrections or additions to the August 13, 2024, minutes. Mr. Ryan Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Brad Smith seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Members Attending:	**Mr. Ryan Thompson, Chairman Dave Burns, Mr. Peter Higgins, Mr. Brad Smith, Mr. Alan Zipperer**
Members Absent:	
Staff Present:	**Mr. Steve Candler: Director of Development Services, Ms. Chelsie Fernald: Senior Planner, Ms. Kimberly Barlett: Planning Board Secretary**
Persons Attending:	**Darrell Dasher, Tonya Gunn, Jeff Gunn, Pat Anderson, Jake Patrick, Larry Vincent, Darlene Vincent, Roger Martin, Erik Johnson, Wrenn Blalock, R. Kevin Edwards, William Vandiver, Harold Dickerson, Kevin Usher, Amber Dambi, John Giordano, Eddie Coleman, Kelvin Wallace, Kindall Harville, Tim Hutchings, Sabrina Hutchings, Len Morgan, Kathy Morgan, Alez Metzger, Taylor Stein, Ben Smith, Allen Wrich, Jimmy Helmly, Rick Wills, Beth Helmly, Rhonda Key, L. Miner, Murray Marshall, Annette**

Youmans, CW Tucker, Loraine D. Claxton, Thomas W. Claxton Sr., Renee Blissett, Emily Smith, Evan Lastinger, Jerri Howell, Emily Heidt, Eric Halseth, Justin Pratt, Mark Lavin, George Kilgore, Laurie Kilgore, John Beecher, Craig Kessler, Brandon Long, Sheila Boazman, Rachel McDowell, Mark Lavin, Chris Murphy, Brian Quigley, Ken Hayes, John Jacobs, Cathy Shuffle, Jimmy Blakey, Sharon Hales, Chad Zittrouer, Samantha Easton, Liz Sapp, Chad Zittrouer, Wrenn Blalock

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Burns stated all items voted on would be presented at the October 1, 2024, Board of Commissioners meeting at 6:00 pm as a public hearing.

Darrell Boazman - PUBLIC HEARING (1): requests a **variance** from ordinance Section 6.2.3 to allow for a reduction in accessory structure setbacks. Located at 109 Lexus Court. **(Fifth District) [Map# 445C Parcel# 98]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Chairman Dave Burns asked if there was any new information about the survey.

Ms. Sheila Boazman said no.

Mr. Steve Candler stated that Ms. Dambi went out to look for individual surveys, and none were recorded. The markers did not move.

Ms. Amber Dambi presented pictures to the board.

Ms. Sheila Boazman asked if the shed was overhanging on the property line.

According to the pictures, Chairman Dave Burns stated that the overhang is over the property line.

Chelsie Fernald explained that the overhang is two inches, but this is a variance of a setback.

Mr. Peter Higgins made a motion for approval with Staff Recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brad Smith and carried unanimously.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Burns stated all items voted on would be presented at the October 1, 2024, Board of Commissioners meeting at 6:00 pm as a public hearing.

Candace Nease as agent for Rhonda Floyd - PUBLIC HEARING (1): requests a **variance** from ordinance Section 3.21.1 to allow for the occupation of an RV/Camper. Located at 271 Pecan Grove Boulevard, zoned **AR-1. (First District) [Map# 304A Parcel# 19]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Mr. Peter Higgins asked how long they had already been there.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald stated the 12 months would start with the board's approval. A Technical Review Committee meeting made them aware of the time limit.

No one was present to speak in favor of or against this item.

Mr. Ryan Thompson made a motion for approval with the following condition: there is a one-year—12-month limitation to allow the establishment of the primary dwelling, at which time the RV can no longer be resided in. Mr. Alan Zipperer seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Rachel McDowell - PUBLIC HEARING (2): requests a **variance** from ordinance Section 5.2.1.1 to allow for a reduction in minimum road frontage in AR-2. Located at 3714 Noel C Conaway Road. **(Second District) [Map# 436 Parcel# 67]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Mr. Alan Zipperer asked for clarification on the 100 feet of frontage required.

Chairman Dave Burns asked if these are non-conforming lots.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald stated that you must have 100 feet of road frontage for both homes based on the ordinance.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked if, in the staff's opinion, this justifies a hardship for a variance.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald stated these are AR-2 conforming lots but do not have the frontage.

Mr. Alan Zipperer asked if the houses would be directly behind the other house.

Ms. Rachel McDowell stated that the second home is a small home for her elderly mom, and her house is not big enough to accommodate her.

Mr. Alan Zipperer made a motion for approval with Staff Recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ryan Thompson and carried unanimously.

Jake Patrick- PUBLIC HEARING (3): requests a **variance** from ordinance Section 5.2.1.1 to allow for a reduction in minimum road frontage in AR-2. Located at 375 Riverside Drive. **(Third District) [Map# 254 Parcel# 6A & 6]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Mr. Jake Patrick stated he met with staff about several property splitting options. The 60-foot easement was an issue, and it would have been cleaner to do flag lots with one plus acre lots for three additional home sites for the county.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked if Riverside is a county road and clarified the setbacks.

Mr. Brad Smith moved for approval with Staff Recommendations. Mr. Alan Zipperer seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ben Smith– PUBLIC HEARING (4): requests to **rezone** +/- 11.4 acres from **AR-1** to **AR-2** to allow for subdivision to create a new home site. Located at 155 Chester Thomas Road. **(Third District) [Map # 315 Parcel # 44]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Chairman Dave Burns asked about the future land use map projecting this parcel to be agricultural.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald explained that the parcels are projected as agricultural because they are north of 119. Although residential or subdivided, they don't have water, sewer, or infrastructure.

Chairman Dave Burns asked if that meant five acres. He thought there was a discussion about a minimum of five acres only.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald stated we have seen lots go as low as one acre in agriculture. At this point, it's based on infrastructure.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked about the maximum number of lots with an easement.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald stated that easements require three lots, but the easement can be turned into a private road, and the three-lot minimum does not apply.

Mr. Ben Smith presented the soil report with a site plan of lots. He stated he would like to subdivide into seven lots and access from Chester Thomas.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald stated that because there are seven lots, this would have to go before the Board of Commissioners for the preliminary plat.

Mr. Peter Higgins asked if it would be a private road.

Mr. Brad Smith asked if a private road needs to be paved.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald explained the standards for roads and subdivisions.

Chairman Dave Burns spoke about the Land use map for the remaining five-acre lots.

Mr. Mark Lavin asked if they are considering 11 one-acre lots.

Mr. Peter Higgins moved for approval with staff recommendations. Mr. Alan Zipperer seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Christopher L. Murphy as agent for The Harold A. Dickerson Revocable Living Trust- PUBLIC HEARING (5): requests to **rezone** +/- 4.25 acres from **AR-1** to **AR-2** to allow for subdivision to create a new home site. Located at 4397 Old Dixie Hwy S. **(Third District) [Map # 313 Parcel # 18]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked whether the plat must be recorded for the zoning to take effect.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald explained that since they are moving property lines, for this zoning to take effect and for them to be able to build three homes, they would need a plat signed and recorded before the zoning can take effect.

Mr. Chris Murphy stated that he plans to build three new home sites to benefit the county's housing needs. Each lot would be over an acre with a pond on one. Since one home is already on the site, there would be two more homes.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked if, with 100 feet of frontage, they could have two homes on the lot.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald stated they would have to meet the acreage requirement.

Chairman Dave Burns expressed concern about subdividing smaller lots in the northern part of the county.

Mr. Brad Smith asked if they would need to return before the board for the plat. Mr. Fernald said no.

Mr. Brad Smith made a motion for approval with staff recommendations. Mr. Ryan Thompson seconded the motion, and Chairman Dave Burns opposed it. The motion carried 4 to 1.

Kevin Usher- PUBLIC HEARING (6): requests to **rezone** +/- 7.625 acres from **AR-1 to AR-2** to allow for subdivision. Located at 701 Log Landing Road. **(Fourth District) [Map #428 Parcel # 2]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Mr. Kevin Usher wants to divide into two 2 ½ acre home sites.

Mr. Brad Smith made a motion for approval with staff recommendations. Mr. Ryan Thompson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Alex Long- PUBLIC HEARING (7): requests to **rezone** +/- 70 acres from **AR-1 to AR-2** to allow for subdivision to create new home sites. Located on Midland Road. **(First District) [Map #350 Parcel # 1]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Mr. Alex Long stated this request is for eight residential lots on 70 acres. The lots range from about three to four acres to the largest, 26 acres. He said there is a growing need for residential lots, and this creates an estate community with access off of Midland Road; each will be served with individual wells and septic tanks. All soil work and a wetlands delineation have been done.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked if the private road would be built to county standards.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald stated it would have ditches and could be paved or gravel with higher standards.

Mr. Alex Long stated he would meet all the standards through the Sketch Plan.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked if he would be okay with the condition that he limit his stay to eight lots.

Mr. William Vandiver states that he owns the property right across the road and thinks it is too low and will negatively affect his property with the water. This item will also increase his taxes.

Chairman Dave Burns asked if this is approved, he will have to return with an engineered drawing. Ms. Fernald said yes, preliminary plat.

Mr. Kevin Edwards stated that he's from District 3, and the county is seeing more and more of these properties cut down. He's glad that they are doing larger lots. He is asking if, with AR-1 lots, there will be an HOA to enforce. As a citizen of Effingham County, he feels like our county is being sold out from under us, and they are taking our land away from us. He thinks there needs to be a closer look at the ARs; he would suggest a minimum of three acres.

Mr. Tim Hutchings stated he is in favor of this. He said this is precisely the type of development that we should encourage in these areas. This is a low-impact benefit: $600,000 plus houses with low infrastructure use and a high tax basis on large lots. He states that this property drains to the Ogeechee so that it wouldn't drain to other properties.

Mr. Ryan Thompson motioned for approval with staff conditions and a limitation of eight total lots being created for the future subdivision. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alan Zipperer and carries unanimously.

Brian Quigley as agent for Jeremy Nease- PUBLIC HEARING (8): requests to **rezone** +/- 102.69 acres from **I1 to LI** to allow for revisions of conditions. Located on US Hwy 80. **(First District) [Map #354 Parcel # 21, 21B, 21C]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Chairman Dave Burns asked for clarification on the 300-foot buffer and the height of the buffer.

Mr. Brian Quigley stated he has had it under contract for over a year but is trying to build three industrial buildings. Commissioner Floyd and he met with the neighbors, and they opposed the buildings' new orientation. So, his plan to compromise is for all the docks to face away from the neighbors on George Road, and they will still get about a million square feet of rentable space. He requests reducing the buffer to 200 feet from 300 feet in exchange for a taller 20-foot berm.

Mr. Steve Candler asked for clarification on the berm heights.

Ms. Chelsie stated a 200-foot buffer would need a 16-foot berm.

Mr. Dennis Hayle expressed concern about the buildings and preserving the oak trees, the lighting, and the trucks on both sides. Once you agree on something, they are tired of fighting it.

Mr. Kevin Edwards stated there are already too many warehouses. He spoke with the commissioner last week and said 15 % of the county is warehouses, which he felt was enough. We're already encroached on residents, but he thinks they should stick to the original terms.

Mr. Taylor Stein stated that the previous sketch plan shows a much larger warehouse. Based on the last meeting, he didn't change the building orientation. Item 9 is the condition he wanted to change, and he believed that would have been approved. The higher berm would align with the proper buffer distances, with mature trees planted to block out the warehouses.

Mr. Alan Zipperer asked for clarification on the road shown in the sketch.

Mr. Taylor Stein stated there is a 25-foot undisturbed buffer that would keep all the trees, and then an additional 15 feet would be allowed for a drainage ditch for runoff. Then, the development would start. There is a condition for the lighting not to be visible from George Road properties, as they will show that the photometric lighting plan has no impact on the neighbors.

Mr. Ken Hales wants to know who will maintain the drainage.

Mr. Steve Candler stated that it is not being dedicated to the county. The people on site will maintain the drainage. The county is trying to rectify the situation, and he can call us.

Mr. Kevin Edwards asked if there were many berms with trees on top and the width of the berms.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked for clarification on the previous sketch plan, and the berm had already been amended.

Ms. Cathy Sheffield stated this is not affecting other residents and thinks we have enough warehouses. She wants to know how they will make left-hand turns. She wants the county to pay attention to too many warehouses.

Chairman Dave Burns explained they will go through GDOT.

Ms. Sharon Hales stated there are some houses with no trees and who waters the trees. She is concerned with the number of automobiles and trailer parking that will increase traffic. She wanted to know if the traffic report had been done.

Mr. Taylor Stein stated that the traffic study has been done, and a left-hand turn lane and a right-hand turn lane for vehicle queuing will be proposed. Regarding the entrances, the East entrance will be for auto parts only, and the West entrance will be for trailers. They do have a TIA for a similar site, and that report agrees with the access from the DOT.

Mr. Peter Higgins asked how many employees would work at that site during the day and if he could get the exact number.

Mr. Taylor Stein said they did the parking count based on the county ordinance to meet the required square footage of the warehouse. He can't give a number of employees because that is a tenant-to-tenant basis. They have landscape architects who work on irrigation plans that include the plantings for the berm. They will comply with the stormwater plan, which consists of a maintenance plan.

Mr. Alan Zipperer states he thinks the 20-foot berm will block out the warehouse, but the original ordinance of 300 feet doesn't require a berm.

Mr. Ryan Thompson thinks the 300 buffers with the berm were put on there for a reason.

Mr. Ryan Thompson made a motion for denial. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brad Smith. Three opposed and motion dies. Mr. Peter Higgins made a motion for approval, along with staff recommendations and the new size of the berm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alan Zipperer. The motion is approved 3 to 2.

James Daniels- PUBLIC HEARING (9): requests to **rezone** +/- 8 acres from **R-1 to B-3** to allow for permitted uses in B-3. Located at 610 Ebenezer Road. **(Fifth District) [Map #446 Parcel # 7B]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Mr. James Daniels is between two B-3, which would be a shared entrance for the other properties. He wants to conform to his neighbors, and the B-3 will help his neighbors with buffers.

Chairman Dave Burns thinks it fits with the surrounding parcels.

Mr. Peter Higgins made a motion for approval with staff recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brad Smith and carries unanimously.

Break: 7:29 PM
Return: 7:40 PM

Johnnie Henderson as agent for Latrelle Jenkins- PUBLIC HEARING (10): requests to **rezone** +/- 10.97 acres from **R-1 to B-3** to allow for permitted uses in B-3. It is located on Goshen Road. **(Second District) [Map #434 Parcel # 2]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Mr. Kevin Edwards stated he used to live in this area, and we will be too far away. He feels like this application was rushed in before the moratorium passed.

Mr. John Jacobs understands it will eventually be commercial because of the parkway, but he wants to buy a B-1 instead of a B-3.

Mr. Jimmy Blakey stated that the parkway is there to move traffic, and it will create too much truck traffic.

Mr. Joel Stewart stated that we just approved the Land use map and are looking for an exception.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked to elaborate on the corridor.

Mr. Peter Higgins asked if the applicant had explained their intentions regarding the property. Ms. Fernald said no.

Mr. Alan Zipperer made a motion to table until they could hear from the applicant. The motion was seconded by Mr. Peter Higgins and carries unanimously

Darrell Morgan- PUBLIC HEARING (11): requests to **rezone** +/- 12 out of 372 acres from **AR-1 to HI** to allow for heavy industrial uses. Located on Sand Hill Road. **(First District) [Map #275 Parcel # 2]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and suggested changing the request to B-3.

Mr. Darrell Morgan stated he would like to keep the request for heavy industrial, such as a sawmill or parking a concrete truck, so it won't surprise potential new neighbors.

Chairman Dave Burns asked for clarification on the location and the buffer requirement.

Mr. Peter Higgins asked if he received any flooding from the last rain.

Ms. Anette Youmans stated she is concerned with the heavy industrial zoning and agrees it would deter the planned development. She thinks it's a little extreme, is worried about future owners, and doesn't think it's appropriate for a residential area.

Ms. Kendall Harville stated that she doesn't think heavy industrial fits this area because of the school and residential. She said that out of the 16 rezoning requests, 11 classifications fall under the moratorium. The residents who live here and support this county are being sold out.

Chairman Dave Burns asked for clarification on the need for heavy industrial.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald stated the sawmill and the cry cement truck parking.

Chairman Dave Burns expressed concerns about the buffers and not enough land.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked what the future land use map shows. Ms. Fernald said agricultural.

Mr. Ryan Thompson made a motion to deny. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brad Smith and carried 3 to 2.

MFL Investments, LLC- PUBLIC HEARING (12): requests to **rezone** +/- .302 out of 1.302 acres from **B-3 to R-4 to** conform with surrounding lots. Located at 721 McCall Road. **(Fourth District) [Map #389 Parcel # 12]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Mr. Alec Metzger stated that this is a minor subdivision recombination. They are in the process of moving all the mobile homes and replacing them with new ones. They needed to add a small piece of property on the north side for some homes with different dimensions and to have the proper setbacks and drive. He requested that the staff report the condition so that a preliminary plat could be removed.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked for clarification on the acreage being rezoned.

Mr. Kevin Edwards stated that this makes sense and is not against it.

Mr. Brad Smith moved to remove the preliminary plat that has to be approved by the Board of Commissioners and noted that only the .302 acres should be rezoned and recombined with the residential. Mr. Peter Higgins seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Michael Ramsey- PUBLIC HEARING (13): requests to **rezone** +/- 279.71 acres from A**R-1 to R-1** to allow for residential development. Located on GA Hwy 119 South. **(Third District) [Map # 272 Parcel # 32]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Mr. Alex Long stated that this was not his project, but Mr. Ramsey did ask him to speak on his behalf. Mr. Ramsey plans to work with the city for water or put in a community well. He also wanted to clarify that there would be no access off Honey Ridge Road, only Hwy 119.

Mr. Kevin Edwards states that it is once again putting a lot of residents in what was once a rural farm. He doesn't understand why they are proposing R-1. He thinks community wells present a problem.

Ms. Jerry Howell states this is a large plot of wetland land with known flooding issues in the subdivisions. She thinks this will significantly impact the infrastructure. She would request that they change the request to AR-2 and limit the acre size. The elementary school is over capacity.

Mr. Randy Alexander states that Honey Ridge is one of the most scenic roads in the county, and we don't know the size of the lots. He is concerned about the other access roads for the fire department. There might be 150 to 200 homes with a community well and septic tanks. This is a very historic area. The high school and middle have almost 3000 students and staff. There is only one fire station with all those homes.

Mr. Hollis Howell states that Mr. Ramsey had no intention of being here because he doesn't live here. A property across the street was already approved last year.

Mr. Justin Pratt agrees with everyone who spoke tonight.

Ms. Lindsay Ronk stated that she is against the rezoning because the schools are already overpopulated, and there would be more congestion and confusion. He cannot get city water because it is outside the city limits.

Mr. and Mrs. Kevin and Deb Bailey stated that are 1,140 acres up for rezoning tonight, which doesn't count the industrial. The R-1 is ridiculous; there are flood zones and wetlands. They called the city of Guyton, and they said private property was not our problem. They state that there isn't infrastructure to support this; they don't have the road or school capacity.

Mr. Daniel Howell stated the speed limit has decreased because of all the traffic. There is a ball field and a new agriculture center. The road was repaved about eight years ago and now again. Enough is enough! Honey Ridge Road is one of the most photographed roads in Georgia.

Mr. Alex Long wanted to clarify that Mr. Ramsey said the access will only be off 119, and the utilities are to be determined.

Mr. Ryan Thompson feels that there wasn't much information proposed to make a decision. He doesn't think this may be for R-1 because the sewer does not serve it.

Mr. Peter Higgins stated the density is overwhelming.

Chairman Dave Burns stated this R-1 one is as low a density for residential, and there is already a lot in that area.

Mr. Peter Higgins moved to deny it. Mr. Brad Smith seconded the motion, which carried 3 to 2.

Hunter Maclean c/o Josh Yellin as agent for Cassie Hinely- PUBLIC HEARING (14): requests to **rezone** +/- 247.2 acres from **AR-1 to PD-R** to allow for residential development. Located on Sand Hill Road. **(First District) [Map # 298 Parcel # 9]**

Postponed to October 8, 2024.

Blue Fern Management/ Scott Rosenstock as agent for Charles Ale- PUBLIC HEARING (15): requests to **rezone** +/- 100.34 acres from **AR-1 to R-5** for residential development. Located on Blue Jay Road. **(First District) [Map # 351 Parcel # 3]**

Mr. Brad Smith moved to recuse Mr. Ryan Thompson. Mr. Peter Higgins seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Mr. John Giordano of Thomas and Hutton stated that R-5 aligns with the county's goals, such as extending water and sewer down Blue Jay. The proposed plan proposes 200 single-family lots with a minimum 6600-foot minimum and a proposed density of 2.7 units per acre, well below the density allowed under R-5. It has two access points for residents and emergency services to connect to Blue Jay Road. In addition, the plan does provide future connectivity to adjacent properties. They are proposing an enhanced buffer of 50 feet against Emerald Plantation and Blue Jay Road. They are strengthening the buffer in case the Right-of-way acquisition does happen. They would still have the required 30 feet of buffer. They plan to meet and exceed the 15 % of net usable area by utilizing the areas for passive recreation. They are also proposing an amenity space for an active park and play areas.

Ms. Emily Heidt states she lives at 351-23A and 23B, and she expressed concern about the surveying process by Blue Fern. They have trespassed and vandalized her property by spray painting all over her lines. She is appalled by the road entrance they have on her property because she actively farms, has livestock, and works with the Forestry Department, so she hopes they honor the 30-foot buffer because it would be a danger to the residents. She doesn't want people wanting to borrow her farm or visit her livestock. She feels like the density is questionable based on the surrounding area. She does appreciate their respect for the wetlands in the area.

Chairman Dave Burns asked for clarification about the road entrance to her property.

Mr. Jeff Heidt states he is the co-owner of the property with his daughter and expressed concerns about the additional water from the wetlands draining on their property.

Mr. David Harris states that his wife's family has been actively farming this land for over 100 years, and they are seeking the historic designation as soon as they get the paperwork finalized. He is concerned about the continuous flood pattern on the property and the continuous burns with the Forestry Department.

He stated to the board that they represent every single private property owner in the community, not just the ones that ask for changes; the ones that aren't asking for changes need equal representation.

Mr. Tim Stika expressed concern about the infrastructure, the water pressure, electrical blackouts, and the rezoning of the children's schools.

Mr. Ly Morgan expressed concerns about the flooding in the area from the other subdivisions and the traffic impacts on the road.

Mr. Tim Hutchings stated that this development has a high impact and low benefit. He said it contradicts every other development in this area and will degrade the quality of life. There is no high-density development down Blue Jay with estate lots. This is nine miles from town; we get zero commercial benefits to develop these properties. He states that high-density developments cost us money, which the county manager in a D2 town hall acknowledged with two other county commissioners, justifying the warehouses. He states that developing this housing density in these areas without sufficient infrastructure costs us money, and we have to approve the warehouses to offset the tax loss. The citizens of Effingham are going to foot the bill for this development while everybody here goes and spends their money in another county. He states that the board of education shared numbers, and they calculated 2.1 students per rooftop. There are 3500 homes already approved and not built in the south corner of the county, which is 7,000 students, 50 percent of the current enrollment for the entire county, and the schools are almost complete. Blue Jay Road will become a truck route, so why put a school and more residential development? The extra traffic will impede his access to his driveway. He also expressed concern about the flooding and lack of drainage.

Ms. Sabrina Hutchings expressed concerns about this not fitting the area and opposes this request.

Mr. John Giordano stated that the secondary access will not be extended as part of the initial development. The county plans to adhere to the stormwater ordinance. They would conduct a complete traffic impact analysis.

The board had discussions about the high density and not fitting the rea.

Mr. Alan Zipperer moved to deny it. Mr. Peter Higgins seconded the motion, which carried 4 to 0.

Mr. Peter Higgins motioned to bring Mr. Ryan Thompson back to the board. Mr. Brad Smith seconded the motion and carried it unanimously.

Neil McKenzie as agent for Nick Finland- PUBLIC HEARING (16): requests to **rezone** +/- 221.87 acres from **AR-1 to R-5** to allow for residential development. Located on Goshen Road. **(Second District) [Map # 451 Parcel # 41]**

Postponed by applicant.

Kern & Co., LLC- Chad Zittrouer as agent for R B Baker Properties, LLC- PUBLIC HEARING (17): requests to **rezone** +/- 114.79 acres from **R-1 to HI** to allow for heavy industrial uses. Located on Old Augusta Road S. **(Fifth District) [Map # 476 Parcel # 4A]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Chairman Dave Burns asked for clarification on the development nodes and why this warehouse request was not placed under light industrial.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald stated because of the square footage and need for the DRI, it was heavily industrial.

Mr. Chad Zittrouer asked if there is a requirement for square footage for warehousing in heavy industry. Ms. Fernald said not currently. Mr. Zittrouer noted that, based on the current ordinance, he would consider this light industrial. He stated that this request was consistent with the previous future land use map. He wanted to clarify that this is not an asphalt plant; this will be warehouse distribution. He understands that additional BMPs have to be taken to preserve the water intake.

Mr. Peter Higgins asked about Savannah expanding their water treatment facility.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald stated that there is an agreement between Effingham County and the City of Savannah for these parcels close to the water intake facility. They have to develop them on-site and provide extra best management practices, among other requirements.

Mr. Kevin Edwards stated that we have 120-plus acres of warehouse space that's not being used. He and everyone he spoke to are opposed to this.

John Beecher stated he was told it would never be paved or industrial, and now it's both. Years ago, it was planned to be residential. He is very opposed to this.

Mr. Wrenn Blalock stated he is the developer, and they don't build spec buildings. They partner with their tenants, who own 25% of each building they've built. He has been building for 356 years and has built over 16 million square feet of space. He said they are good landlords and stewards of the community and will not build without a tenant being involved. He agrees they have overbuilt the market, but his program is different.

Ms. Darlene Vincent was asked if she would like comments addressing the concerns over protecting the water intake. The best management practices only work when they are in place. She states that warehouses along the strip store materials outside, and they should not be stored outside. She claimed she had not seen the DRI, and changing it from HI to LI is better, but it still leaves a lot of risks.

Ms. Tanya Gun is concerned about truck traffic.

Mr. Rick Wells believes that land should be donated to have a park or refuge for everybody to enjoy.

Mr. Jeff Gun is concerned about the land and whether they will bring dirt to fill it back up and create a buffer. It's already 20 feet deep.

Mr. Chad Zittrouer started this property, which was acquired in conjunction with the construction of Old Augusta Parkway. However, the material was found to have too much clay and wasn't thoroughly mined. With certainty, they feel they can comply with the county standards.

Mr. Ryan Thompson wanted to ensure that buffer ordinance requirements were met and no variances were filed. This could potentially result in a lot more houses.

Chairman Dave Burns asked for clarification on the berm.

Mr. Chad Zittrouer said there would be 150 feet of buffer, and the south side would be the only side without a berm because of the wetlands. The berm that is currently there will be improved.

Mr. Steve Candler explained how the buffer and berm work in the ordinance.

Mr. Peter Higgins expressed concerns about being so close to the water intake.

Mr. Peter Higgins made a motion for approval with the light industrial. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alan Zipperer and carries unanimously.

Kern & Co., LLC- Chad Zittrouer as agent for Karen Brindley- PUBLIC HEARING (18): requests to **rezone** +/- 17.77 out of 64.48 acres from **AR-1 to R-5** to allow for residential development. Located on Blue Jay Road. **(Second District) [Map # 432 Parcel # 45]**

Ms. Chelsie Fernald presented this item, and if approved, this will comply with ordinance criteria.

Mr. Brandon Long stated this development has nothing to do with the current development. The access will use the same entrance. They are proposing 58 units.

Mr. Alan Zipperer asked if this property had to do with the school. Mr. Long said no.

Chairman Dave Burns asked if they have plans for the addition. Mr. Long said not at this time.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked if the second access point stubbed out would be an emergency access point. Mr. Bradnon Long said yes, it is a 30-foot easement going out to Blue Jay with a knock box.

Mr. Chad Zittrouer stated that the state of Georgia adopted the code requiring emergency vehicle access on over 120 lots. Contrary to the first development, he does have an amenity package.

Chairman Dave Burns asked if the front subdivision had the same zoning.

Ms. Chelsie Fernald explained that the first one is R-6, whereas R-5 has not yet been implemented.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked what the adjacent buffers would be for the remaining AR-1. He wants to make sure it's clear so there is no justification for a variance.

Ms. Cheslie Fernald said 30 feet. She explained there's a buffer required against the railroad tracks, which is 25 feet.

Mr. Craig Kessler stated he lives directly across this property, which he accesses through Blandford Crossing and the potential new development. He is not opposed but wants to make the point that his land is a timber farm, and he wants to be clear that timber trucks must be able to come in and out of that subdivision. He hoped that it would be given to the county. He is concerned about people walking onto his property because he hunts on it and hopes for a line of demarcation and drainage requirements.

Mr. Kevin Edwards expressed concern about the 300-foot minimum when hunting on your property. He stated that the housing this is connected to is lower-income homes, and he fears that there will be homeless camps. There is an increase in crime and traffic.

Chairman Dave Burns stated this is not lower-income houses.

Mr. Alan Zipperer moved for approval with staff reconditions. Mr. Ryan Thompson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Break: 9:30 PM
Return: 9:40 PM

Consideration of an **amendment** to the Code of Ordinances – **Public Discussion (19): Part II – Official Code: Chapter 54 – Section 54-3- Commercial Corridor** of the Effingham County Code of Ordinances

Mr. Steve Candler explained that certain areas on the future land use map have been designated corridor districts, including extra standards, architectural landscaping, and setbacks. These areas are along 21 North, 21 South, parts of Hodgeville, and Effingham Parkway. Mr. Thompson will submit his suggestions to Steve.

Chairman Dave Burns remains of the opinion that Hodgeville should not be in it. Most agreed. Mr. Thompson thinks it should, but not as a commercial corridor.

Mr. Peter Higgins made a motion for approval of the changes discussed. Mr. Brad Smith seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Consideration of an **amendment** to the Code of Ordinances – **Public Discussion (20):** ORDINANCE REVISION: **Consideration of approval to adopt the official code of Georgia rules and regulations for body art**

Mr. Steve Candler stated these were presented by the Department of Health, who wants this approved and who will enforce, review, and collect the fees.

Mr. Alan Zipperer made a motion for approval with staff recommendations. Mr. Ryan Thompson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Consideration of an **amendment** to the Code of Ordinances – **Public Discussion (21): Part II – Official Code: Chapter 38- Health and Sanitation- Sections 38.1 & 38.2** of the Effingham County Code of Ordinances.

Mr. Steve Candler stated he is removing this from the ordinance so there will be no conflict when the state code for body art is adopted.

Mr. Ryan Thompson made a motion for approval with staff recommendations. Mr. Alan Zipperer seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Consideration of an **amendment** to the Code of Ordinances – **Public Discussion (22): Part II – Official Code: Appendix C – Article V- Section 5.8.6-R.6 Single Family Residential District** of the Effingham County Code of Ordinances

Mr. Steve Candler stated that there have been several instances where an R-6 has not met the criteria, and we have approved variances for lots down to 50 feet in size.

Mr. Peter Higgins asked if this would affect cul de sac lots.
Mr. Ryan Thompson asked for clarification of the strike-through.

Mr. Peter Higgins made a motion for approval with staff recommendations. Mr. Ryan Thompson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Discussion of an **amendment** to the Code of Ordinances – **Public Discussion (23): Part II – Official Code: Appendix C – Article IV- 4.2- Zoning Map** of the Effingham County Code of Ordinances

Mr. Steve Candler explained that 4.2 describes the zoning map, how it can be defined, and its criteria. The county attorney wrote the ordinance, and he's requesting that we adopt this ordinance.

Mr. Peter Higgins made a motion for approval with staff recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alan Zipperer and carries unanimously

Consideration of an **amendment** to the Code of Ordinances – **Public Discussion (24):** An amendment to adopt the official Zoning **Map of Effingham County, Georgia.**

Mr. Steve Candler stated that this is the official map created by GIS. A few properties are hashed, and they are still under review.

Mr. Ryan Thompson asked if this map will constantly be coming to the board with the zoning changes.

Mr. Steve Candler said that it would probably come back before the board after a month's cycle of two commissioner meetings.

Mr. Alan Zippeer made a motion for approval with staff recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ryan Thompson and carries unanimously.

Consideration of an **amendment** to the Code of Ordinances – **Public Discussion (25): Part II – Official Code: Appendix C – Article VII- Planning Board** of the Effingham County Code of Ordinances

Mr. Steve Candler explained that this is a request to change the appointment process, the clerk to the board, the planning board's responsibilities, and the Commissioners' responsibilities at their request.

Mr. Alan Zipperer made a motion for approval with staff recommendations. Mr. Brad Smith seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Consideration of an **amendment** to the Code of Ordinances – **Public Discussion (26): Part II – Official Code: Appendix C – Article III- 3.15A- Residential Business** of the Effingham County Code of Ordinances

Mr. Steve Candler explained that he was striking the words "planning board" and putting in the words "Board of Commissioners" because they were the ones who exclusively handled residential businesses. It's now going to the County Commissioners.

Mr. Peter Higgins made a motion for approval with staff recommendations. Mr. Ryan Thompson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 PM.

10-8-24

CHAIRMAN OF PLANNING BOARD
EFFINGHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA

DATE

10/7/24

PLANNING BOARD SECRETARY

DATE