



PUTNAM COUNTY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

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Minutes

Thursday, August 7, 2025 ♦ 6:30 pm

Opening

1. Call to Order

Chairman Charles Gray called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

2. Attendance

Zoning Coordinator Angela Waldroup called the Attendance.

Present: Member William Rainey Jr., Member David Erickson, Member Harold Jones, Member Shad Atkinson, Chairman Charles Gray

Staff: Attorney Adam Nelson, Director Lisa Jackson, Assistant Director Courtney Andrews, Zoning Coordinator Angela Waldroup

3. Rules of Procedures

Chairman Charles Gray read the Rules of Procedures.

Minutes

4. Approval of Minutes- 5-8-25

Motion: **Member Rainey** made the motion to approve the 5-8-25 minutes

Second: **Member Jones**

Voting Yea: **Member Rainey, Member Erickson, Member Jones, Member Atkinson, Chairman Gray**

The motion was approved by a vote of 5.

Requests

5. Request by **Bailey Lively, agent for APC** for a conditional use at 671 Twin Bridges Road. Presently zoned AG. **[Map 057, Parcel 010, District 4].* Ms. Bailey Lively** represented this request.

Ms. Lively stated that they were proposing a new cellphone tower. It will be a 255-foot-tall lattice structure. It would be located within a 60 X 60 fenced in compound area with landscaping. They meet all the required setbacks per the ordinance, and the parcel is zoned agricultural. The purpose of the tower would be to provide and improve cellphone coverage, high speed internet, broadband access, and emergency 911 services to the area.

Member David Erickson asked if there was a search circle associated with the location process of the tower.

Ms. Lively confirmed yes. She added that the tower would be used by T-Mobile. Their radio frequency engineers determine the location that they would prefer to get the best coverage for the area to fill the gap. There is a certain radius around it to see if there are any existing towers or structures that would be suitable within the search range. She believed that the closest tower was a little over 2 miles of the search ring. Meaning, it would not provide the needed coverage.

Member Erickson asked what the radius of the search ring was.

Ms. Lively confirmed 2 miles. Meaning, anything within the 4-mile radius would work.

Member Erickson asked if she worked for T-Mobile or APC

Ms. Lively confirmed that they work as a contractor for APC and described their responsibilities.

Member Erickson asked if she knew how many slots were available for other carriers.

Ms. Lively stated that the tower could be modified in the future if additional carriers are needed but it is set for 3 carriers.

Member Erickson stated that some towers can be done in a stealth manner, made to look like trees. He asked if this tower could be done that way.

Ms. Lively stated that it was not proposed but they could table the request if that was a condition that was desired of the board.

The following signed in to speak on the request and were given 3 minutes each.

Marion Allen

Barb Vargo

Member Erickson asked if Ms. Lively could address the concerns about trees.

Ms. Lively stated that the terrain goes into what the engineers look at when mapping the area. She also addressed some other concerns made from Ms. Vargo.

Member Erickson asked if Ms. Lively could confirm how long the building time is for this site.

Ms. Lively stated that she could get that specific information, however, it usually takes 9-12 months.

Member Erickson asked if it was a 700-megahertz system.

Ms. Lively stated that she could get that information for him.

Member Erickson shared information about wave lengths and their frequencies.

Ms. Lively confirmed how the different frequencies would work based on the need in the area.

Member Erickson asked if the FCC dictates the amount of radiation that is emitted from the equipment in terms of public safety and could she confirm there would be no issue.

Ms. Lively confirmed that the tower and all equipment will follow FCC regulations, and they provide a threshold for radio frequency emissions, which is all taken into account to make sure they fall below the maximum FCC regulation.

Chairman Charles Gray stated that he has seen different types of towers that match the topography of the area.

Ms. Lively confirmed that there are a lot of different options for towers, however, making this tower favor a tree would stick out because it exceeds the height of trees in the area.

Chairman Gray asked if in the future the county had a need to place an antenna, for whatever reason, would it be possible.

Ms. Lively responded yes.

Member Erickson asked if the light was a small red flashing light.

Ms. Lively stated that the plans did not include proposed lighting. Usually, it is included due to air traffic control patterns. If it is not required, it will not be added.

Staff recommendation was for approval for a conditional use at 671 Twin Bridges Road. Presently zoned AG. [Map 057, Parcel 010, District 4].*

Motion: **Member Atkinson** made the motion to approve the request for conditional use at 671 Twin Bridges Road. Presently zoned AG. **[Map 057, Parcel 010, District 4].***

Second: **Member Rainey**

Member Erickson stated that based on the 4-mile radius circle. He would like to see the cell tower 1,500 feet from the road.

Amended motion: **Member Erickson** made the motion to approve the request for condition use at 671 Twin Bridges Road with the condition that it is placed 1,500 feet from the road. Presently zoned AG. **[Map 057, Parcel 010, District 4].***

Second: None. The motion died.

Amended Motion #2: **Member Jones** made the motion to approve the request for condition use at 671 Twin Bridges Road with the condition that it is placed 1,000 feet from the road. Presently zoned AG. **[Map 057, Parcel 010, District 4].***

Second: **Member Erickson**

Billy Webster asked if he could sign in to speak.

Chairman Gray stated that he would allow it. He was given 3 minutes.

Member Rainey state that Ms. Lively explained that the position of the tower was set by the engineers. Moving it 1,000 – 1,500 feet in any direction would change the topography of the radio waves and what structures would be covered. He asked Ms. Lively to confirm.

Ms. Lively confirmed yes.

Mr. Atkinson stated that looking at the parcel he did not see where there was sufficient room to move the tower 1,000 feet not 1,500 feet.

Voting Yea: **Member Erickson, Member Jones**

Voting Nay: **Member Rainey, Member Atkinson, Chairman Gray**

The amended motion was denied by a 3 to 2 vote.

The original motion was made by **Member Atkinson** to approve the request for conditional use at 671 Twin Bridges Road. Presently zoned AG. **[Map 057, Parcel 010, District 4].*** with a second by **Member Rainey** was back on the table

Second: **Member Rainey**

Voting Yea: **Member Rainey, Member Jones, Member Atkinson, Chairman Gray**

Voting Nay: **Member Erickson**

The original motion was approved by a 4 to 1 vote.

6. Request by **Bailey Lively, agent for Betty Weem** for a conditional use at 1103 Oconee Springs Road. Presently zoned AG. **[Map 107, Parcel 025, District 2].* THIS ITEM HAS BEEN MOVED TO THE SEPTEMBER 4TH, 2025 P&Z MEETING AGENDA.**
7. Request by **Rick McAllister, agent Imperial Park Holdings, LLC** to rezone 3.0 acres at 301 New Phoenix Road from AG to C-1. **[Map 105, Part of Parcel 019, District 1].*Mr. Rick McAllister** represented this request.

Mr. McAllister stated that the site is located at the intersection of New Phoenix and Old Phoenix Road with an area of approximately 3 acres. Surrounding land uses across the street include C-1 and a public utility. Behind the site is AG. The proposed road access include proposed road cuts on Old and New Phoenix. The requested zoning was an extension of the zoning that exists on all the parcels at this intersection. The intended land use for the property is a convenience store with fuel pumps. He also referred to the submitted concept plan and traffic study. Mr. McAllister added that there would be an onsite well and septic system. He stated that the majority of the intersections within 3 miles of the site along Old and New Phoenix contained some sort of commercial zoning.

Chairman Gray asked if he knew what type of lighting would be available for this site.

Mr. McAllister stated that the proposed lighting would meet the county codes.

The following signed in to speak on the request and were given 3 minutes each.

**Marion Allen
Barb Vargo
Sharron Callahan**

Member Rainey asked Mr. McAllister if there were any design standards that they were trying to meet to be more neighborhood friendly to match the area.

Mr. McAllister stated that they were rezoning for the use not for the architecture of the building. He explained it was something that is done under another process.

Mr. McAllister asked if the staff recommendation could be read before he made his rebuttal.

Chairman Gray agreed.

The staff recommendation was read as follows:

Given the rapid growth currently occurring in Putnam County, it is likely that other landowners with property at high-visibility intersections will also seek a C-1 rezoning. Without an updated comprehensive plan to address the major intersections, the County may face a steady stream of rezoning requests which increases the risk of incompatible land uses, traffic congestion, and may have an adverse effect on community character. It is imperative that Putnam County implement a coordinated land use plan to address commercial development at major intersections. This will ensure that decisions are made with long-term goals supporting compatible growth while preserving the character of existing residential neighborhoods. Furthermore, staff recommends that the Board of Commissioners:

1. **Conduct a comprehensive assessment of major intersections throughout the County, particularly those located along primary arterial roads.**
2. **Formulate a list of community-compatible uses appropriate for development at each intersection.**
3. **Adopt this list and incorporate overlay districts for these key intersections, thereby providing clear expectations for future rezonings and balancing the interests of both residents and other property owners.**

This process will create consistency, improve public trust, and allow the County to accommodate growth while preserving the character of its communities.

Subject to the same, staff recommends approval of the rezoning requests subject to the following conditions:

1. **The property must be used for the purpose stated in the filed application, unless approved by the Board of Commissioners.**
 2. **The developer shall install both a right turn lane and left turn lane, on Old Phoenix and New Phoenix Road, per state and local guidelines.**
- the rezoning action.**
3. **This rezoning shall be conditioned upon the resurveying and recordation in the Superior Court of Putnam County of an accurate plat within 120 days of approval by the board of commissioners. A copy of the recorded plat shall be filed with the planning and development department director. Failure to file a plat pursuant to this subsection shall have the effect of invalidating**
 4. **Failure to abide by the stated conditions shall cause the property to revert to the Agriculture designation.**

Mr. McAllister used the unused portion of his time for rebuttal.

Mr. McAllister stated that there was a way that the planning and zoning commission and board of commissioners have the power to change and modify things. He quoted a section of

the code that says, any changes, composed conditions, and rezonings may be deemed revisable so that the purpose of the chapter would be served and help public safety and general welfare. In addition to that, the planning and zoning commission and the board of commissioners could change, reduce, and modify any part of the application to best achieve the balance between the rights of the applicant and the public interest. There are 4 parcels at this intersection. 1 parcel is a power station that would never be rezoned. Of the remaining 3, 2 of them are already C-1. The 4th parcel is still zoned AG. By virtue of the way the area is being rezoned, they should consider the rights of the property owner.

No further discussion.

Motion: **Member Rainey** made the motion to approve the request to **rezone 3.0 acres at 301 New Phoenix Road from AG to C-1. [Map 105, Part of Parcel 019, District 1].*with the following conditions:**

- 1. The property must be used for the purpose stated in the filed application, unless approved by the Board of Commissioners.**
- 2. The developer shall install both a right turn lane and left turn lane, on Old Phoenix and New Phoenix Road, per state and local guidelines.**
- 3. This rezoning shall be conditioned upon the resurveying and recordation in the Superior Court of Putnam County of an accurate plat within 120 days of approval by the board of commissioners. A copy of the recorded plat shall be filed with the planning and development department director. Failure to file a plat pursuant to this subsection shall have the effect of invalidating the rezoning action.**
- 4. Failure to abide by the stated conditions shall cause the property to revert to the Agriculture designation.**

Second: **Member Atkinson**

Member Erickson stated that he was not on the board when the other parcels at the intersection were rezoned. He was taught at training that the comprehensive plan should be followed. The comprehensive plan was for residential and not commercial. He added that the comprehensive plan may have needed to be updated.

Chairman Gray stated that the opposite lot had been rezoned to C-1 to develop storage units, but nothing had been done. He thought the county was starting to realize that there are some problems with the existing comprehensive plan and revisions need to be changed. He gave an example and added that he was in full support of staff's recommendation.

Voting Yea: **Member Rainey, Member Jones, Member Atkinson, Chairman Gray**

Voting Nay: **Member Erickson**

The motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 1.

New Business

Chairman Gray stated that he spoke with Attorney Nelson about scheduling some work sessions so that the board can discuss procedures and ask questions.

Attorney Adam Nelson requested a 5–10-minute recess.

8. Appeal by Matthew Reeves, agent for Thunder Valley Owners Association, Inc of the Thunder Pointe preliminary plat approval decision made by the director of Planning and Development located on Clack Circle. Presently zoned C-1. **[Map 102B, Parcel 032, District 3]. Mr. Matthew Reeves** represented this request.

Mr. Reeves requested to table the request.

Motion: **Member Rainey** made the motion to approve the request to table the item.

Second: **Member Atkinson**

Voting Yea: **Member Rainey, Member Erickson, Member Atkinson, Chairman Gray**

Abstain: **Member Jones**

The motion was approved by a vote of 4.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:57 pm

Attest:

Lisa Jackson
Director

Charles Gray
Chairman