

WALTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

July 09, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT: Timothy Kemp, Michelle Trammel, Josh Ferguson, Robert Post, Mark Banks & Chris Alexander

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tim Hinton

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT OFFICIAL: Kristi Parr, Tracie Malcom, Hannah Davis and Ron Smith

Co-chairman Timothy Kemp called the meeting to order.

Chris Alexander opened with prayer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Josh Ferguson made a Motion to approve the minutes of June 4 2026, with a second from Michelle Trammel. The minutes were approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS: No Old Business

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Z26-0158 – Rezone 3.90 acres from R1 to A1 to have personal outside animals – Applicant: Carlos R Barahona/Owners: Anita Panjwani, Arash Punjwani & Cinthia D Santos Diaz – property located at 2487 Johnson Road – Map/Parcel C0100016 - District 2

Josh Ferguson made a motion to move this case to end of the meeting due to the interpreter running late. This was seconded by Michelle Trammel. All voted unanimously to move the case to the end of the meeting.

2. Z26-0159 – Rezone a portion of Parcel C0590057 (4.00) acres from R1 to A1 to have personal outside animals – Applicant/Owner: Fig Leaf Risk Advisors, LLC - property located at 3084 Brooks Trail - District 1

Recommendation: Josh Ferguson advised the Board that the Applicant has requested that the case be tabled. Josh Ferguson made a motion that the case be tabled with a second by Michelle Trammel. The Motion carried unanimously.

3. Z26-0139 – Rezone 3.11 acres from R1 to A1 to have personal outside animals – Applicant: Dinko Cepic/Owners: Dinko & Maryssa Cepic – property located at 3460 Stock Road – Map/Parcel C0720061 - District 5

Presentation: Dink Cepic represented the case. He stated that he is looking to rezone his property from R1 to A1 to have personal outside animals. He was asked about what kind of animals and Mr. Cepic stated only a couple of hens. He said that they will be in a 6x5 chicken coop which is 50 ft. from the property line and approximately 16 feet from the porch. He said the surrounding properties are all Zoned A1.

Josh Ferguson asked if there was going to be any commercial business-like selling animals and Mr. Cepic stated he would not be selling animals that these are for personal use.

Timothy Kemp asked how many chickens and Mr. Cepic stated about 4.

Speaking: No one

Recommendation: Josh Ferguson made a motion to recommend approval as submitted with a second by Robert Post. The Motion carried unanimously.

4. Z26-0156 – Rezone 7.486 acres from A2 to B2 for a convenience store with fuel pumps and office warehouse/contractor storage buildings – Applicant/Owner: 81 Investment Company, LLC – property located at 5187 Highway 81 & Bay Creek Church Road – Map/Parcel C0390008 - District 1

Presentation: Andrea Gray stated her address is 300 E. Church Street and she is representing the case on behalf of 81 Investments LLC. Her client is asking to rezone 7.486 acres A2 to B2 to have a convenience store with fuel pumps and office warehouse/contractor storage buildings. She stated the property is located at the corner of Hwy 81 and Bay Creek Church Road. The property is in a commercial node along a State Highway. The proposed B2 zoning is consistent with the Future Land Use Plan. The property is also in the Big Haynes/Alcovy River Watershed. This development would complement surrounding residential and commercial properties. There are already commercial properties within 1 mile which consist of a gas station/convenience store, dog grooming, HVAC, self-storage, pet salon and retail/commercial. The uses are consistent with B2 zoning and no variances are requested. They are going to build a 7,150 square foot convenience store. They are leaving 75% pervious surfaces, open space. The 3 warehouse buildings with an accumulation of 37,200 square feet. There will be a 10 ft. landscaping strip and fencing at the boundaries with adjoining properties. The convenience store will be brick veneer, stone veneer, metal siding charcoal gray and the trim will be virtual taupe and awnings, and canopy will be black and will have concrete paving light broom finish.

Ms. Gray stated that they had completed a traffic analysis. Entrance aligns with Bay Creek Road with a right turn deceleration lane. There will also be a middle turn lane and right turn deceleration lane on Highway 81.

Ms. Gray stated that a traffic study was completed for the traffic counts to estimate the trip generations for each entrance. On Bay Creek Church Road there are 422 daily trips with half turning right and half turning left. Highway 81 shows 466 daily trips with half turning right and half left. Recommendations from GDOT are Highway 81 have a right turn deceleration lane, and a center left turn lane and on Bay Creek Church Road is a right turn deceleration lane.

As to buffers and mitigation of impacts there will be a 10 ft. landscape strip along Highway 81 and Bay Creek and behind the convenience store. There will be a 6 ft. opaque fence around side and rear perimeter. There will be a 50 ft. transitional buffer and the office/warehouse fenced separately with a security gate.

Security will be lighting, video surveillance, fencing and secure access will help secure the site and protect adjoining property owners. There will be downward and inward face lighting. There will be security fencing and gated access to the warehouses. Video cameras will be installed and a perimeter fence adjacent to residential properties.

This will be a benefit to the community due to Walton County's rapidly growing population with the need for convenient fuel, retail, and accessible personal & business storage. The premier design aesthetics will be that the convenience store will have brick veneers and stone-accented storage garages elevate the corridor and this will not be your typical metal box development.

The economic contribution will be construction employment, permanent jobs, and recurring ad valorem tax revenues supporting Walton County services.

Applicant respectfully requests approval of the Rezoning from A2 to B2.

Josh Ferguson asked if the buffer area would have a planted landscape and Ms. Gray stated that is what they intended to do.

Chris Alexander asked if they anticipated heavy traffic coming in and Ms. Gray stated that there is not a lot of room and it's more made for pick-up trucks rather than big heavy Trailer trucks. There will be no parking.

Timothy Kemp asked if they were trying to attract a certain type of storage and Ms. Gray said it's mainly business storage and it will be very organized and there will be no outside storage.

Robert Post asked if the walls were going to be pre-divided and Ms. Gray said that later the walls might be.

Robert Post asked if the Sheriff's Office had any comments due to fatalities happening here and Ms. Gray stated that she had not looked at fatalities. She did say that the Sheriff's Office did provide a comment.

Mrs. Gray stated that the entrance connects with Bay Creek Church Road and they weren't provided with any other details. She does not think the sheriff's office was aware of any traffic study, but that traffic control was not a huge concern.

Speaking: Joe Siegelman, Attorney at Law, who represents 5141 Food Mart Inc. spoke. Mr. Siegelman stated that a very similar, if not identical, case was withdrawn last year for the same thing. He stated that he had prepared a letter that he wanted to put in the record and the letter was given to Kristi Parr, Director of Planning & Development, to put in the record. He said the letter outlines the nature of their interest and stated that he has legitimate concerns to recommend denial. He stated that his client's 5141 Food Mart is right down the road from where this development would be. When the previous case was going on less than a year ago, they petitioned against it. He brought a copy of the signature from the previous case that was against this development. He stated that the previous application did not have fuel pumps, which was part of the issue of the public being opposed. Their primary concern is the combination of things being operated on the property. If there is constant storage then there will be constant traffic going in and out, it will cause loitering which is too intense of a change for this area and causes security concerns.

Mark Banks asked if his client applied and then withdrew it and Mr. Siegelman stated that the Applicant was someone other than them and he feels that the applicant has not been forthright because this is a new applicant.

Mark Banks stated that if someone had withdrawn their application and a new application was filed then this is a separate matter.

Timothy Kemp stated that the signatures that Mr. Siegelman wants to present are from the other application and have nothing to do with the present application that has been filed.

Mr. Siegelman said yes, it does and then Mr. Kemp stated that this case is a new one, so it is different.

Josh Ferguson stated, "is this just speculation?"

Mr. Siegelman stated that the application was withdrawn and he was just conveying the history, but it is essentially the same application.

Robert Post asked if the opposition to this case was because his client is in competition and Mr. Siegelman stated that is not the only reason.

Timothy Kemp stated that yes Mr. Siegelman had said that it was due to competition.

Mr. Siegelman stated that this was not intended to be competition.

Timothy Kemp stated that the issue is that the signatures are from a different application not this

current one.

Mr. Siegelman stated that he was not going to include the record of the petition with signatures, but he will leave them with Kristi Parr to be reviewed.

Rebuttal: Mrs. Gray stated that the property has changed since the other application and her client held a meeting with the owners. Her client reached out to neighbors via email, phone, and mail so they are very much aware of what's going on. She stated that Mr. Siegelman's client is a competitor, and she hopes they can be a good neighbor.

Recommendation: Josh Ferguson made a motion to recommend approval as submitted with the following conditions: 1) 10 ft. landscape buffer shall be planted with appropriate evergreen buffer trees per Walton County Tree Ordinance. 2) frontage of convenience store shall be enhanced with deciduous trees & shrubs 3) Architectural treatments shall be in keeping with applicant's submitted renderings. 4) Transportation upgrades as recommended by traffic study shall be installed by GDOT and Walton County Transportation Coordination. 5) Outdoor storage shall be prohibited in the storage area. With a second by Timothy Kemp, The Motion carried unanimously.

5. Z26-0158 – Rezone 3.90 acres from R1 to A1 to have personal outside animals – Applicant: Carlos R Barahona/Owners: Anita Panjwani, Arash Punjwani & Cinthia D Santos Diaz – property located at 2487 Johnson Road – Map/Parcel C0100016 - District 2

Presentation: Carlos Barahona and his Interpreter, Samiris Ortiz, presented the case. Mr. Barahona stated that he wanted to change his property from R1 to A1 to have chickens for his children. He said that last year he could not get a rezone on his property because his chickens were for sale but now, he is not selling anything, they are just for personal use. He stated that his chickens are always in their chicken coop and are in good health. They do have nonfighting roosters, but they are just for looks. He stated he would also like the opportunity to have some ponies for the sake of his children.

Chris Alexander reassured that Mr. Barahona was asking for chickens and ponies and Mr. Barahona stated that it was correct.

Chris Alexander asked how many chickens and ponies he wanted and Mr. Barahona stated that he wants a female and male pony.

Chris Alexander asked how many are on his property currently.

Mr. Barahona said that they are currently not on his property, they are on his neighbor's property. He moved the chickens after the last meeting. There are about 15-16 chickens that his neighbor has given him permission to keep on their property because their property will allow the chickens.

Chris Alexander asked if the 15-16 quantity includes the roosters and Mr. Barahona stated that it was correct and that he only has 3 roosters.

Chris Alexander asked where he would store the chickens on his property and Mr. Barahona stated that he would either have them in the corner or in the center of his property.

Chris Alexander asked if there would be free range or be in a chicken coop and Mr. Barahona stated that they would be in a chicken coop with only 1 to 3 hours a day free range.

Michelle Trammel asked if the property was fenced and Mr. Barahona stated that he has 2 acres currently fenced but if given this opportunity then he will add more fencing.

He went on to say that the property beside him is A1. He is R1 and has about 4 acres and he is not in a subdivision.

Chris Alexander asked again if Mr. Barahona was going to sell the chickens and Mr. Barahona stated no that they are for his family and children.

Speaking: Lawrence Bowman, who lives at 2497 Johnson Road, is against this request. He stated that there are way more than 15 chickens on Mr. Barahona's property. He stated that there are bags of chicken feed all around the property which blow over into his yard. Mr. Bowman stated that code enforcement has been out numerous times. The chicken coop has never been moved. This area is not a farming community.

Ryan Nesbit, who lives at 2498 Johnson Road, is against this request. He stated that this has been an ongoing problem. Code enforcement just keeps giving him an extension of when to get the chickens off the property. He stated that Mr. Barahona has never gotten the chickens off the property. He said that they have loud concerts over there all the time with cops coming out for noise complaints. He stated that his mother was dying and he was mad that she had to listen to that.

Ralph Nesbit, who also lives at 2497 Johnson Road stated that this is going to ruin the value of their house if they have a zoo across the street.

Josh Ferguson asked Mr. Barahona if he had a response to anything that was said.

Rebuttal: Mr. Barahona said that his only response was that he asks them to leave him in peace. He stated that there was no concert but that he had a birthday party for his daughter. He said that his neighbors on the right of his property just don't like him. Mr. Barahona stated that he had 2 dogs and had to give them up for adoption because of his neighbors. He said his neighbors have always had a problem with him and won't leave him alone, they throw trash at his property and destroy his fence. He said all he is doing is asking to have animals not for selling but for his family. If he cannot have animals he will have to sale his property due to not needing that much land with no animals.

Robert Post advised that roosters are prohibited. Mr. Post was advised the Mr. Barahona is not in a platted subdivision.

Recommendation: Chris Alexander made a motion to deny it and was seconded by Robert Post. The Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

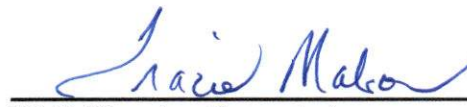
Respectfully Submitted,

Timothy Kemp – Co-chairman



W.C. Planning Commission

Tracie Malcom, Executive Secretary



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