

**COLUMBUS COUNTY PROPOSED SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS ORDINANCE
PUBLIC INFORMATION FORUM
(South Columbus High School)
May 25, 2006
6:00 P.M.**

COMMISSIONERS:

Chairman Godwin
Commissioner Prevatte
Commissioner Memory

PLANNING BOARD:

Al Leonard, Tabor City Town Manager
J.B. Evans, Chairman
Stevie Cox, Planning Director

OTHERS:

Tom King, Community Developer, N.C. Department of Commerce
Mark Gilchrest, News Reporter
David, Tabor Loris Tribune
Ronald Gore, Southern end of the County
Bobbie Faircloth, Paralegal, County Attorney's Office
Mary Cartrette, Realtor, Private Citizen
Eric Underwood, Whiteville Resident, Private Citizen
Johnny Ward, Newport, Private Citizen
Roosevelt Nobles, Private Citizen

Chairman Godwin stated the following:

1. That growth is coming to Columbus County as Horry County, Brunswick County and New Hanover overflows towards Columbus County.
2. Planning Board was established about four or five years ago and Mr. Evans has been the Chair of this Board for sometime now.
3. Concept behind community development planning is to manage growth and this subdivision ordinance is a step in the right direction.
4. To set rules and guidance to the developers and land owners.
5. Total of four forums to gather the public opinions and to inform the public of what is contained in the Subdivision.
6. Introduced Tom King, Community Developer with the Department of Commerce.

J.B. Evans stated the following:

1. The Planning Board has worked over two years to get this plan in place, so the County Commissioner could take a look at it and make any changes that they feel necessary.
2. The people on the Planning Board were assets to the County. There were a town manager, two elected officials, Mr. Wilson from Lake Waccamaw and myself, Mr. Evans and one contractor along with the general public.
3. These mix of people help to form a well verse plan.
4. We are hoping the public takes a good look at this plan and approves of it.

Ronald Gore stated the following:

1. Interested to see how the plan was developed and input on the folks out here.
2. Keep in mind that we are a low wealth County and have potential for growth.

Mary Cartrette stated the following:

1. Sold a house in our community to a man from New York.
2. Partner in the realtor company since 1990 and seen a lot of things happening in Brunswick County and South Carolina and was wondering what we were going to do.

Eric Underwood stated that he saw the ad in the paper and wanted to hear more about it.

Roosevelt Nobles stated that he came to see what is going on.

Stevie Cox stated the following:

1. Subdivision is the taking of a parent tract of land and subdividing it to give to heirs or purchasing of adjoining lands to recombine with your property

2. Building a subdivision is the taking of a parent tract of land and subdividing it into smaller tracts to build residential homes and then reselling individual lots to the public.
3. The subdivision ordinance is to assist in managing the growth in our county.
4. The ordinance will provided guidance whether you are doing a family conveyance or a minor subdivision, 8 lots or less and a major subdivision, 9 lots or more.
5. Provides guidance how to construct a subdivision.
6. Three types: Family subdivision allows for you to divide the property up to 8 lots for the family one time. Also allows a person to apply for a variance if the 8 lots are not enough to do a family conveyance. Minor Subdivision allows for a property owner to subdivide into no more than 8 lots to sell. Minor or Family subdivision must have a home driveway or a private road built to a minimum standard road. Road must be 50 foot with hard surface material pressed down to four inches.
7. The purpose of having a standard road type is to keep from having problems for emergency vehicles, service vehicles and residents having access to the property.
8. Major subdivision is when you are dividing nine lots or more. A Major subdivision must go through the complete process that includes surveying the property and sketch plan review. It is suggested that you do a pre-submission to the technical review committee, preliminary submission that goes before the Planning Board and County Commissioners. The final site plans will then need to be recorded in the Register of Deeds.

Tom King stated the following:

1. Purpose of the ordinance is essential to make sure when dividing property adequate infrastructure is in place such as adequate roads, water, proper lot size for wells and septic tanks, also establishes setback lines.
2. Two classes of road plans, class A or class B. Travel way (easement) will only have to be 12 feet for four or less lots and sixteen feet for eight lots or more.
3. Smaller subdivision such as two lots will not have to build a private road; it can be an easement for ingress, egress and/or regress.
4. Clarification of the process of Minor and Major Subdivision. Minor Subdivisions require a sketch plan that is submitted to the staff and the last step is to file the final plat. Major subdivision is a four step process. The first step is a meeting with the staff, a pre-application process, site analysis plat is required, that can be put together by Arial photos, boundary line surveys or any kind of inventory, and this gives the staff an idea that this is what we are looking at. The staff also goes out to the property to see what the plan will be. Once the sketch plan is submitted then a neighborhood awareness meeting is suggested. The next step is the site plan review and it is submitted to the correct departments for issues to be addressed. A technical review committee will then review the site plan or preliminary plat that is submitted. Once these steps are completed, the next step is a preliminary plat that is submitted to the Planning Board and the Board of Commissioners which is reviewed during a public hearing. Once the Planning Board and County Commissioners approve the preliminary plat, the final plat just needs to go to the Planning Department for final approval.

Commissioner Prevatte stated that according to the brochure you could provide direct road frontage instead of a private road.

Ronald Gore stated the following:

1. If there was a problem with drainage who would be the person to make the call. Mr. Developer you are going to build a retention pond or some other way to fix the problem.
2. Somebody somewhere needs to keep the individual property owners in mind when reviewing site plans/sketch plans for developers.
3. What if the problem was not know before the subdivision was completed, who would be responsible for correcting it then?

Tom King stated the following:

1. Drainage issue may be brought up by a neighing property owner, during the neighborhood meeting to a new planned subdivision. The notes from this meeting will be forwarded to the Planning Department.
2. Adjoining property owners will also be notified of the public hearing and given a chance of speaking up before the sketch plan/site plan, review and approval.

Stevie Cox stated the following:

1. Once the plans have been reviewed by the technical committee, this issue should be addressed and a solution prepared.
2. Other option is to try and preserve most of the natural vegetation. This will help with drainage problems. Adding a fifty foot buffer would be an option to the developer.

Chairman Godwin stated the following:

1. Having this set of ordinance does protect maybe the neighbors more than if we didn't have it. Because there is a review process. It has just about every agency you can think of that has jurisdiction over different parts of a project like this.
2. However, the reality of it is that something might be missed, but I believe you are better off having some guidelines or process for people to go through. I think you are less likely to miss something when there are some rules to follow.
3. Also added to the ordinance is a Board of Adjustment and that really is the Board that will be responsible for hearing grievances and ultimately they always have the legal recourse.

Commissioner Prevatte stated this is not something set in stone; it is a living document that can be changed. It is so much better than having nothing, because right now if someone was to come in and build a subdivision wherever and they would follow no guideline whatsoever.

Ronald Gore stated the following:

1. Does the mobile home parks fall under any of this?
2. Do we have any guidelines on Mobile Home Parks?
3. It looks like to me you need to put some teeth in the Mobile Home Parks Ordinance.

Commissioner Prevatte stated it started out including mobile homes But it was pulled out.

Chairman Godwin stated the following:

1. There is a separate Mobile Home Park Ordinance created in 1998 and an RV Park Ordinance.
2. Once this is behind us we are going to go back and update our Mobile Home Park Ordinance.
3. What we would ultimately like to do is a combined Ordinance to include the Mobile Home Park, RV Parks and Subdivisions.

Al Leonard stated the following:

1. I go back with Mr. Evans to 2001 in 21st Century Planning initiative at the Department of Commerce.
2. One of the statements was that the Columbus County has no plan. They called for the creation of the Planning Board and I salute the Commissioners for the creation of the Planning Department.
3. Really what we have before us is the first plans for Columbus County. I am not a real big fan of government regulation. But I think there is times when it is necessary.
4. We were told by some person that if we developed regulations that we would stop growth.
5. Bladen County just adopted a Subdivision Ordinance and this did not stop the growth.
6. We will adopt this ordinance and something will come up and we will find out that something was put in that needs to be removed or something may need to be added.

Chairman Godwin states the following:

1. The tract that we are on for this proposal is the four community forums and a call for a public hearing on June 19, 2006, and a public hearing and adoption during the meeting in July, 2006.
2. This thing is not carved in stone it gives us a starting point.
3. I think the point is that we do not want to be seeing problems with new subdivisions, as we do with Mobile Home Parks. The adoption of the Mobile Home Ordinances were about 20 years to late.

Commissioner Prevatte stated the following:

1. Looking at the statistics from last year we had 500 mobile homes come into the County and less than 50 stick built homes.
2. There is a group of developers that want to put in a group of 120-150 homes very soon. If we do not get something on the books now, then we might find the roads every which way.

Mary Cartrette stated the following:

1. I have observed the investors from wherever come in with several backers and they have a lot of pause when they come in.
2. You got to have something in place, it probably will not be perfect but it can be corrected.

Stevie Cox stated the following:

1. I would request that you attend the public hearing and whether you are for or against it, please state your opinion.
2. If you cannot attend, please send you comments in writing.
3. We are looking on how things will look in 20 years from now. This is our opportunity to see this county grow in a positive way.

At 8:30 P.M., Chairman Godwin closed the Public Forum.

APPROVED:

**BOBBIE FAIRCLOTH, Acting Clerk
to Board**

KIPLING GODWIN, Chairman