

The Russell County Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 18, 2011
4:30 P.M.

An adjourned meeting of the Russell Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman R.C. Adams. Members present were Jimmie Batchelor, Carla Thomas, Dillie Elliott, Attorney Walter Gray, David Ellis, Gary Head, Bill Friend and Peggy Martin. Advisors present were Larry Kite; County Engineer, Brandon Bundy, Greg Smith; Russell County Building Inspector, Johnny Burrell; Russell County Health Department,

Chairman Adams called for a motion to approve December 21, 2010 meeting minutes. Bill Friend motioned to approve the minutes. Peggy Martin seconded the motion. The motion carried with eight yes votes. Gary Head abstained.

Bill Barrett submitted the Final Plat for Maple Leaf Subdivision Phase 2 for approval. Mr. Barrett stated this phase is nine lots facing McLendon Road. David Ellis stated that a fire hydrant was to be installed and has not been. I don't want to vote this down however it is getting to the point where I have no control over whether he installs one or not. Mr. Barrett suggested that water service could be withheld pending installation of the hydrant.

Mr. Ellis asked Mr. Barrett to explain this to the developer and motioned to approve with contingent that the hydrant is installed. Jimmie Batchelor seconded the motion. The motion carried by eight yes votes and one no vote cast by Gary Head.

Gary Head stated I want to go on record that any thing that comes up in Ft. Mitchell, I'm not going to vote yes on anything that doesn't have sewerage. We are not doing the citizens of Ft. Mitchell justice when we know that sooner or later we are going to have problems without sewerage. It's not that they are not complying with Health Department standards it's because that soil can only take so much.

Chairman Adams asked for the State requirements on developments. Johnny Burrell stated the requirements are based on site evaluations and a certain amount of fill lines. Minimum lot size is 15,000 feet. The size of the septic tank and number of feet of fill lines is based on the soil analysis performed. Right now what we have in the subdivision regulations there is no restrictions of what you can put on a 15,000 square feet lot. After the Public Hearing is held and regulations are changed the county will have more stringent regulations than the state, which we will follow.

Gary Head stated every time we approve those subdivisions we are adding more powder to the keg by not having sewerage.

Larry Kite stated, I believe you have the authority to pass regulations and require subdivisions of a certain size and number of lots to have a package system for sewage. While those are tough decisions to make as far as revenue is concerned, the density problem may be averted by mandating the systems are put in place.

Walter Gray reiterated comments made by Mr. Kite.

Peggy Martin stated the developers of sewer systems from around Baldwin County are still talking with us. They are sending us additional information to review.

LeAnn Horne stated the system suggested to us was a system somewhere between a centralized and decentralized system. In this the developers are responsible for installation within the subdivision itself. The system itself is to be maintained by the provider of the service. They have a dump station or plant if you will where the sewage is collected. The track record for keeping the fees under control for these services is very good, varying less than ten dollars over the past ten years. The nice thing about this is it stops the appeal for being annexed into the city for reasons of having sewerage and fire protection; therefore keeping the revenue in the county. This is not at the expense of the county or the water authority or the citizens. This is a private regulated company that provides a service for the citizens.

Jimmie Batcheldor stated we toured one of these facilities in Mobile. I remember the system would take over should there be a problem somewhere along the line and provide back up. They were very efficient at what they do.

Chairman Adams asked that the county engineer check around to see what might be available to address this problem.

Chairman Adams stated we will have a Public Hearing on our Subdivision Regulations changes before our regular meeting at 4:30 on February 1, 2011.

LeAnn Horne stated the topics we discussed on the comprehensive study at our last meeting have been delivered to Mr. Watts. They are meeting with the utility authorities to finish up that portion of their study. Today I met with an Economic Development professor from Auburn University that is working with them in this area. Hopefully they will be forthcoming in the next couple of weeks with a final product.

David Ellis stated, the county does not have time to come out and check on the location of gas lines, cable, phone lines, etc. and where they are being placed. This creates a nightmare when water lines need repairs, because other supply lines are placed on top of one another. I think the county should dedicate

guidelines to be followed to avoid these problems. If those guidelines are not followed, fines should be imposed to those violators. I will try to get with Larry Kite before our next meeting to come up with suggestions addressing this issue.

Bill Friend stated, currently the engineers can sign off on minor subdivisions of five plots or less. I think we need to stop that practice and have all subdivisions come before the Planning Commission. If a piece of land is cut into two or more pieces, it is a subdivision and should be approved by the Planning Commission.

David Ellis motioned to approve and was seconded by Bill Friend. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Chairman Adams stated at our next meeting we will elect a chairperson and a vice chairperson.

The meeting adjourned.