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Timothy Byler  
ASST. VICE CHAIR  
Lynn Pace  
SECRETARY  
Jeff Ricketson



COMMISSIONERS  
Sarah Baker  
Alonzo Bryant  
Andrew Williams  
Marshall Kennemer  
Phil Odom  
Durand Standard

July 25, 2016

The Liberty Consolidated Planning Commission met on Tuesday, July 19, 2016, in the Historic Courthouse, 100 Main St., Hinesville, GA. Jack Shuman, Chairman, called the meeting to order. A Motion was made by Durand Standard to accept the minutes from the June 21, 2016, meeting. Marshall Kennemer seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Chairman Shuman asked for a motion to accept the final agenda. Motion was made by Tim Byler and seconded by Marshall Kennemer. Motion passed unanimously. The public was notified of the meeting; the agenda was posted in accordance with Georgia Law.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Durand Standard  
Phil Odom  
Andrew Williams  
Lynn Pace  
Alonzo Bryant  
Tim Byler  
Marshall Kennemer  
Jack Shuman  
Sarah Baker

ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jeff Ricketson, Executive Director, Secretary  
Gabby Hartage, Zoning Administrator  
Melissa Jones, Planner II  
Curles Butler, Senior Inspector  
Abe Nadji, Engineering Director  
Kelly Wiggins, Executive Assistant

Chairman Shuman asked the public to disclose prior to speaking at the podium if they had contributed more than \$250.00 to any elected official who would be voting on these zoning matters.

**1.0 OLD BUSINESS (OPEN PUBLIC HEARING)**

**1.1 Rezoning Petition 2016-016-LC.** An application has been filed by Jerry C. Poppell, owner, to rezone 4.8 acres of land, more or less, from AR-1 (Agricultural Residential District) to B-2 (General Commercial District) for an outdoor retail market/flea market off

E. Oglethorpe Hwy, further described as LCTM-Parcels 101-053 and 101-049.

Jeff presented new information to the Planning Commission on behalf of Mr. Poppell. Mr. Poppell has requested an extension of thirty days for his rezoning. He has received an answer on the decel lane from GDOT but is still trying to get his wetlands delineated.

MOTION: Durand Standard  
SECOND: Andrew Williams  
VOTE: Unanimous

## **2.0 NEW BUSINESS**

### **2.1 Consent Agenda Items (None)**

### **2.2 Ordinances and Resolutions**

## **3.0 REZONING PETITIONS AND OTHER ZONING RELATED ITEMS**

### **LIBERTY COUNTY**

**3.1 Rezoning Petition 2016-018-LC.** An application by Soon Woodard, owner, to rezone 2.52 acres of land, more or less, from AR-1 (Agricultural Residential District) and A-1 (Agricultural District) to R-3 (Multi-Family Residential District). Property is located on Tibet Road and is further described as LCTM-Parcel 064C-007.

Melissa presented this zoning petition to the Planning Commission. The purpose of this rezoning is to offer transitional housing to probationers and parolees as well as housing for homeless and indigent persons. This 90-day program will house up to ten individuals at one time. The applicant has applied for their 501C status and state support. The residents are expected to pay a portion of their earnings to the center. Melissa explained to the Planning Commission that this would have an adverse effect on the nearby properties if approved. This could also create a burden on public safety. This is considered spot zoning and is unrelated to the existing pattern of development.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Disapproval

John Woodard, owner of property, came forward to speak in support of the rezoning. Mr. Woodard stated that his intention is to help people. He stated there many homeless people wandering around Liberty County. Mr. Woodard stated he is giving them a bed, giving them food and buying them clothes. I have not gotten a dime from anyone. This is all from our pocket, because we love and because God mandates us to that. He states they will be seeking public assistance from the State when we do get people paroled from prison. We do have two probationers in the house now. We get the conditions of their probation. They are working and contributing to society. Mr. Woodard stated that there is a separate kitchen and separate living quarters for the occupants. We are looking to be a help to Liberty County. We are not looking to decrease our property value. These people would be wandering around Liberty County and if you look at the gazebo now you will see that it is cleaned out. That is because we help people get on their feet, get out, and go to work. The most important thing to us is that they develop a relationship with God. That is our number one goal. We take them to church with us three times a week. Mr. Woodard stated that his home in out in the country and his neighbors are far away.

We have built a privacy fence. He says that the prison system does not send them violent felons. They send him people that the system believes are ready to be reintroduced to society. We were doing this in Long County but had to move because we outgrew the facility. We would like to put up another dwelling to house more. We would like to help people and we have never had a problem in the past. Mr. Woodard stated that is what they are all about and he does not think his neighbors have anything to worry about. We have a very close relationship with the police department and the probation officers. Any time we need them we call them and they are right there. They come to visit us several times a week to check on things and make sure everyone is behaving. Chairman Shuman asked Mr. Woodard if he was previously located in Long County as the same operation. Mr. Woodard stated yes. Chairman Shuman asked Mr. Woodard why he left Long County. Mr. Woodard stated because his land was too small. Chairman Shuman asked where are the ones you have custody of staying now. Mr. Woodard stated that right now we have two, which he has a 900 square foot garage, and they live there. Chairman Shuman asked if the parolees are from this area. Mr. Woodard stated that they are from the Liberty County Jail. They are on probation here and cannot leave until they get their probation transferred to their hometown. Parolees from prison would be a different story. I would be a member of their THOR program and I have applied for that and will be approved once this zoning goes through. Then we will get prisoners from all around. Chairman Shuman asked how many he could accommodate at this time. Mr. Woodard stated that he is set up for ten. The most I have had so far is five. Commissioner Williams asked Mr. Woodard to address sexual offenders. Mr. Woodard stated that there is a possibility that they will accept a sex offender, but at no time will he have more than four sex offenders. Commissioner Williams stated that if you get a sex offender we still have to follow the policy of the state for sex offenders living arrangements. Commissioner Williams stated if he was not mistaken, he believes there is a church on Tibet Road that is near Mr. Woodard's home. Mr. Woodard stated that is true but the Sheriff's Department has checked and issued a certificate of compliance stating that they meet all that is required by law. He is over 1000 feet away. Commissioner Kennemer questioned the restroom facilities for the occupants. They have their own restroom and their own shower. Commissioner Kennemer asked if there was just one. Mr. Woodard said that they have three full baths in the house and they are allowed to use any of them. Commissioner Kennemer asked about recreation for them. Mr. Woodard stated that other than work, they have a basketball court and ping pong tables. The occupants are allowed to go to town or to a park during the day. They get there by bicycle or if Mr. Woodard is available, he will give them a ride. His church provides a van they can use as well. Commissioner Kennemer asked if they had a curfew. Mr. Woodard stated that the curfew is 10:00 p.m. They have to be back on the property and checked in by 10:00 p.m. If there are any exceptions, they have to be pre-approved. Commissioner Byler asked if he had an agreement with the Sheriff's Office to have deputies come in and sweep the premises for any illegal paraphernalia. Mr. Woodard stated that he has an agreement with the Sheriff's Office and the Probation Department. Mr. Woodard also stated that he has cameras on the premises and that the occupant is told upon arrival that they are being recorded. Soon Woodard, owner of property, also spoke in favor of the rezoning. Mrs. Woodard stated she came to the United States for this opportunity to help others. She wishes to minister to the occupants and to help them re-establish a place in the community.

Mr. L.C. Williams came forward to speak in opposition to this rezoning. Mr. Williams lives next door to this house and he states that what the Woodard's are proposing is already in affect now. Mr. Williams states that they have been operating since March. Mr. Williams states that the occupants do not live in Mr. Woodard's house; they live in a 15 X 20 shed in the back. Mr. Williams states that there are three sex offenders living there and only two are registered in Liberty County. Mr. Williams lives within 200 feet of the Woodard's house. Mr. Williams has

grandchildren and has lived there for 20 years. Mr. Williams thinks his property value will go down if this rezoning is allowed. Mr. Williams states that there is no bathroom facility for the occupants to use. Mr. Williams stated that his wife spoke with one of the occupants and the occupant stated that the Woodards put them out of the house at one o'clock in the afternoon and tell them to come back at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Williams is concerned about where this sex offender would go during this time. Mr. Williams stated that he could see the occupants using the bathroom outside from his upstairs window. Mr. Williams stated that the recidivism rate for is 66 to 70 %. If 12 people are there at any given time that means 5 to 6 of them are going to commit that same type of crime. In addition, both of the people that lived there last were child molesters. Chairman Shuman asked Mr. Williams if he stated that they have been utilizing this facility since March. Mr. Williams stated yes.

Mrs. Cynthia Williams spoke in opposition to this rezoning. Mrs. Williams is concerned about having this many felons in one place and possibly having temper flaring in this small space and causing some sort of disturbance. Mrs. Williams's states that she does not want to live next to a compound. Mrs. Williams states that she knows of four people that have been put out of the house and had to rely on Liberty County's system. In addition, those people were not from this area and that is drain on Liberty County resources. Mrs. Williams states that according to the State of Georgia's website, child molesters are not allowed in this type of facility.

Mr. Andrew Standard spoke in opposition of this rezoning. Mr. Standard states that he lives next door to Mr. and Mrs. Williams. He has lived in this neighborhood for 40 years. Mr. Standard states that they have a peaceful neighborhood. Mr. Standard stated that this is something that sounds nice but this is actually a moneymaking business. He is not against the concept; however, he is very much against the location. Mr. Standard also stated that the Woodard's do receive monetary benefit for each occupant. Mr. Standard pointed out the Woodard's have been running this business since March without the proper licenses or permits. Mr. Standard's opinion is that anyone that deceives the public or him by starting the business in an improper way sends a bad signal to him.

Mr. Woodard came forward to address the issues brought up from the neighbors. Mr. Woodard stated that the little building that they are talking about in the back is the kitchen for the occupants. They go in there and hang out. It is air-conditioned. He did not know they were using the bathroom outside and would address that with the residents. Mr. Woodard stated that the sex offenders that have lived there were brought to him by a probation officer that knocked on his door and asked if he would take them. Susan Brown has put them on a bus and sent them to my house. That is how we got started four months ago. Because I was asked to take them in and I said I would do the best I can. Mr. Woodard said that he has not been approved or permitted and he is not running a business or receiving payment from anyone. He states he is paying for everything out of his pocket and that he has not received a single penny from anyone. Not even a donation. The police asked the Woodard's to lock the doors if we leave the property and the occupants will have to wait outside. We do leave but we do not stay gone for a long time. Commissioner Byler stated that money is not coming to the Woodard's at this time, but that leads the Planning Commission to believe that you want to operate a group-home/rehab center once this is approved and that opens this up to a lot more. Mr. Woodard stated that he would receive \$600.00 per inmate from the State. Commissioner Odom asked how does local law enforcement know you offer this service. Mr. Woodard stated that they know because of the relationship with inmates and Long County Probation was aware of his services. Commissioner Odom stated that he has a problem with Mr. Woodard starting the business without the proper



permits. Commissioner Kennemer asked if the state calls you and offers you money to take this people. Mr. Woodard stated that the state has not offered him a dime.

**MOTION TO DISAPPROVE:** Marshall Kennemer

**SECOND:** Andrew Williams

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**This rezoning will go before the LCBOC on August 2, 2016 at 6:00 P.M.**

**3.2 Special Exception Request 2016-020-LC.** A request by Ace Coastal Builders Inc. (Ted Eby) to allow a self-defense pistol shooting range off Limerick Road. Properties are further described as LCTM-Parcels 238A-097, 238A-098, 238A-099, and 238A-100

Melissa presented this request to the Planning Commission. Mr. Shawn White will teach the classes. There will be three instructors per class. Prior to each of the classes, the applicant will call the Liberty County Sheriff's Office and advise them that they are teaching a shooting class on that day. Melissa presented a proximity map and pictures of the berm and the site to the Planning Commission. The MJM Center is located next door to the shooting range and the children play outside. There are children present during the week as well as on weekends. Melissa also informed the Planning Commission that the LCPC received a petition with 124 signatures stating they are against the location of the shooting range. Ms. Charlene Harris, MJM founder, stated that the children play kickball within the vicinity, said Melissa Jones.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Disapproval

Commissioner Byler asked Melissa if the same individual owned all the parcels. Melissa stated yes. Commissioner Byler pointed out accepting the special exception and what would happen when an individual decides to purchase the property to build a home on the other parcels.

Ted Eby came forward to speak on behalf of the shooting range. Mr. Eby stated that he was approached about the shooting range and told the applicant that he could use the property for a shooting range until he was able to sell the property. Mr. Eby says that this is a safe area. He stated that the MJM center for children is only open from Monday through Friday and that the children do not play in the area closest to the firing range. Chairman Shuman asked Mr. Eby if he still has plans to sell the property for homes and if this is just a temporary shooting range. Mr. Eby stated this is temporary. Commissioner Williams asked how the Planning Commission would know that this is a safe area and if the berm was built to safe standards. Sean White came forward to address the safety concerns for Commissioner Williams. Mr. White stated that there is no high-powered rifle shooting. The only shooting will be fired directly towards the berm. Mr. White stated they would be operating on Saturdays from eight to four. There will be no live firing on Sundays. Commissioner Odom asked Mr. White how he plans to mitigate the lead left over on the range and if Mr. White had those letters of certification. Mr. White stated that he did not.

The following people came forward to speak in opposition of this shooting range: Kenneth Larson, President of Woodland Lakes Association, Maxie Jones IV, Casey Nash, Tamika Byrd, Randolph Baker, Tom Estes, Sheri Purcell, David Carlevalle, Barry Hew, Brenda Booker, and Linda Estes. The majority of the people in opposition stated that they are in fear of their safety and life. Their home life is disrupted. One neighbor has an autistic child that the shooting

affects. The shells being left on the ground. Decreased property value. Environmental impact. Some homeowners have PTSD and this is disturbing to them. Safety of children playing outside.

Chairman Shuman asked Mr. White to come forward and address the issues brought up by the surrounding residents. Mr. White stated he has not used the range for his business as of yet. There were other people shooting on the property. Mr. White stated that he would hate to break up a community and would just rather withdraw his rezoning petition. Mr. White apologized for wasting the Commission's time. Mr. Eby also got up, apologized to the audience, and stated that he would refrain from any further shooting on the property. The audience clapped and thanked both of Mr. White and Mr. Eby for withdrawing.

Chairman Shuman stated that he would accept Mr. White's withdrawal.

## WALTHOURVILLE

**3.3 Rezoning Petition 2016-019-W.** An application by Richard M. Roberts, owner, to rezone 1.00 acre of land, more or less, from AR-1 (Agricultural Residential District) to R-2A (Single-Family, Two-Family, and Mobile Home Residential District). Property is located on Hillary Lane and is further described as LCTM-Parcel 051A-065.

Gabby presented this rezoning petition to the Planning Commission. Gabby stated that the parcel it is not in flood zone at this time, but on the preliminary panel this property would fall in flood zone "A" if the maps are adopted in 2017.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Tim Byler  
SECOND: Marshall Kennemer  
VOTE: Unanimous

**This rezoning will go before the City of Walthourville on July 26 at 6:00 p.m.**

## CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

### 4.0 SITE PLANS, PRELIMINARY PLATS & FINAL PLATS

**4.1 Preliminary Plat for Mehalko Road Subdivision.** Request by T.R. Long Engineering for preliminary plat approval for a subdivision consisting of 11 lots.

Abe presented the Planning Commission with this preliminary plat. The utilities, water and sewer already exists. The developer is also willing to pave the two alleys. Commissioner Pace asked if sidewalks would be installed. Abe stated that there would be a sidewalk on Douglas Road and Mehalko Road.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

MOTION TO APPROVE: Durand Standard  
SECOND: Phil Odom  
VOTE: Unanimous

**This preliminary plat will go before the City of Walthourville on July 26, at 6:00 p.m.**

**5.0 INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**6.0 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**7.0 OTHER COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**7.1 Director's Report**

Jeff Ricketson presented the Planning Commission with an update of last month's actions. Jeff stated that the Comprehensive Plan has gone before the city governments with the exception of LCBOC and Midway. After the adoption from the last two government entities within the next week, the Comprehensive Plan will be sent to DCA and the Regional Commission for their review. Hinesville City Council tabled the doggy daycare on Airport Road. The Hinesville City Council approved Carpathia Paws. The car sales lot on Airport Road was approved but with three additional spaces granted by the Hinesville City Council. The property next to Food Lion on HWY 196 was approved as well as the family cemetery in Gum Branch. The presentation of the flood maps will be tomorrow, July 20, 2017 at the Performing Arts Center from 5 to 7 p.m.

**8.0 ADJOURN**

MOTION: Tim Byler  
SECOND: Andrew Williams  
VOTE: Unanimous.



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**Jack Shuman, Chairman**

TIMOTHY BYLER VICE CHAIR



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**Jeff Ricketson, Secretary to the Board**

16 Aug 16

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**DATE**