

Planning Board / Board of Adjustments and Appeals

Regular Meeting

October 24, 2023

Minutes

The Okeechobee County Planning Board/Board of Adjustments and Appeals met in regular session on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the Okeechobee County Health Department Auditorium, 1728 NW 9th Avenue, Okeechobee, Florida.

Board members present were Joey Hoover, Billy McCullers, Charles Murphy, Samantha Saucedo and Ann Vu. Matthew Buxton and Jeff Davis were absent. Also in attendance were County Attorney Garrett Olsen, Planning Director Bill Royce, Planner Ty Hancock and Administrative Assistant Jenna Durham.

Chairman Joey Hoover called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Agenda Item # 1. Public Comment.

There were no comments from the public.

Agenda Item # 2. Approval of Minutes.

Ann Vu moved to approve the September 26, 2023 minutes as submitted. Billy McCullers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item # 3, Public Hearing, Petition R-2023-0763, Change in Zoning. William Jason Tomlinson Living Trust, property owner and applicant. Request for a change in zoning from the existing classification of Residential Mixed (RM) to the proposed classification of Neighborhood Commercial-2 (NC-2). The property address is 9889 US Highway 441 North.

Planning Director Bill Royce presented the petition and described the surrounding area. He stated that the subject parcel is located on Highway 441 and is the only parcel along four blocks that is not zoned for commercial or industrial use. He stated that the block to the south contains some residential uses, but the rest of the surrounding properties are mostly commercial uses. He stated that the subject property is on an arterial highway and located in the Okeechobee Little Farms Rural Activity Center future land use classification. He stated that the applicant wants to rezone the subject parcel to combine an adjacent parcel and create a more marketable building site. He stated the requested change of zoning meets all the criteria and is consistent with the Okeechobee County land development regulations and comprehensive plan.

Mr. Royce stated that staff recommends that the Planning Board recommend that the Board of County Commissioners grant a change in zoning from Residential Mixed (RM) to Neighborhood Commercial-2 (NC-2).

Chairman Joey Hoover opened the public hearing.

There were no comments from the public.

Ann Vu moved to close the public hearing. Charles Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ann Vu moved to recommend that the Board of County Commissioners grant petition R-2023-0763, request for a change of zoning from Residential Mixed (RM) to Neighborhood Commercial-2 (NC-2), based on the staff report and recommendation. Billy McCullers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Joey Hoover stated that a second public hearing to consider the request for a change in zoning will be held before the Board of County Commissioners on Thursday, November 9, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in the Judge William L. Hendry Courtroom, Room 270, Historic Okeechobee County Courthouse, 304 NW 2nd Street, Okeechobee, Florida.

Agenda Item # 4, Public Hearing, Petition C-2023-0001, Comprehensive Plan Amendment. Sloane Ray Hester, property owner; The Singer Company, LLC, dba Mid-Florida Industrial Solutions, LLC, applicant. Request to reclassify approximately 400 acres from the Agriculture future land use classification to the Industrial future land use classification. The property is located on NE 128th Avenue, approximately 2 miles north of State Road 70 East and approximately .9 miles south of the entrance to the WM Okeechobee Landfill. This petition is associated with Petition R-2023-0762, request for a change in zoning from Agriculture (A) to Heavy Industrial (I-2).

Planning Director Bill Royce presented the petition. He stated that this petition qualifies as a large scale amendment. He stated that the subject property consists of 400 acres on north Berman Road. He stated that to the north are 250 acres that are already in the Industrial future land use classification, and that were rezoned to Heavy Industrial (I-2) some years ago. He stated that Faith Farm is to the south. He stated that the regional landfill is across the street to the east, and that there is agricultural land to the west. He stated that the south 150 acres of the subject property is a wetland that cannot be developed, and would serve as a buffer between the developed portion of the subject parcel and Faith Farm. He stated that Berman Road is a collector road and the traffic study shows that existing roadways can handle the expected increase in traffic. He stated that the proposed amendment is compatible with the area and briefly explained the approval process for a large scale comprehensive plan amendment.

Mr. Royce stated that staff recommends that the Planning Board sitting as the Local Planning Agency recommend that the Board of County Commissioners approve the requested map amendment to the comprehensive plan and forward the amendment to the state reviewing agencies.

Chairman Joey Hoover opened the public hearing.

Rick Aspden, Faith Farm Ministries, addressed the Board. He stated concerns about the increased truck traffic and asked for further clarification about the project.

Steve Dobbs, SLD Newlines Engineering, addressed the Board on behalf of the applicant and discussed proposed plans for the industrial park.

Phillip Berger, Coldwell Banker Berger Real Estate, addressed the Board. He stated that the property has realistically outgrown its agricultural use and is now best suited for an industrial use.

Ann Vu moved to close the public hearing. Billy McCullers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

There was some discussion between the Board and Mr. Royce regarding the subject property's wetland and the distance between it and Faith Farm.

Ann Vu, moved to recommend that the Board of County Commissioners approve the requested map amendment to the comprehensive plan and forward the amendment to the state reviewing agencies, based on the staff report and recommendation. Billy McCullers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Joey Hoover stated that a second public hearing to consider the request for an amendment to the comprehensive plan will be held before the Board of County Commissioners on Thursday, November 9, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in the Judge William L. Hendry Courtroom, Room 270, Historic Okeechobee County Courthouse, 304 NW 2nd Street, Okeechobee, Florida.

Agenda Item # 5, Public Hearing, Petition R-2023-0762, Change in Zoning. Sloane Ray Hester, property owner; The Singer Company, LLC, dba Mid-Florida Industrial Solutions, LLC, applicant. Request for a change in zoning from the existing classification of Agriculture (A) to the proposed classification of Heavy Industrial (I-2). The property is located on NE 128th Avenue, approximately 2 miles north of State Road 70 East and .9 miles south of the entrance to the WM Okeechobee Landfill. This petition is associated with Petition C-2023-0001, request for a comprehensive plan amendment to change the future land use classification from Agriculture to Industrial.

Planning Director Bill Royce presented the petition and described the surrounding area. He stated that the request for zoning is contingent on the approval of the comprehensive plan amendment application that was just heard. He stated that state law allows for concurrent applications for the comprehensive plan amendment and change of zoning to a zoning district that's consistent with the new future land use classification. He stated that if the comprehensive plan amendment is approved, a Heavy Industrial (I-2) zoning would be compatible for the subject parcel. He stated that if the comprehensive plan is not approved, the subject parcel will retain its current Agriculture (A) zoning. He stated that the subject parcel is 400 acres, on a collector road, with Industrial zoning to the north and a regional landfill across the street to the east. He stated that if the associated comprehensive plan amendment is approved, the proposed change of zoning will be consistent with the comprehensive plan and land development regulations.

Mr. Royce stated that staff recommends that the Planning Board recommend that the Board of County Commissioners grant the request for a change in zoning from the existing classification of Agriculture (A) to the proposed classification of Heavy Industrial (I-2), with the understanding that the new zoning designation will not become effective unless the associated request for a comprehensive plan amendment changing the property to an Industrial future land use classification is approved by the Board of County Commissioners and found to be in compliance with state law.

Chairman Joey Hoover opened the public hearing.

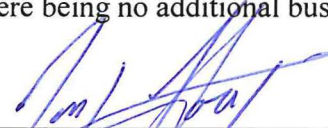
Richard Aspden, Faith Farm Ministries, addressed the Board to state that he would like to receive additional information on the project.

Ann Vu moved to close the public hearing. Billy McCullers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ann Vu moved to recommend that the Board of County Commissioners grant petition R-2023-0762, request for a change of zoning from Agriculture (A) to Heavy Industrial (I-2), with the understanding that the new zoning designation will not become effective unless the associated request for a comprehensive plan amendment changing the property to an Industrial future land use classification is approved by the Board of County Commissioners and found to be in compliance with state law, based on staff report and recommendation. Billy McCullers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Joey Hoover stated that a second public hearing to consider the request for a change in zoning will be held before the Board of County Commissioners on Thursday, November 9, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in the Judge William L. Hendry Courtroom, Room 270, Historic Okeechobee County Courthouse, 304 NW 2nd Street, Okeechobee, Florida.

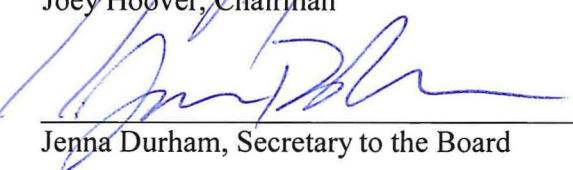
There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:27 p.m.



Joey Hoover, Chairman



Date of Approval



Jenna Durham, Secretary to the Board



Date