



HABERSHAM COUNTY
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HABERSHAM COUNTY

Planning & Development

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MINUTES
HABERSHAM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Public Hearing
Tuesday, May 6, 2025

The Habersham County Planning Commission held a public hearing on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at the Habersham County Courthouse, located at 295 Llewellyn St. in Clarkesville, Georgia.

Planning Commission Members Present: Greg Hill, Jessie Owensby, D. Higgins, Larry Phillips, & Richard Thornton.

Commissioners Jim Kiger & Jason Smith along with Assistant Planning & Development Director, Troy Dills, were unable to attend.

Also, present was Mike Beecham, Planning & Development Director & Habersham County Attorney, Ralph Taylor.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Chairman D. Higgins called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

INVOCATION:

The invocation was given by Commissioner Jessie Owensby.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Approved without change.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

A motion was made by Commissioner Greg Hill to move the Map Amendment **Z-25-02** to the beginning of new business for discussion since it would need to be tabled.

It was seconded by Commissioner Richard Thornton. All were in favor.

The results of the votes were as follows:

Commissioner Greg Hill – Yea
Commissioner Larry Phillips – Yea

Commissioner Jessie Owensby – Yea
Commissioner Richard Thornton – Yea

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Z-25-02: Greg & Paula Bagley are seeking a Map Amendment to rezone a parcel from AG – Agriculture to LI – Low Intensity. The tract is located at 1191 Blair Rd. and is further identified as Map 132 Parcel 003.

Due to the lack of needed documentation to go forward with discussion of the Map Amendment, a motion was made by Commissioner Richard Thornton to table **Z-25-02** until the June Planning Commission meeting.

It was seconded by Commissioner Larry Phillips. All were in favor.

The results of the votes were as follows:

Commissioner Greg Hill – Yea
Commissioner Larry Phillips – Yea

Commissioner Jessie Owensby – Yea
Commissioner Richard Thornton – Yea

CU-25-01: James W Draper, Jr. is seeking a Conditional Use to operate a Christian Retreat with up to 17 cabins. The tract is located at 735 Kennedy Mountain Rd. and is further identified as Map 014 Parcel 003.

After the proposal was presented, the applicant was given a chance to speak.

Mr. Draper began to speak and talk about his intentions for the property. He stated that plans were for this to be a Christian Retreat not a religious cult. He said that he also had no plans to widen the road to protect it nor cut all the trees.

After Mr. Draper was finished speaking, those in favor or in opposition to the proposal were given a chance to speak as well.

The following people were in favor of the proposal:

- Lew Oliver said the road should remain as is to discourage development.
- Joe Inglis & Bradley Cook are locals from the area and were both in attendance. Neither had any issues with the proposal.

The following people were in attendance to speak in opposition to the proposal:

- David Foster 287 Allen Trail Drive Clarkesville, Ga. 30523
- Peggy Lovell 350 Kennedy Mountain Rd. Clarkesville, Ga. 30523
- Todd Valentini 232 Kennedy Mountain Rd. Clarkesville, Ga. 30523
- Jeff Allen 212 Allen Trail Drive Clarkesville, Ga. 30523
- Jimmy Cantrell 3029 Goshen Creek Rd. Clarkesville, Ga. 30523
- Wink Densmore 776 Kennedy Mountain Rd. Clarkesville, Ga. 30523
- Lisa Densmore 776 Kennedy Mountain Rd. Clarkesville, Ga. 30523
- Lawrence Bridges 713 Kennedy Mountain Rd. Clarkesville, Ga. 30523
- Ginger Kennedy Bridges 713 Kennedy Mountain Rd. Clarkesville, Ga. 30523
- Julius Miller 259 Kennedy Mountain Rd. Clarkesville, Ga. 30523
- Patricia Miller 259 Kennedy Mountain Rd. Clarkesville, Ga. 30523

The following concerns and issues seemed to resonate with all those in opposition:

- Safety concerns due to more traffic on an already narrow county road.
- Possible erosion threat to local streams and water.
- Negative impact on watershed and water table.

After everyone had finished speaking, public comment was then closed so that the Commissioners could discuss the proposal and vote.

A motion was then made by Commissioner Greg Hill to deny **CU-25-01**.

It was seconded by Commissioner Larry Phillips. All were in favor.

The results of the votes were as follows:

Commissioner Greg Hill – Nay
Commissioner Larry Phillips – Nay

Commissioner Jessie Owensby – Nay
Commissioner Richard Thornton – Nay

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

SUBDIVISIONS:

SV-25-02: Greg Hill is seeking approval of a preliminary plat for a 10-lot subdivision (The Grove). The tract is located at 1195 J. Warren Rd. and is further identified as map 086 Parcel 001.

Due to Commissioner Greg Hill having to recuse himself from discussion, James Irvin from Foothills Land Design spoke on his behalf.

After Mr. Irvin was finished speaking, anyone in favor or in opposition to the proposal was given a chance to speak.

Since no one else was in attendance with any concerns or issues, public comment was then closed so that the Commissioners could discuss the proposal and vote.

A motion was then made by Commissioner Richard Thornton to approve the preliminary plat for “The Grove” subdivision.

It was seconded by Commissioner Larry Phillips. All were in favor.

The results of the votes were as follows:

Commissioner D. Higgins – Yea
Commissioner Larry Phillips – Yea

Commissioner Jessie Owensby – Yea
Commissioner Richard Thornton – Yea

REPORTS TO COMMISSION:

None.

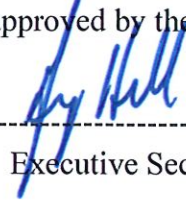
ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.

As approved by the Habersham County Planning Commission:



Executive Secretary



Date