



HABERSHAM COUNTY

Planning & Development

130 Jacob's Way Clarkesville, GA 30523
706-839-0142 www.tidills@habershamga.com

MINUTES
HABERSHAM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Public Hearing
Tuesday, January 6, 2026

The Habersham County Planning Commission held a public hearing on Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at the Habersham County Courthouse, located at 295 Llewellyn St. in Clarkesville, Georgia.

Planning Commission Members Present: Greg Hill, Larry Phillips, D. Higgins, Jessie Owensby, Mike Roberts, Ronald Lewallen, & Jason Smith.

Also present was Mike Beecham, Planning & Development Director, & Troy Dills, Planning & Development Assistant Director.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Chairman D. Higgins called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

INVOCATION:

The invocation was given by Commissioner Jessie Owensby.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Commissioner Greg Hill made a motion to keep Commissioner D. Higgins as chairman. It was seconded by Commissioner Larry Phillips. All were in favor.

Next, Commissioner D. Higgins made a motion to appoint Commissioner Greg Hill as Vice-Chairman. It was seconded by Commissioner Jessie Owensby. All were in favor.

Commissioner Greg Hill then made a motion to appoint Commissioner Larry Phillips as Secretary to which Commissioner Larry Phillips declined.

A final motion was made by Commissioner Greg Hill to appoint Commissioner Jason Smith as Secretary. It was seconded by Commissioner D. Higgins. All were in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Approved without change.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Due to a request from the applicant, Commissioner Greg Hill made a motion to amend the agenda and to table CU-26-02.

It was seconded by Commissioner Jessie Owensby. All were in favor.

The results of the votes were as follows:

Commissioner Greg Hill – Yea
Commissioner Jessie Owensby – Yea
Commissioner Ronald Lewallen – Yea

Commissioner Larry Phillips – Yea
Commissioner Mike Roberts – Yea
Commissioner Jason Smith – Yea

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

CU-26-01: Doug Campbell is seeking a Conditional Use to be able to operate Farm Tours on their property that will include horse boarding, riding lessons, private events, and shows. The tract is located at 850 Preacher Campbell Rd. and is further identified as Map 020 Parcel 036.

After the proposal was presented, the applicant was given a chance to speak. Cassidy Burnette (daughter) was there to speak on behalf of the applicant and the proposal. Mrs. Burnette began to lay out the plans that they have for the property.

The purpose of this application is to allow the applicant to operate an agritourism and educational venue on their property. If permitted the applicant would like to offer farm tours, private events, horse-related activities, and livestock instruction. The applicant wants to keep the area as rural as possible, and they plan on being very selective about who comes and goes. In addition, the property will support and offer horse-riding lessons, horsemanship clinics, training events, as well as livestock focused workshops, teaching proper animal care and farm management. They may also host an occasional wedding and birthday parties are welcome as well. All activities will focus on safety, animal welfare, with respect to community.

After Mrs. Burnette had finished speaking, anyone in attendance in favor of or in opposition of the proposal was then given a chance to speak.

The following people were in attendance to express their concerns about the proposal.

- Darla Jackson 777 Preacher Campbell Rd. Clarkesville, GA. 30523
- Martine Olsen 1644 Echota Rd. Clarkesville, GA. 30523
- Greg Dobson 1260 Preacher Campbell Rd. Clarkesville, GA. 30523

The following concerns seemed to be shared by all those that spoke.

- Extra traffic on an already busy cut through road.
- Excessive parking could spill out further than intended.
- Future growth could possibly expand the operation out to more than first expected.

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

A motion was then made by Commissioner Greg Hill to approve CU-26-01 with following conditions:

- Hours of operation shall be limited to 8 am – 10 pm daily.
- Only private events will be allowed.
- Public Works approval of driveway sight distance requirements.

It was seconded by Commissioner Jessie Owensby. The motion carried by a 5-1 margin.

The results of the votes were as follows:

Commissioner Greg Hill – Yea
Commissioner Jessie Owensby – Yea
Commissioner Ronald Lewallen – Yea

Commissioner Larry Phillips – Nay
Commissioner Mike Roberts – Yea
Commissioner Jason Smith – Yea

CU-26-02: William Gary is seeking a Conditional Use to be allowed to operate an R/V Park with possible boat storage on his property. The tract is located on Cannon Bridge Rd. and is further identified as Map 043 Parcel 055A.

*See (Approval of Agenda)

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

REPORTS TO COMMISSION:

None.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

Discussion was made about the new Unified Development Ordinance.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 PM.

As approved by the Habersham County Planning Commission:



Executive Secretary

2/3/26

Date