BZA gives conditional OK for RV park expansion

BY MIKE EADS
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WALHALLA — Keowee Falls RV Park received tentative approval Thursday for a proposed expansion, provided it meets terms laid down by Oconee County's Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).

Ronald Hughey, owner of the 53-acre park at 150 Jefferson Road, told the board he's running out of space and wants to add spaces along Jefferson Road to accommodate growing demand. He had already started tiling and electrical work.

"I was shocked to hear it was zoned," Hughey said, assuming his 12-year-old business and land was grandfathered in when the county's zoning laws took effect in 2009.

Ben Turetsky of Friends of Lake Keowee Society (FOLKS) complained to the board about silt runoff from the park into the Cane Creek inlet to Lake Keowee. He asked for silt fencing and more vegetation to be planted on the property to curb erosion.

Turetsky added that previous attempts by the state Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) to address soil erosion from the RV park into the lake have been ineffective.

"No one else can force them to do this except you," Turetsky said.

Neighbors also noted the erosion problem, but they all acknowledged that previous flooding and runoff from all along the creek have been a much bigger problem.

One woman, Ellen Clark, did complain about boats from the RV park coming within "3 feet of my dock" and was worried about more campers creating more boat traffic.

The BZA voted 6 to 0 to allow Hughey's zoning request. He will have to get a stormwater containment plan in place, as well as the rest of the relevant permits from the county's building code office. Hughey agreed to the conditions without complaint and pledged to keep in close contact with the neighbors.

meads@upstatetoday.com | (864) 973-6685