Councilman to press zoning issues

Wayne McCall to seek unreleased emails to overturn zoning decisions

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WALHALLA — Councilman Wayne McCall plans to turn up the heat on the simmering zoning debate in Oconee County.



McCall

McCall said Friday that he asked for two controversial zoning-related items be placed on the agenda of the Sept. 6 Oconee County Council meeting.

First, McCall said he wants a discussion on crafting an ordinance that would overturn the North Fairview and North Cane Creek rezoning ordinances so that the two communities could "start the rezoning process on an equal footing."

Second, McCall said he wants to discuss a council resolution that would approve the release of emails presently being withheld from the public because the county is invoking attorney-client privilege.

The emails were withheld from a Freedom of Information Act request made by North Fairview residents Jean Jennings and David and Michelle McMahan. The county released dozens of other emails under the FOIA request.

McCall made his agenda request in writing to County Administrator Scott Moulder and Clerk to Council Beth Hulse on Monday, two days before Jennings and the McMahans filed a lawsuit against the county.

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ZONING: Emails withheld from Freedom of Information Act request

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The lawsuit references the emails released by the county to show that council's ultimate decision, which denied the rezoning request made by Jennings and the McMahans, was influenced by ex parte communications between county officials and members of Advocates for Quality Development Inc.

AQD members were supportive of the North Cane Creek petition, which was at odds with the North Fairview request.

McCall said he wants to know what was being said in the emails.

"Since I was not included in these communications, as (County Attorney Tom Martin) pointed out, the only way I can learn what transpired is to get council majority approval for the emails to be released," McCall said in his letter to Moulder and Hulse.

"I plan on making a motion to this effect at the Sept. 6 council meeting," McCall added in the letter.

McCall said he would move forward even if his items are left out of the Sept. 6 agenda because of pending litigation with Jennings and the McMahans.

"I'll just bring it up under new business," McCall told The Journal on Friday.

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