

# 'Suddenly it all stopped'

## Emails fill gap in zoning delay

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THE JOURNAL

### What do the records really say?

District 1 Councilman Paul Corbeil picked up the mantra from his lakeside neighbors and constituents.

"I am convinced that zoning opponents now see Traditional Rural as a blank check, and contrary to their public utterances of wanting to protect what they've always had, also want to have it as an insurance policy in the event that a commercial offer or the like comes along," Corbeil wrote to County Administrator Scott Moulder on Sept. 28, 2010. Corbeil copied Councilmen Reg Dexter and Joel Thrift, and Planning Commissioner Heller in the email.

Corbeil has declined to comment and has said he is reserving any comments until The Journal series on the emails is completed.

In a related development, local activist Donna Linsin made a FOIA request Tuesday seeking additional information from

SEE ZONING, PAGE A5

WALHALLA — A Keowee Courier article written by Ashton Hester made it into the chain of emails that has ignited a firestorm of debate over zoning in Oconee County.

Planning Commission member Andrea "Andy" Heller circulated Hester's observations on zoning found under the subhead: "Is the Oconee County CEO Dead? Or Just in a Deep Sleep?"

The article that appeared in the July 28, 2010, edition tries to explain why the initial flurry of rezoning activity in the county came to a screeching halt.

"Zoning has not been on a County Council meeting agenda since April 13," Hester wrote.

From the time that council members unanimously approved on first reading the ordinances related to the North Lane Creek and North Fairview rezoning petitions April 13,



**Thursday:** Where did ag residential come from & who suggested it should be the Fairview answer?

eight months went by before a second reading was taken on Dec. 17.

The emails, obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request and posted online by The Journal, shine some light on what was going on behind the scenes during the time lapse.

Lakeside residents branded



**Friday:** Locals are not alone in believing that civil conspiracies can take place.

with the property ... hog farms, junkyards, rentals ... anything," wrote one alarmed Oake Pointe resident.



**Saturday:** Did county officials cross the line to help private interests effect change?

the North Fairview request for Traditional Rural District as being the "most unrestrictive" zoning in the county.

"... That means they can do anything



To read the emails and attachments provided by Oconee County and referred to in this story go to: <http://upstatetoday.com/index.php/rezoning>

# ZONING: 'It's pretty darn obvious'



Council voted 4-0 to approve North Cane Creek and 5-0 to approve North Fairview Community, both on first reading (in title only), referring the matters to the Planning Commission for the required review and to request a recommendation be returned from the Planning Commission within 30 days.



In an email from Paul Corbeil to Gary McMahan, Corbeil says the county needs a group of reasonable people with different viewpoints to leave the baggage at the door and sit down with members of the Planning Commission and staff and address the classifications that are needed, logical transition, standards, etc. and this would improve the ZEO and provide better long term protection.



At Planning Commission Andrea Heller pointed out that the proposed new zoning district, "Agricultural Residential" would provide additional choices for rezoning that Rural Residential did not offer. After discussion, Commission members agreed to replace the Rural Residential zoning classification with the new Agricultural Residential District. Members all agreed that the draft Public and Recreation District was acceptable as is and should be incorporated as an additional zoning district.



At Planning Commission, Ryan Honea made a motion to send both the Agricultural Residential, as amended, and the Public and Recreational District to County Council to be included into the ZEO. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.



Planning Director Art Holbrooks informed the Planning Commission that the Planning staff had developed a recommendation on Ordinances, 2010-15 and 2010-16 because of the overlap. He explained that the staff recom-

mendation could be submitted to County Council. Commission unanimously approved a motion to forward on to County Council the North Fairview request, as it was submitted, as the dominant map, then use the North Cane Creek map, as it was submitted, to fill in around the North Fairview request.



County Council approved, 5-0, Ordinance 2010-21, establishing the Agricultural Residential District and the Public and Recreational Lands District on Second Reading.



County Council approved, 3-0, (McCall abstained) to approve Ordinance 2010-21 to establish the Agricultural Residential District and the Public and Recreational Lands District as amended on third and final reading.



In an email from Paul Corbeil to Scott Moulder and Art Holbrooks, Corbeil questions whether Cane Creek/Fairview applications should be deferred until Traditional Rural and Ag Res modifications are resolved



On 3-2 votes with Joel Thrift and Wayne McCall in opposition, County Council approves on second reading amended North Cane Creek and North Fairview ordinances, replacing original maps with a common map created by the Planning Office.



Council voted for various parcels in North Fairview Community to be rezoned to Agricultural Residential District for third and final reading. The Ordinance for North Fairview Community passed 3 to 2 with McCall and Thrift voting against.

## FROM PAGE A1

the county.

Linsin wants information related to a zoning meeting that took place in April 2010 between county officials, members of Advocates for Quality Development, Inc. and others referenced in the emails obtained by The Journal.

Planning Commission Vice Chairman Howard Moore has

been pouring over the emails since getting copies last week.

Moore calls the eight-month stretch between the first and second readings of the controversial zoning petitions "unprecedented."

Moore said the Planning Commission unanimously recommended Traditional Rural for the North Fairview petition several times, but County Council would send it back.

"They didn't like that,"

Moore said Tuesday. "They would not take the Planning Commission's recommendation."

In retrospect, and after reading the emails, Moore thinks he has a better understanding of the way everything played out behind the scenes.

"It's pretty darn obvious what was going on," Moore said.



How transparent do you feel the county has been?