Massive zoning petition on docket



JESSICA NELMS | THE JOURNAL

Most of the parcels in a massive rezoning request coming before the Oconee Planning Commission for the first time on Monday are lakefront parcels. However, a few people have asked to be taken out of the zoning request, Wand at least one adjoining property owner is concerned about what the future may hold for his farmland.

Planners to take first look at 2,800-parcel request

BY CARLOS GALARZA
THE JOURNAL

WALHALLA — Randy Gilchrist owns almost 40 acres of control free district property in the Stamp Creek area, but he is worried his land might not be control free for long.

Gilchrist said this week he is growing timber on his parcel and that it has the potential to be farmland in the future.

Yet, Gilchrist is worried that a 2,800-parcel rezoning request introduced to the Oconee County Council last month puts a cloud of uncertainty on what future uses may be made of his property.

The Oconee County Planning Commission gets its first look at the Keowee Key/Stamp Creek petition at its regular meeting Monday. The session begins at 6 p.m. in council chambers, 415 S. Pine St.

Gary Owens, a former president of Advocates for Quality Development Inc., an organization created five years ago to protect the interests of lake residents, is spearheading the rezoning petition.

The request would protect the majority of properties in the petition under zoning classifications of Lake Residential and Residential districts.

The boundary of Owens' petition bumps against Gilchrist's property, but does not include it. Gilchrist fears an attempt could be made to rezone his land lake residential or residential in the future.

SEE **ZONING**, PAGE **A5**

ZONING: Planning Commission meets Monday at 6 p.m.

FROM PAGE A1

"I don't like the land grab that's going on," Gilchrist said.

And, he is not alone. Others who do fall within the Keowee Key/Stamp Creek petition have called the Oconee County Planning Department to voice their concerns and objections to the petition.

One protestor said that hundreds of acres being pulled in by the petition have been in the family for more than 100 years as timber land.

County Planner Aaron Gadsby said recently he had about eight property owners that have objected to being included in the petition.

The Planning Commission agenda includes public comment of the review and proposed changes made so far to three zoning districts — Traditional Rural, Agricultural and Agricultural Residential.

carlos@dailyjrn.com | (864) 973-6685