

Oconee to streamline permitting

Building Codes targets one-stop services

BY CARLOS GALARZA
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WALHALLA — Oconee County is working on a plan to make it easier and faster for contractors and developers to get their permits.

Some think such a service is long overdue. County officials have heard complaints from builders who say they can get their permits much faster in Anderson and Pickens than in Oconee.

Building Codes Director David Stokes said he is aware it's an important service that Oconee has to improve. He said

County Administrator Scott Moulder indicated as much when he hired him to take over the Building Codes Department almost five months ago.

At the time of his hiring, Stokes said he wanted to build rapport and improve services for the professionals who frequently visit the Building Codes Department.

Stokes said he delegated the task of streamlining the permitting process to Aaron Gadsby, who recently stepped in as deputy director of Building Codes after moving over from the Planning Department.

"That'll be one of

(Gadsby's) main focuses," Stokes said.

Gadsby said Tuesday that his goal is to change the current linear step-by-step permitting process so that multiple steps could take place at



Stokes

the same time.

"You have to go through a series of steps before you get permits," Gadsby said. "We're hoping to centralize that to get things going."

Many have been calling for such one-stop service for some time. It would save developers the time and effort of going to dif-

ferent agencies or offices for such things as septic or sewer permits, floodplain checks, encroachment permits, issuing 911 addresses, meeting zoning requirements and reviewing plans.

Gadsby said he would have to work out the details with other agencies, such as the state Department of Health and Environmental Control.

"DHEC is excited about it," Gadsby said. "In concept, they're in favor. It's just a matter of working out the details."

Stokes said the county is targeted to begin offering one-stop services by early January.

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