Planners complete zoning revision

Sending changes to County Council

BY CARLOS GALARZA
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WALHALLA — The Oconee County Planning Commission completed a revision of the zoning laws that one member said should stop land-grabbing or over-reaching by property owners utilizing small area rezoning.

Commission Chairman Ryan Honea said the key change is that subdivisions will not be able to pull in larger tracts without having at least 65 percent of parcels with 1.5 acres or more.

Planners approved the change during their regular meeting Monday night, and voted to send all revisions made in the Zoning Enabling Ordinance to County Council.

Honea said he proposed the change to homeowners in subdivisions from pulling in property owners with much larger tracts.



Honea

Honea said this would give more protection to large parcel owners — mostly farms.

"They'll have to ask the owners of these large parcels, 'Do you want to zone with us?' Honea said. "That's new. I've been working on that for a while."

Going forward, Honea said property owners would be notified early on in the process that they are being included in a rezoning petition, and not wait until the matter already has come before County Council or the Planning Commission.

County Planner Aaron Gadsby guided the Commission through the revision process over many months.

"I think this will clarify a lot of things," Gadsby said.

Commission members Andrea Heller and Gwen McPhail thanked Gadsby for his work in getting the revision completed.

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