

Planners to

Seek 2 special meetings, 1 with attorney present

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WALHALLA — Moving quickly on Oconee County Council's request to review parts of the Zoning Enabling Ordinance, the county's Planning Commission wants to convene at least two special meetings before the ZEO goes

into effect May 1.

Chairman Tommy Abbott said at Monday night's regular meeting of the Planning Commission that new County Attorney Tom Martin would be invited to one of the special meetings.

Vice Chairman Ryan Honea emphasized the importance of having Martin present.

About 60 residents attended the meeting, which dealt primarily with the comprehensive plan.

However, during public comments on the onset, every speaker addressed zoning.

The ZEO was later addressed under new business by Planning Department Director Art Holbrooks, who outlined

review zoning

three issues County Council specifically wants the Planning Commission to address.

Holbrooks said the first issue the Commission has to take up is a clarification of the procedures required for all amendments to the ZEO so that it complies with state law. He said the second issue relates to the section on overlays and to provide resident involvement in the discussion. Finally, the Commission is to consider payment of costs for implementing

and administering zoning in the county.

Commissioner Bill Evatt questioned having to ask the new county attorney for an opinion of the legality of the county's ZEO when previous county attorney Brad Norton already issued an opinion.

"Now we have another attorney looking into this," Evatt said. "This is going to cost the county a lot of money."

Earlier in meeting, Holbrooks made a presentation of some of

the ideas presented during a comprehensive plan stakeholder meeting last week related to population and transportation.

With the county population increasing at a 7 percent rate and expected to top 83,000 in 2020 and reach almost 92,000 by 2030, Holbrooks said stakeholders presented many good ideas.

Holbrooks said the next stakeholder meeting related to natural resources will be held from 5 p.m.-7 p.m. March 5.