Rezoning bids may start to flow again soon

Council may consider three petitions Oct. 19

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WALHALLA — A stream of rezoning petitions that have been backlogged for months is expected to begin flowing before the Oconee County Council later this month.

Planning Director Art Holbrooks said Wednesday that his office would try to have three petitions incorporated in ordinances ready for first reading at the Oct. 19 council meeting.

"We're going to try to get multiple petitions going," Holbrooks said.

Chairman Reg Dexter wanted to know at Tuesday council meeting why petitions with 100 percent support had not been presented.

All parcels in Oconee County are zoned Control Free District. There are three methods that could be used to rezone to any of 11 other Base Zoning Districts.

County Administrator Scott Moulder told Dexter he did not know why petitions were not being presented and would find out.

Howard Moore, vice chairman of the Planning Commission, expressed the same concern at Monday night's planning meeting.

Holbrooks said there are some eight to 10 rezoning petitions where all parcel owners are 100 percent in agreement with changes that could be acted on quickly.



Moulder



Dexter

For more than six months, the Planning Commission, Planning Department and County Council have been stuck on two rezoning requests each of which includes 13 of the same parcels. Property owners of those 13 parcels signed both petitions.

One petition pits the wishes of the Lake Keowee community of North Cane Creek looking to zone exclusively Lake Residential District, against the wishes of the North Fairview community that

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mostly wants Traditional Rural District.

The so-called "dueling" petitions have raised concerns among Planning Commission members about Oconee's fledgling Zoning Enabling Ordinance (ZEO) that went into effect in May 2009.

The Commission and County Council held a joint workshop in June to address those concerns.

Moore, who had a list of recommendations that he apparently asked the Planning office to forward on to County Council, said this week he never got feedback on his zoning suggestions from council.

Moore asked in the form of a motion at Monday's Commission meeting that the Planning Department send a letter to council requesting feedback to his proposed changes in the zoning process.

Holbrooks had a draft of the letter in his office Wednesday. He said it needed the signature of either Moore or Commission Chairman Tommy Abbott so it could be forwarded to council.

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