Zoning fee proposal is in the works

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WALHALLA — The Oconee County Planning Department will recommend to council a $50 zoning application fee for all requests made after initial rezoning petitions.

Planning Department Director Art Holbrooks said he would propose the $50 fee because it is the amount typically charged for permitting variance requests.

Holbrooks said he would likely make the proposal during a council budget workshop next week.

The fee would not apply during the initial stages of rezoning available to property owners using three methods outlined in the county's Zoning Enabling Ordinance (ZEO) that took effect May 1. As defined by the ZEO, Oconee is "control free," except for specially carved overlays. It would take a petition utilizing one of the three methods to get property rezoned and out of "control free" designation.

Holbrooks said there is no charge during the initial rezoning process using Planning District Initiated by Citizens, Small Area Rezoning or County Initiated Rezoning.

The $50 application fee would be applied to any request made in a rezoned area.

For example, if the owner of a parcel in an area rezoned as an Agricultural District wants to use that land for commercial development, the owner would have to ask for a variance.