

# Lakeside Lodge, county talk incentives

BY NORM CANNADA  
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SENECA — Oconee County officials plan to discuss an incentive package with the entire county council in executive session next week, a step the county hopes will bring an end to an annex-

ation request before Clemson City Council by the developer of a property inside Oconee County.

County administrator Scott Moulder, Oconee Economic Alliance director Richard Blackwell, county attorney David Root and Oconee County Councilmen Paul Cain and

Julian Davis met with Lakeside Lodge developer Steve Mudge and attorney Richard Few in Seneca on Wednesday. While no agreement is final, Moulder called the meeting “a positive step.”

“We had what we thought was a very positive discussion with the developer,” Moulder

said of Wednesday’s meeting. “We discussed the incentive options for the projects and talked about the logistics of the timing of how those incentives would be approved. Where we are at this point, it’s still in a positive discussion

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## INCENTIVES: No specifics announced

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phase in which both parties will begin to draft documents and agreements. We discussed the relationship conceptually and have come to an understanding of what that conceptual relationship would look like, but there is no formal agreement yet.”

Moulder said the draft documents and agreements will be discussed with the full council in executive session during Tuesday’s regularly scheduled council meeting. He said he expects first reading on an ordinance to approve the incentives would occur March 20.

Lakeside Lodge Clemson is a proposed \$40-million-plus condominium project on nearly 8 acres of land adjacent to the Hartwell Village shopping center on U.S. Highway 123 near S.C. Highway 98. Mudge has requested annexation into the city of Clemson, which would be the first land in Oconee County annexed by Clemson. The city’s planning commission recommended the annexation Feb. 12. City council held a public hearing Feb. 19 on the issue, in which several Oconee residents spoke

against the annexation, including three county council members.

City council did not vote on first reading of the annexation ordinance at that meeting.

On Feb. 20, Oconee County Council approved the motion to begin negotiations on incentives with Lakeside Lodge, but the motion said the incentives were contingent on the developers not being annexed by Clemson.

Blackwell presented the incentive offer last week to Mudge, who requested Wednesday’s meeting to discuss the issue more.

Moulder said that any incentives approved by county council would take three readings and would be contingent on the developers dropping the request to be annexed by Clemson.

“Anything the county would approve would be based on that contingency,” Moulder said. “I think that the meeting was a positive step in the right direction, and it was a good opportunity for us to have good meeting of the minds to express each party’s position on the matter.”

Moulder said that while there was no request Wednesday that Mudge drop the request with Clemson before a final agreement is reached, “it is understood that (annexation) request would need to be dropped once an agreement is reached between the county and the developer.”

Moulder would not give the specifics of the incentives, but said they would be similar to other incentive packages.

“I can tell you there will be a minimum investment requirement, as we do with all of our incentives, and there will be a minimum job requirement as we do with all of our incentives,”

Moulder said. “And it will be an infrastructure rebate for improvements made to the property.”

In an email response to The Journal on Wednesday, Mudge confirmed the meeting but did not discuss specific details.

“We did meet with Oconee County representatives (Wednesday) morning,” Mudge wrote. “Discussions are ongoing as we continue to explore our development options. We look forward to a successful project that benefits Clemson, Seneca, Oconee County and Tiger Nation.”

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