



Minutes
Sumter County Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 11, 2023 -- Held at 6:00 p.m.
Sumter County Administration Building
Third Floor, County Council Chambers
13 E. Canal Street, Sumter, SC

Social Distancing Is Encouraged At All of County Council's Meetings, And Seating Is On A First Come First Serve Basis.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAHjiqzPaonQ9LFS2kO37tA>

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: James T. McCain, Jr., Chairman; James R. Byrd, Jr., Vice Chairman; Artie Baker, Eugene R. Baten, Charles T. Edens, Vivian Fleming McGhaney, and Carlton B. Washington.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Gary Mixon, Mary W. Blanding, Johnathan Bryan, Joe Perry, Helen Roodman, Valerie Brunson, and two Sheriff Deputies.

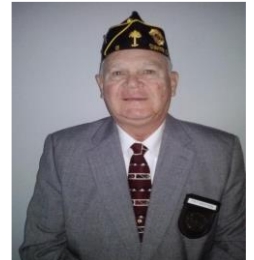
MEDIA PRESENT: Shelbie Goulding, The Item Newspaper reporter, was in attendance.

PUBLIC PRESENT: Approximately 16 members of the public attended this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Or Vice Chairman Of Sumter County Council - Chairman James T. McCain, Jr. called County Council's April 11, 2023, meeting to order.

INVOCATION: Council Member, Staff Member, Or Local Citizen - Councilman Vivian Fleming McGhaney gave the invocation at this meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance to the America Flag was led by Veteran US Air Force Veteran Charles P. Sexton who served our country from March 1963 to March 1967. He is a Past Commander of American Legion Post 15 in Sumter. He currently lives in County Council District 3. Thank you for your service.



APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Regular Meeting Tuesday, April 11, 2023

Chairman McCain asked the Clerk to Council if there were any changes to the agenda. The Clerk responded that there were no proposed changes to the agenda. Then Chairman McCain called for a motion concerning action on the Regular Agenda for Sumter County Council for April 11, 2023.

ACTION: MOTION was made by Vice Chairman Byrd, seconded by Councilman Baker, and unanimously carried by Council to approve the agenda as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Regular Meeting Tuesday, March 28, 2023

Chairman McCain asked Council members for a motion concerning the approval of Council's March 28, 2023, the Clerk to Council if there were any changes to the agenda. The Clerk responded that there were no proposed changes to the agenda. Then Chairman McCain called for a motion concerning action on the Regular Agenda for Sumter County Council for April 11, 2023.

ACTION: MOTION was made by Vice Chairman Byrd, seconded by Councilman Baker, and unanimously carried by Council to approve the agenda as presented.

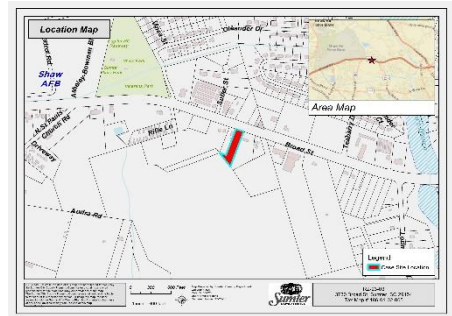
LAND USE MATTERS AND REZONING REQUESTS:

Planned Development/Rezoning Requests:

NOTE: RZ = Rezoning Of Property As Applicable In Sumter County Zoning and Development Standards.
AC = Agricultural Conservation As Applicable In Sumter County Zoning and Development Standards.
NC = Neighborhood Commercial As Applicable In Sumter County Zoning and Development Standards.
LI-W = Light Industrial-Warehouse As Applicable in Sumter County Zoning and Development Standards.

- (1) **RZ-23-03 -- 3720 Broad Street -- (County) - First Reading -- A Request To Rezone A +/- 0.81-Acre Portion Of A Larger +/- 1.59-Acre Property From General Residential (GR) To General Commercial (GC). The Property Is Located At 3720 Broad Street And Is Represented By Tax Map #186-01-02-005.**

Mrs. Helen Roodman, the Planning Director, stated that this request is from Christine T. Coker who is the application. She hopes to have this property, an .81-acre tract of a larger track (1.59 acre) from General Residential (GR) to General Commercial (GC). The property is located at 3720 Broad Street. This property is currently located between commercially zoned properties and both properties have a home located on them. This request does not impact any setbacks on the subject's property at this time. However, the request will impact setbacks at the time of the development. It was mentioned by Mrs. Roodman that the applicant has not stated the intent for the proposed rezoning at the drafting of this report. It was also noted by the Planning Director that the Planning Staff's assumption is that the applicant wishes to bring the entire property into the General Commercial Zoning District to accommodate future development. Mrs. Roodman also stated that changing the GR zoning designation to a non-residential zoning designation is in alignment with the Sumter 2040 Comprehensive Plan, as the GR district permits residential densities much greater than what is recommended within the MPA future land use designation. It appears that future residential development immediately adjacent to the subject property is unlikely. The Planning Commission notes that if the request is successful, increased building setbacks are still applicable on the portion of property adjacent to a residential zoning district.



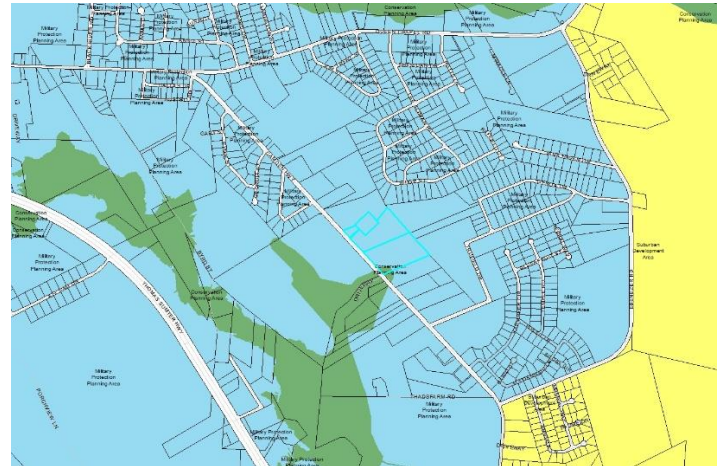
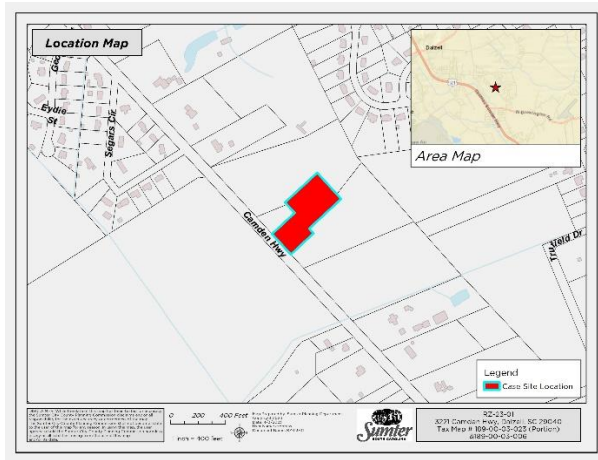
After all comments by Council and staff, the following motion was carried by Council members.

ACTION: MOTION was made by Vice Chairman Byrd, seconded by Councilman Baker, and unanimously carried by Council to grant first reading to this rezoning request as presented by the Planning Director.

- (2) **RZ-23-01 -- 3221 Camden Highway -- (County) - Second Reading -- A Request To Rezone Three (3) Separate Parcels Of Land Totaling +/- 20.12 Acres From Residential-9 (R-9) To Agricultural Conservation (AC). The Property Is Located At 3221 Camden Highway And Is Represented By Tax Map #'S 189-00-03-006, 189-00-03-023, & 189-00-03-024. (Public Hearing Was Held On March 28, 2023.)**

Prior to this rezoning request being presented to Council and the public, Chairman McCain reminded Council that the Public Hearing for this rezoning request was held on March 28, 2023, and no public hearing will be held at this meeting for this rezoning request.

Mrs. Roodman stated that this request is by the property owner, Mr. Christopher Raffield who was present at the meeting. The request has been amended to rezone one two-acre parcel and a one-acre portion of a larger tract of land for a total of 3.0 acres from Residential-9 to Agricultural Conservation. Mrs. Roodman stated that she met with Mr. Raffield and his legal representative to make this decision.



Mr. Raffield chose the sight that is listed on the Location Map in red based on previous flooding on the larger piece of property. The homestead and the smaller piece of property that Mr. Raffield has chosen did not flood during the thousand-year flood which occurred in Sumter County during 2015.

Councilman Baker asked if this rezoning is approved, would Mr. Raffield be able to place another dwelling on the property without taking the house down that is currently on the larger piece of property. Mrs. Roodman stated that Mr. Raffield would not be able to place another dwelling on either of the properties and specifically he would not be allowed to place another dwelling on the property where the homestead is located unless it is demolished.

Mrs. Roodman reminded Council that this request is in alignment with the policies of the Sumter 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, the AC district has a one (1) acre minimum lot size requirement, where the R-9 district permits a significantly higher degree of density. She also stated that this rezoning request is a reduction to the initial area requested for rezoning based upon community comments at the March 28, 2023, Public Hearing for this rezoning request. The Planning Director said that this is the minimal amount of area necessary to achieve the applicant's objective.

After all questions from Council members, the Chairman called for a motion on second reading to the rezoning request.

ACTION: MOTION was made by Vice Chairman Byrd, seconded by Councilman Baker, and unanimously carried by Council to grant second reading to this rezoning request as presented by the Planning Director.

OTHER PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- (1) None

NEW BUSINESS:

- (1) It May Be Necessary To Hold An Executive Session To Discuss An Employment Matter, An Economic Development Matter, A Legal Briefing, Or Other Matters Pertaining To An Executive Session, And Take Appropriate Actions Thereafter In Open Session If Necessary.

No executive session was held.

OLD BUSINESS

- (1) **Ordinance 23-986 – Second Reading** -- An Ordinance Authorizing (1) Pursuant To Title 12, Chapter 44 Of The Code Of Laws Of South Carolina 1976, As Amended, The Execution And Delivery Of A Fee-In-Lieu Of Ad Valorem Taxes Agreement, By And Between Sumter County, South Carolina And A Company Known To The County As Project Ignis, As Sponsor, And One Or More Sponsor Affiliates To Provide For A Fee-In-Lieu Of Ad Valorem Taxes Incentive And Certain Special Source Revenue Credits For The Benefit Of A Project In The County; (2) The Execution And Delivery Of A Special Source Revenue Credit Agreement By And Between The County And Project Ignis With Respect To Certain Real Property In The County, Whereby Such Real Property Will Receive Certain Special Source Revenue Credits; And (3) Other Related Matters. (A public hearing is scheduled for this ordinance on April 25, 2023.)

Mr. Johnathan Bryan, Sumter County’s Attorney, stated that this ordinance pertains to an industrial project known as Project Ignis. The ordinance, if approved, will allow for a Fee-In-Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes Agreement and a Special Source Revenue Credit Agreement. The project will remain anonymous until the company makes its official announcement prior to third reading approval. Additionally, the project is a \$65,900,000 investment of which \$36,500,000 will be new equipment and machinery and \$25,300,000 will be investment in renovations of an existing building here in Sumter. The building will not qualify for a Fee-In-Lieu of Taxes. The new equipment and machinery will qualify for the Fee-In Lieu of Taxes which will be a 30-year agreement, 6% assessment ratio, and 348.5 fixed millage, with clawback information. The company will be in a Multi-County Industrial Park with Clarendon and Sumter Counties, as well as receive special source revenue. It is expected that the company will hire 300 employees at an approximately hourly rate of \$20 per hour, and other project agreements as listed in the ordinance and the two aforementioned agreements.

After all comments, the Chairman called for a motion on second reading.

ACTION: MOTION was made by Vice Chairman Byrd, seconded by Councilman Baker, and unanimously carried by Council to grant second reading to this proposed ordinance for Project Ignis as presented at second reading.

NOTE: The public hearing for this ordinance will be held on April 25, 2023.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

(1) **Land Use Committee Meeting Scheduled For Tuesday, April 11, 2023, At 4:45 p.m. In The County Administrator’s Conference Room, 13 E. Canal Street, Sumter, SC 29150. (Edens, Baker, and Baten)**

Committee Chairman Charles T. Edens, stated that the Committee received a report from himself and Louis Tisdale concerning regulations about Solar Developments and not just Solar Farms in Sumter County that may be near or in residential areas. No action was taken at this time; however, the Committee agreed to continue research on this matter through the Planning Department and when appropriate, this Land Use Development concern will be brought back to the Committee for review.

ACTION: The Planning Commission will continue its review on this matter and provide its findings to the Land Use Committee.

(2) **Public Safety Committee Meeting Scheduled For Tuesday, April 11, 2023, At 5:30 p.m. In The County Administrator’s Conference Room, 13 E. Canal Street, Sumter, SC 29150. (This Committee meeting will be held immediately after the Land Use Committee Meeting or at 5:30 p.m.) (Washington, Baten, and Byrd)**

Committee Chairman Carlton B. Washington reported that Sumter County Sheriff, the Honorable Anthony Dennis, Chief Deputy Gardner, and SSgt Blake Weathersbee, came before the Committee to discuss two matters.

State Accreditation: Sheriff Dennis along with SSgt Blake Weathersbee discussed the mandate that is being sent from the Governor of the State of South Carolina, the Honorable Henry McMaster, that all law enforcement agencies must receive State Accreditation. As of this meeting SSgt Blake Weathersbee is spearheading the efforts for the Sheriff’s Office. There are over 300 agencies throughout South Carolina that must be Certified. Currently, there are approximately 50 agencies that are already certified.

Sumter County Detention Center: The Committee discussed the concern for space for the inmates and the violent inmates. Sheriff Dennis informed the Committee members that there are 450 inmates as of today. He also mentioned that the housing of those inmates exceeds the space that is at the Detention Center. Sheriff Dennis is working with surrounding counties to help with the housing of some of Sumter County’s inmates. Also, he stated that although the Detention Center is understaffed, four new people have been hired for the Detention Center. The Sheriff also stated that there are 17 people that have been sent to the Detention Center but do not have any criminal charges. The courts have no place to put the Mental Health persons, so they are sending them to the Detention Center. Councilman Washington said that the Committee will keep Council up-to-date on matters relating to the Detention Center.

(3) **Report From Council Members On Other Meetings, Trainings, And/Or Conferences.**

Councilman Washington stated that on Tuesday, April 18, 2023, there will be a Community Walk-through at F. E. Delaine School from 5:00-7:00 p.m. The tour will be led by Sumter School District Dr. William Wright. Councilman Washington invited Council members and also stated that the tour is opened to anyone that would like to attend.

MONTHLY REPORTS

- 1) Festival On The Avenue – April 29, 2023
- 2) Morris College Charter Day – April 12, 2023
- 3) Mayor's Prayer Breakfast – May 4, 2023
- 4) Mary McLeod Bethune Festival – May 19-21, 2023

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Mr. Mixon reported on the following items:

Upcoming Budget Workshop: Mr. Mixon reminded Council members that the staff is in the middle of developing information for Council for the budget process which is underway. The first budget workshop will be held on Tuesday, April 25, 2023, which will be a general introduction to the proposed budget for fiscal year 2023-2024.

Litter Pick-Up: Mr. Mixon stated that the County is in full swing of the quadrant clean-up activities. There was a grand opening at the Civic Center and he publicly thanked Shelby Goulding, Item Reporter, for the wonderful article that she had on the front page. Shelby focused the article on the participation from the Schools and the Superintendent. The next article will feature the Litter Officer, and Shelby will get the opportunity to ride with the Litter Officer and then report on the experience. Ms. Goulding will be featuring two additional articles in the future which will give Sumter’s citizens four opportunities to learn more about what the Litter Advisory Committee is doing to combat the litter problems in Sumter.

Maria Dansler, Principal of Manchester Elementary School – Video: Joe Perry presented a video that Principal Dansler developed with Mr. Perry in support of the “Litter Stash The Trash Campaign” in Sumter County. He also announced that Palmetto Pride had an event at the State House during the last of March that emphasized Litter Campaigns.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Citizens Desiring To Speak Are Limited To No More Than Three (3) Minutes; Comments Are To Be Made Through The Chairman Of Sumter County Council.

Chairman McCain asked if anyone wished to speak during public comment. The following persons spoke during public comment:

- Jody Raffield stated that she did not understand what Sumter County Council members did when they took action on RZ-23-01. She also stated that because the house will remain on the property, that creates a dangerous situation. If someone goes in the house, they could fall through the floors, or it could easily catch on fire and then it could burn all the trees and eventually burn her home. The house should be taken down. She also stated that it took Mr. Raffield less than 20 years to make a mess of the house and the property that he lives on.
- Sue Pasquale stated that she previously talked to Mr. Baker about dogs being tied up with an anchor chain that is too heavy for the animal. She provided copies of the law to Mr. Mixon. She asked County Council Chairman to tell her what is her next step to ensure that the dog is relieved of this inhumane action. Chairman McCain stated that he will speak to her after the meeting.
- Diane Butler stated that she has lived at 2457 Camden Highway for over 20 years. She also said that she has been asking for City Water for over 20 years and has not received it yet. Ms. Butler also stated that there are days that she has been without water because the ponds are so low. However, all the subdivisions that are coming in the area have City Water, but she does not. Ms. Butler stated that the City said it would be over \$2,000 for her to get City Water at her home. Lastly, she commented that it is not fair to her to pay that amount of money go get City Water.

- Ethel Durant asked County Council for an intersection streetlight. She said that people are always having a wreck at this location. She added that she has an outside light in her yard, but an intersection streetlight needs to be placed at the street to help people see where the road is as they turn off Camden Highway. It was also mentioned that people would come to her door at night and ask for help. The intersection streetlight is very necessary.
- Brian Davis stated that he addressed Council at the last meeting about the rezoning on Camden Highway. He further stated that he does not think that all the facts were presented at the last meeting and what was presented was not totally true and factual. Mr. Davis said that two weeks ago Mr. Raffield's Attorney stated that you could not see the house from the road, Google Earth Straight View and see the house from the road, he said that he can see the house from the road (white siding with gray shingles, and a silver tarp on the roof. Then he read the following to Sumter County Council.

Back in 2015, Shaw AFB Boy Scouts Troop helped Mr. Raffield at his property and the All-God's Creatures Deserve To Live. We delivered mulch, procured donated lumber, built steps and a ramp at a mobile home by the house and removed and burnt a lot of brush, trees, and debris from around his house, mobile home, and dog pens. We also built a privacy fence and removed several trailer loads of debris from the property. The Boy Scouts had to stop their share of the work because Mr. Raffield was arrested for having 60 marijuana plants on his property worth over \$150,000 at that time. Two weeks ago, we stated that the community was concerned about mobile homes and drugs, etc. There is already a mobile home on the property, there has already been drugs on the property. I believe that the mobile home that was on the property in 2015 is still there. You can see it from the street. The scouts also accomplished electrical work and plumbing work repairs in that mobile home. Now if only one dwelling is allowed on the property, there are currently two dwellings on the property and you have just rezoned the property to a three-acre plot, now it will be three on that three-acre plot. I just think that all the investigations and all the fact findings were not done prior to a vote. Three homes on three acres is clearly a violation.

- Amber Bochette stated that she spoke against the rezoning at Council's last meeting. She asked her question to Councilman Charles Edens. She stated that to her understanding Mr. Raffield hired you to sell a family member's home a couple of months ago. She then said she wondered if Mr. Raffield sought out professional knowledge from Councilman Edens and or Councilman Edens experience about placing a mobile home in a zoning that is prohibited. (Note: Councilman Edens stated that he would talk to Ms. Bochette after the meeting.)
- Mrs. Connie Brown spoke to Council about Alabama Lane. She stated that she talked to Councilman Washington about the water on the road and she provided pictures for him to show to Council (Note: *The Clerk to Council placed copies of the pictures of the road in each Council members folders and the County Administrator's folder.*) She also read a letter from one of the neighbors that lives on Alabama Lane in Rembert. It was also stated that the children have problems catching the school bus after it rains. Cars are getting bogged down on the road, which also causes problems for the cars because of the water that gets in the car from the road. The children's clothes are wet because of walking home from the school bus and in the water.
- Brenda Hunter also spoke to Council about Alabama Lane. She asked Council for help to fix this road and talked about the emergency vehicles, including the Sheriff's Office, that could not come on the road because of the bad condition of the road.

- Dr. Brenda Williams stated that she is representing the Family Unit, Inc. 501c3. She talked to Council about the food desert in Hickory Hollow, Spring Hollow, and Walnut Hill areas of Sumter County. She stated that these areas are getting some attention from the local Regional Transportation Authority. There has also been a study done by the Seven Day Adventist Church members concerning the needs of the Community. Dr. Williams stated that she is asking City Council as well as County Council to be of help to this community by appropriating at least \$5,000 a year to help this community to overcome the food desert.
- Danielle Watken spoke to Council about the Camden Highway rezoning matters. She asked is it not the duty of the Planning Commission to go review the property prior to acting on its approval or denial. Mrs. Roodman stated that the Planning Commission staff came out and reviewed the site. Mrs. Watken also asked why Mr. Raffield states that it is not feasible for him to afford to tear down the house; yet he has had trees cut down and dirt hauled onto the property. The Chairman stated that he and others will speak to Ms. Watken after the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for Sumter County Council, and no additional comments from the public, the meeting was adjourned at 6:49 p.m. after a motion by Councilman Baker, seconded by Vice Chairman Byrd, and unanimously carried by Council.

Respectfully submitted,

James T. McCain, Jr.
 Chairman or Vice Chairman
 Sumter County Council

Mary W. Blanding
 Clerk to County Council
 Sumter County Council

Approved: April 25, 2023

I certify that public and media notification of the above-mentioned meeting was given prior thereto as follows required by Freedom of Information:

- Public Notified: Yes
- Manner Notified: Agendas posted on Television on first floor of the Administration Building.
- Date Posted: April 6, 2023
- Media Notified: Yes
- Manner Notified: Agenda Information is listed on Sumter County’s Home Page, and E-mailed to The Item, The Chamber, WIS-TV, WBTW, and Spectrum Cable.
- Date Notified: April 6, 2023

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Respectfully submitted,
Mary W. Blanding
Clerk To County Council