PICKENS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

of

October 13, 2025

6:30 pm

PICKENS COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
Main Conference Room

NOTICE OF MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING: Pursuant to Section 30-4-80 of the S.C. Code of Laws, annual notice of this Commission's meeting was provided January 1, 2025 via the Pickens County Website and posted next to the Offices of the County Planning Department. In addition, the agenda for this meeting was posted outside the meeting place (Pickens County Administration Building Bulletin Board) and was emailed to all persons, organizations, and news media requesting notice. Notice for the public hearings was published in the *Pickens County Courier,* posted on the properties subject of public hearing(s), and emailed to all persons, organizations, and news media requesting notice pursuant to Section 1205(d)(1) of the Pickens County Unified Development Standards Ordinance.

MEMBERS PRESENT:
Michael Watson, Chairman
Kelsey Crooks, Vice Chairwoman
Jessica Massey
Daniel Brazinski
Tripp Brooks
Jennifer DeWild

MEMBERS ABSENT:
Danny Garrett

STAFF PRESENT:
Trad Julian, Senior Planner
Sydney Sculley, Planner

Welcome and Call to Order

Chairman Watson, the Presiding Official, called the meeting to order and asked those in attendance to join in a moment of silence and then asked everyone to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Watson then asked the members of the Commission to introduce themselves.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Watson made a motion for approval of the minutes of the August 11, 2025, meeting. Ms. Crooks seconded.

Chairman Watson calls for a vote. The vote passes unanimously (6-0).

Chairman Watson made a motion for approval of the minutes of the September 8th, 2025, meeting. Ms. Crooks seconded.

Mrs. Massey requested that the minutes from September include a note stating that Mr. Hendricks assisted with the wording of the motion. Additionally, Mrs. DeWild asked for the minutes to reflect that the developers mentioned their future intentions to have the roads added to the county maintenance system and that speakers came to the September meeting to speak regarding the agenda item.

Chairman Watson calls for a vote. The vote fails 0-5, with Mr. Brooks and Mr. Watson abstaining.

Public Comments

Chairman Watson noted that there was no one present who wished to make a public comment regarding an item not on the agenda. Therefore, Chairman Watson closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

Public Hearings

Changes to RV Parks and Campground Standards

Chairman Watson called for the Changes to the RV Parks and Campground Standards agenda item to be heard.

Mr. Julian presented the changes as requested by the Planning Commission to the current RV Parks and Campground Standards.

The commissioners held a discussion regarding citizen recommendations related to the 180-day maximum stay regulation in RV Parks and Campgrounds. Mrs. Massey proposed the implementation of an onsite occupancy log to ensure that these facilities adhere to the 180-day stay limit. Mr. Brooks inquired about how this requirement would be managed administratively. In response, Mrs. Massey suggested that Code Enforcement could conduct spontaneous checks. Mr. Julian stated that Code Enforcement currently responds when citizens report that an RV Park is not complying with the established standards.

Mr. Julian mentions that any campground created before this standard was implemented does not have to abide by the 180-day maximum stay regulation.

Commissioners discuss the logistics of incorporating this into the ordinance. Mr. Julian suggests that it could be included in the application process, rather than creating a new regulation in the UDSO. The Commissioners inquire about the enforcement of the site management plan and occupancy log. Mr. Julian explains that the Planning Staff keeps the site management plans on file to ensure that everything presented to the Planning Commission is being properly implemented. Additionally, Mr. Julian mentioned that he will contact Code Enforcement to ensure compliance with the 180-day maximum stay requirement.

Mr. Brooks makes a motion to approve the amendments and transmit to Council. Mrs. Massey seconded.

Chairman Watson calls for a vote. The vote passes unanimously (6-0).

Defining Solar Farm, Commercial Lodging, and Campground in UDSO

Chairman Watson called for the Defining Solar Farm, Commercial Lodging, and Campground in UDSO agenda item to be heard.

Mr. Julian presents the definitions of Campground, Commercial Lodging, and Solar Farm to the Commission.

Mr. Brooks discusses the phrase “for compensation” in the definition of Campground. Mr. Julian explains that this is included because Campgrounds typically operate on a commercial basis. The commissioners then debate the distinction between commercial and personal use of RVs. Mr. Brazinski and Mrs. Massey raise concerns that removing “for compensation” could create challenges, as personal use events might require review by the Planning Commission if that language is omitted. Commissioners are in agreement with the wording as it has been presented.

Mr. Brazinski sought clarification on number three regarding the definition of Commercial Lodging. Mr. Julian explained that dormitories, fraternities, and sororities are usually associated with universities and should therefore be excluded from Planning Commission review. He noted that these types of lodging typically fall within city limits, which is another reason for their exclusion from the review process. The Commissioners agreed with the wording as it has been presented.

Commissioners are in agreement with the Solar Farm definition presented by Planning Staff.

Mrs. DeWild raised the question of whether a definition for Data Center should be included in the recommendation to the Council, given the increasing number being constructed in Georgia. The commissioners discussed whether to incorporate this definition now or defer it and present it to the Council at a later date. They ultimately decided it would be best to address this issue separately, as it would take additional time to develop a comprehensive definition.

Mrs. Massey asks for clarification on what all-weather road standards mean in the RV Parks and Campground Standards. Mr. Julian states that they must have at least gravel, but there is no depth standard in the current RV Parks and Campgrounds Standards. Mr. Julian also states that Billy Gibson, the Director of Emergency Services, looks at the grade of the roads during the Development Review process to ensure emergency vehicles can properly access RV Parks and Campgrounds. Commissioners requested Mr. Julian send them the standards Billy Gibson goes by when looking into the grade and material of roads.

Mr. Brooks makes a motion to approve the amendments and transmit to Council. Mr. Brazinski seconded.

Chairman Watson calls for a vote. The vote passes unanimously (6-0).

New Business

Mr. Julian stated that there are no applications on the November agenda.

Commissioners and Staff Discussion

Mr. Brooks discusses the document that was sent to the Commissioners regarding infrastructure review. This document aims to address the Commissioners' concerns at the time of application. He explains that it will provide the Commissioners with specific data rather than general approval from entities like the School Board or the Sanitation Company's, for example. Mr. Brooks also notes that Commissioners should designate where the traffic studies for each development should be done rather than the applicant choosing.

Mr. Julian explains to the Commissioners that obtaining land use approval is the first step in the process. He emphasizes that the development review process is lengthy and ensures that projects are carried out as they were approved by the Planning Commission.

Mrs. DeWild discusses the possibility of requiring two readings for larger projects, noting that there are 60 days to take action on an agenda item. Mr. Julian responds from the staff's perspective, stating that it's better to deny a project outright rather than table it. This approach prevents an agenda item from being automatically approved in the event of a lack of quorum or if a natural disaster occurs that hinders the Planning Commission from meeting in time. Mrs. Massey suggests that instead of requiring two readings, the Commissioners could define a specific number of homes that would categorize a project as "large." In such cases, a more in-depth application packet should be provided to the Commission prior to the Public Hearing.

Commissioners and Planning Staff discuss that Mr. Brooks will refine the document to focus on the priorities the Commissioners want to see during the application process and will send it to the Planning Staff. Mr. Julian states that once he receives the updated document, he will distribute it to the other departments involved in the development review process.

Commissioners and Planning Staff discuss their confusion in regard to tabling and why the public could not speak at the second meeting once and agenda item is tabled. Mr. Julian explained that tabling an agenda item is a continuation of the previous meeting. Therefore, the public hearing and public comment portion of the meeting has already taken place. Mr. Julian also noted that at any time, the Chairman can allow the public to speak on an agenda item since it is his meeting. Mr. Brooks also noted that the Commission can vote on adding items to the agenda as long as they do not require a vote during the meeting. Commissioners discuss wanting to look into updating the Bylaws to include more language regarding tabling.

Ms. Crooks and Mrs. DeWild express their concerns about applicants having legal representation present during the Planning Commission meetings, while the Commission itself does not have legal counsel. Mr. Julian points out that staff are not notified in advance about the presence of legal representation but can inquire applicants about it in the future. He adds that if staff are informed that legal representation will attend a meeting, he will contact the County Attorney to check her availability to be present as well.

Commissioners discussed the possibility of recording their meetings. Mr. Julian informed them that the only requirement is to take minutes for each meeting. The Commissioners inquired with the Planning staff about how they could arrange to have the meetings recorded, despite it not being mandatory. Mr. Julian stated that he will look into recording the meetings.

Ms. Crooks mentions the document that Commissioners received from citizens who attended the meeting. The Commissioners agreed to look over the document and discuss the items during the next meeting.

Ms. Crooks mentions that Chairman Saitta of the County Council has requested three priorities from the Planning Commission so Council can discuss it while reviewing the UDSO in the upcoming months. Mr. Brooks provides the priority of a process for infrastructure review. Mrs. Massey mentions riparian buffers and setbacks as a priority. Commissioners agreed that they will email Mr. Julian individually with their top three priorities and will determine which priorities receive the most mentions.

Mr. Julian requests that Commissioners send their availability for SCAC training. The Commissioners will also include topics they would like covered during the training.

Adjourn

There being no additional matters to be taken up by the Planning Commission, Chairman Watson called for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Massey made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Crooks seconded. Chairman Watson called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously. (6-0).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Submitted by:

______________________________ ___________________________
Secretary Date

Approved by:

______________________________ ___________________________
Chairman Date