

The following are minutes from the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting on Thursday, July 31, 2025, in the Abita Springs Town Hall. The meeting convened at 5:02 P.M.

Commission Chairman Pierce called the meeting to order, and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioners in attendance included John Pierce, Chad Hall, Mike Lanaux, and Claire Guidry. Lex LeBlanc arrived at the beginning of the Zoning portion of the meeting. Staff members Kristin Tortorich and Heather Hockman were also present, along with Planners Alex Carter, Evelyn Campo, and Matt Wilson with Desire Line.

**AGENDA MODIFICATION** There weren't any modifications to the agenda.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES** The Commission reviewed and accepted the minutes from the June 26, 2025, meeting.

**Commissioner Guidry motioned to accept the minutes of the June 26, 2025, meeting as presented. Commission Vice Chair Hall seconded the motion. All voted in favor.**

## PLANNING

### *Introduction: Abita Meadows Development*

- The Abita Meadows development includes a PUD (Planned Unit Development) approval and subdivision approval.
- These items will be discussed at the next meeting, with a public hearing and a vote to follow.
- The subdivision approval will also be voted on at the next meeting, considering any conditions that need to be met.
- Commissioners Pierce and Guidry invited public comments during the Public Comment period.

## ZONING

### *Update on the Comprehensive Rezoning Process*

- The comprehensive rezoning process has been ongoing for several months, with good public input received.
- The discussion focused on the results of a micro survey, feedback from a July 18th Q&A session, and proposed changes to the permitted use table and zoning map.
- Key topics included:
  - Conservation Residential district locations
  - Whether to allow duplexes in the Neighborhood Residential district
  - Creation of a new Traditional Residential district
- The commission agreed to change the crane manufacturing use in the Light Industrial district to a conditional use.
- The commission agreed to keep the proposed residential zoning for the area north of the existing Light Industrial zone.
- The commission discussed the proposed changes to the mixed-use and commercial areas, including the quail farm property, but did not make any final decisions. The majority were in favor of scaling back the quail farm to mixed-use, while there were differing opinions on changing the eastern parcels of Allen Road between Silver Springs Drive and Highway 435 to commercial.

- The commission agreed to wait for public comments before providing feedback on the Traditional Residential district.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- Residents provided feedback on various aspects of the proposed zoning changes, including:
  - Concerns about the impact of development on the road network and drainage infrastructure
  - Support for allowing more duplexes and affordable housing options
  - Concerns about the proposed commercial and industrial zoning in certain areas
  - Requests to modify the zoning of specific properties
- Alderman E.J. Boudreaux recommended adding tributaries and drainage ditches to the map to better illustrate development constraints.
- Adrienne Petrosini supported the proposed residential zoning for question 11 on the map and expressed support for allowing duplexes throughout the town.
- Lee Barrios raised concerns about whether the existing road network could handle the proposed development.
- Ron Blich, a Historic Commissioner, provided historical context on the Ochsner site. He also suggested considering mixed-use zoning along the potential future Harrison Avenue extension and was opposed to commercial zoning along Highway 59 (Rangeline) due to the fill that would be required, yet likely unallowed due to the wetland area with the Long Branch Creek location.
- Sissy Wiggin supported the idea of allowing more duplexes to help attract younger residents.
- Scott Payne supported changing the quail farm property to mixed-use zoning but opposed the commercial zoning on the triangle parcel due to traffic and flooding concerns.
- Tim Sanchez supported the commercial zoning on the triangle parcel, citing its location and road access.
- Laura Reagan expressed concerns about the commercial zoning north of Southwind.
- Angie Reach opposed industrial uses on Prats Road because of the area's residential character and expressed concern about flooding from commercial development along Highway 59 (Rangeline).
- Alderman Stephen Saussy confirmed that the Long Branch Creek area along Highway 59 (Rangeline) is not suitable for development, unless, perhaps, camps could be developed there.
- Stewart Eastman expressed concerns about proposed zoning changes to his property and the surrounding area.
- Brenda Lanier opposed the proposed mixed-use zoning along Highway 59, citing the area's existing residential character.
- Tim Grigsby supported concerns about traffic and flooding issues on Allen Road.
- Joey Celino from Car Medics explained that he wants the Historic Overlay removed from his property next to Car Medics to allow construction of an additional building with a design that would fit the character of the surrounding buildings.
- Commissioner Lex LeBlanc asked about traffic study requirements for mixed-use developments.

- Alex Carter and Kristin Tortorich clarified that traffic studies are required for specific uses, not for entire zoning districts, and encouraged the public to review the draft code and provide comments.

#### NEXT STEPS

- The Town Council will be briefed on the rezoning process at their next meeting on August 5th.
- A clean draft of the code and map will be provided to the Planning & Zoning Commission in mid-August to incorporate the changes discussed at this meeting and will be posted on the website as soon as it is ready.
- The Planning & Zoning Commission will hold a discussion-focused meeting on August 28th to review the updated materials.
- The rezoning could be introduced for a vote at the September 25th Planning & Zoning meeting.
- The rezoning could then be sent to the Town Council in October or November.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Commissioner Guidry motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lanaux seconded the motion. All voted in favor.** The meeting adjourned at 6:38 P.M.

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Kristin Tortorich, Planning & Zoning Director

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Date