

City of Orangeburg  
Planning Commission Minutes  
March 21, 2024  
6:00 PM

**Members Present**

Guy Best – Chairperson  
Dr. Shirlan Mosley-Jenkins – Vice-Chairperson  
Paula Payton  
Stephon Edwards II  
Vincent Pendarvis  
Jeanna Reynolds  
John Wolfe

**Staff Members**

Theresa Williams, Interim Assistant City Administrator  
Kenith Salley, Jr., Administrative Coordinator  
Clayton Bozard, Director of Innovation & Technology  
Olivia Singleton, IT Support Technician  
David Epting, Zoning & Building Official

<b>Citizens from the community</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Press present</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Guests (Developer)</b>	<b>1</b>

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Chairman Best opened Public Hearing at 6:00 pm for consideration of a Zoning District Map change from A-1, Residential Single-Unit District to A-2, Residential Multi-Unit District for property belonging to Guri Sandhu located at 1700 Hillsboro Road, TMS# 0174-17-08-003.000.

Chuck Nichols (115 Crescent Oaks Court) addressed the Planning Commission. He asked, “We have had this same request in November of 2022, why are we having a rezoning request again?”

Chairman Best replied, “It was over a year and represented by the property owner.”

Matthew Burlison (1340 Hillsboro Road) addressed the Planning Commission. He stated, “In a quick google search, it looks like this parcel is about 1.4 acres of land and my wife and I have a little over 4 acres of land on Hillsboro Road. I could not dare imagine trying to zone my lot as a multi-unit property. Also, judging by the amount of traffic that is already present on Hillsboro Road, I cannot imagine that this would be to the benefit of anyone that is currently on the road itself.”

Arden Weathers (168 Cloister Cove Lane) addressed the Planning Commission. He stated, “The wisdom of this committee and City Council a year or so ago decided that this was not a good idea and wonder what new wisdom has occurred to make it come back. There are several things I think this will impact negatively. One, if you go all the way down Hillsboro Road from one end to the other there is not one apartment. There are four large blocks down that area and the entire area has not one multi-family dwelling. So, these people move into this area with the full intent of single-family dwellings. Secondly, the property is backed up to a residential area of single-family homes that GW Berry developed while he was alive. Being backed up to apartments certainly will devalue those properties and the lots that are still there for sale. In my opinion, it will devalue the property that is adjacent to it also. Thirdly, there are multiple traffic problems. I looked at Little Street on yesterday and it holds 3 ½ to 4 cars depending on the size of the cars, sometimes they are backed up all the way on Hillsboro Road so it will be difficult for people in an apartment to get out during high-volume hours. After speaking with a Policeman this week and he said this is one of the most dangerous intersections in the City. There are also businesses nearby such as an ambulance service which could have difficulty getting out depending on the time of day.”

Joann Lighfoot (320 Old Orchard Way) addressed the Planning Commission. She stated, "I built my house several years ago in the Orchard because it was such a pretty place, it was nice and quite and it still is. Ever since I have lived there, I have felt safe and everyone that lives there are older citizens. We have the police ride throughout the neighborhood day and night for extra security. I feel like if you build apartments or duplexes you will then have young families coming in with the possibility of young children and dogs, which is normal. But it will not be quiet anymore because of loud music and more cars. Another thing that bothers me is when you build something like that, it will decrease the value of my house. If this does happen, I just ask that you build a privacy fence so that they will not be able to come into the Orchard and so that we will still feel safe."

Carmal Livingston (310 Old Orchard Way) addressed the Planning Commission. She stated. "I live next to Joann that just spoke and she has said most of everything that is a great concern to me as a senior single woman. I do not think it has been mentioned but the Orchard is a senior community, with a minimum age of 55 to live there. So, security is the utmost importance to me. We feel very safe there, that is why the homes were purchased and built there because of the ability to feel safe with a group of people that will understand our needs and ways of living. We have a foot traffic problem as well as motor vehicles. My house is directly behind the house on Hillsboro Road that caught fire a few months ago, and that house has remained empty and uninhabited since. I have a challenge with a path being cut from that house leading up to my bedroom window, though I have not seen anyone to report it necessarily, but it is a very clear pathway. So, of course I have great concern for other people being able to have foot access. My only request is that you consider the concerns of the residents that will be affected by any changes to the properties as they exist."

Patricia Connolly (1693 Hillsboro Road) addressed the Planning Commission. She stated, "I live on the corner by Little Street and our house was the first house ever built on Hillsboro Road. My husband and I are younger than a lot of people in our neighborhood and our concern is security and traffic also. Traffic is horrendous, it is hard to get out of my yard in the mornings, buses nor traffic do not stop and I do not think this is a great idea."

Patsy Journey (230 Old Orchard Way) addressed the Planning Commission. She stated, "I am originally from Orangeburg, but I moved back in 2019. My husband and I looked at over seventeen houses before we decided on our home at Old Orchard Way. We chose this home because it was what we were looking for, something quiet, not a lot of traffic, or noise. We have thoroughly enjoyed living there and I am with the other residents that have spoken from Old Orchard Way. It will increase the traffic and have a lot more noise and I just think it is not a good thing to change the zone from what it is now to A-2."

Thomas Reid (200 Old Orchard Way) addressed the Planning Commission. He asked, "My concern is, what is this going to mean for the Orchard itself? Will it change the classification or complexity inside the Orchard?"

Interim Assistant City Administrator, Theresa Williams answered, "Per our Building Official, David Epting, 'no', it will not affect the classification of Old Orchard Way neighborhood."

Thomas Reid, also asked, "I know there is property behind the Orchard, will that be included with the new zoning request?"

Chairman Best answered, "It will only affect the property that has requested to be changed."

Barbara Beach (175 Holly Creek Drive) addressed the Planning Commission. She asked, "What are they asking to place on the property they wish to be rezoned? Are there any plans that were submitted?"

Chairman Best answered, "It was presented to us to change from A-1, single-unit to A-2, multi-unit district. There were no plans submitted at the time of request."

Patsy Journey (230 Old Orchard Way) addressed the Planning Commission. She stated, "I believe Mr. Reid was referring to the property behind his house, he lives next to me and there is a wooded area behind our homes rather it would be affected also."

Chairman Best answer, "It is just for the property that is requested to be rezoned."

Joann Lighfoot (320 Old Orchard Way) addressed the Planning Commission. She asked, "If apartments were to be built at the rezone location, how many apartments can it hold?"

Ms. Williams answered, "According to City building codes and density, it is estimated that approximately 10 to 18 units can be built on that property."

Barbara Reid (200 Old Orchard Way) addressed the Planning Commission. She stated, "I have been at my home almost three years and I moved from Calhoun County to be closer to the City. When I found the Orchard, I was very pleased because it sits apart from the City but the only problem that I find with it is that there is congestion on Hillsboro Road. I feel what I hear tonight is setting up to be a disaster. Hillsboro Road is a shortcut from Broughton Street to Columbia Road and there is traffic there all day long and trying to get out of the Orchard will make us prisoners. As older people we are very cautious about our driving and sometimes things happen where we do not see traffic as well as younger people. At the end of Hillsboro Road there is a strip mall, where ambulances, short buses, and small cargo cars go in and out of that area. I do not see in my mind where an 18-unit development will add to the property line, the value of the property, or even to the community. I see it as a deterrent and something that will make it harder to live in."

Matthew Burleson (1340 Hillsboro Road) addressed the Planning Commission. He stated, "After hearing what Mrs. Williams said about the lot size and the projected number of units that could potentially be built upon that lot. Having firsthand knowledge of other multi-unit developments, one in particular located in Clarendon County, beginning April 1<sup>st</sup> they have assigned 3 parking spots to every unit within a 72-unit complex. Theoretically, if that would be the case with the 10-18 unit development, you could potentially add 30-54 cars additionally on a road that holds 3 ½ cars on Little Street. I do not think that is a great idea."

Guri Sandhu (property owner/developer - 1148 Barfield Street, Charleston, SC) addressed the Planning Commission. He stated, "I am the owner of said parcel. I understand all their concerns, we can go 10-18 units with a max of 36 vehicles. I understand the concerns of privacy and cutting down trees, it is a strong possibility that even though we can maximize 10-18 units we could possibly do 10-12 units instead and build a privacy fence or brick wall to make the residence on Hillsboro Road feel comfortable. It is traffic all the way around and we have to deal with it every day and I understand that. I think this is a great location for upscale units. I have been in this business for a long time and the higher you go in the cost of rent; you get a better class of people. I want to bring people closer to the City where they can have access just like everyone in this room does, such as better grocery stores, better schools, or just better access overall. That is one reason why everybody here lives where they live because it is a great location. I know the City wants to grow and expand and this is a great tax revenue, roughly \$12, 000 - \$15,000 a year-with no infrastructure cost from the City and it will bring in additional people to the City that would not be able to live in that area. The Comprehensive Plan that the City of Orangeburg has encourages this type of development. I believe if it is controlled and flexible which I am willing to be, I think it can be a great fit for the Community overall."

Everett Connelley (1693 Hillsboro Road) addressed the Planning Commission. He stated, "Building apartments or duplexes is a very bad idea. I may be legally blind, but I still see all this traffic and wrecks on Little Street. Nobody slows down on Hillsboro Road even if you put a stop sign or speed limit sign there. I see cars racing up and down Hillsboro Road and you want to build apartments? All you are concerned about is money. If you want to build something, build a house, not a duplex."

Joann Lighfoot (320 Old Orchard Way) addressed the Planning Commission. She asked, "I just want to know, will we be able to attend the City Council meeting?"

Chairman Best answered, "Yes, you will be able to attend the City Council meeting."

Ms. Williams answered, "With reference to the City Council meetings, we meet the first and third Tuesday of each month at 6 o'clock p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend depending upon what is stated here tonight and what the outcome is. The address to the City Chamber building is, 933 Middleton Street, next door to City Hall."

## **REGULAR MEETING**

### Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Stephon Edwards, seconded by Vice-Chairperson, Shirlan Jenkins to approve the minutes for February 15, 2024. The motion was unanimously approved.

### New Business

Chairman Best stated, "Under New Business to consider a zoning district map change from A-1, residential single-unit district to A-2, residential multi-unit district for the following property at 1700 Hillsboro Road, TMS# 0174-17-08-003.000. Chairman Best asked Interim Assistant City Administrator Theresa Williams if she wanted to address the Commission."

Mrs. Williams stated, "Mr. Sandhu met our requirements for rezoning, therefore, we posted signs on the property and made sure the advertisement was posted in the Time and Democrat newspaper as well as posted on the City's website."

A motion was made by Vice-Chairperson Shirlan Jenkins to deny the request, seconded by Commissioner Jeanna Reynolds. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Chairman Best, seconded by Commissioner Edwards to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'TW', written over a horizontal line.

Theresa Williams  
Interim Assistant City Administrator