

HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Commission Chamber, Room 215, Harris County Courthouse
REGULAR SESSION
March 3, 2026
6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Susan Andrews, Bobby Irions, Rob Grant, Greg Gantt, Scott Lightsey. Staff Present: Clark Harrell, County Manager; Russell Britt, County Attorney; Andrea Dzioba, County Clerk; Brian Williams, Community Development Director; Lee Walton and Claire Patrick, Consultants.

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Chair Andrews called the Regular Session to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. **INVOCATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Chair Andrews gave the invocation. Chair Andrews led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **MINUTES** The motion to approve the minutes of the February 17, 2026 Appeal Hearing and Regular Session was made by Vice-Chair Irions, seconded by Commissioner Gantt, and passed unanimously.
4. **APPEARANCE OF CITIZENS**
 - A. **Tommy Hutcherson - UDC Concerns and Long-Term Planning.** Mr. Hutcherson was unable to attend the meeting.

Brian McKeen, citizen who lives on O'Neal Road, stated that he has expressed many times that he is concerned that County doesn't have a true long-term plan; that the Board needs to attract residential development to the right places; that he wonders how the Comprehensive Plan is used by the Board of Commissioners for things other than zoning and how many County roads have been improved and how many water and sewage lines laid; that filling potholes doesn't count as infrastructure; that plans are good intentions; that HB 581 changed homestead exemptions; that the inflation gap will grow year over year; that the millage rate will need to be raised, services and goods cut or the tax base changed; that taxes on residential property may disappear by 2032; and wants to know if there is a plan.

- B. **Stephen Hudson - Dissolving 1986 Trust Indenture and Process for Executing Court-Ordered Judicial Foreclosure Sales.** Stephen Hudson addressed the Board and advised that he is in attendance representing the Backwaters - a 78-unit condominium complex; that they have been working with the Georgia Environmental Protection Association and others to work through their many legal and regulatory challenges; that the State required a sewage upgrade; that they need to terminate the trust deed from October 31, 1986; that the termination of the trust deed will remove a legal impasse and enable them to obtain a loan; that they will enter into a binding non-judicial agreement with Synovus and the Harris County Health Department; that it is in the best interest of the community to prioritize the system upgrade; that he needs their assistance to get "across the finish line;" that he would like to expedite the process; and that he has talked to Berta Cox about speaking at the next Board of Health meeting.
5. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. **Memorandum of Understanding Between the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia by and on behalf of the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension and Harris County.** Chair Andrews introduced the item related to the Memorandum of Understanding and stated that the last agreement was in October of 2020. The motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding Between the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia by and on behalf of the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension and Harris County and authorize the Chairman to execute same was made by Vice-Chairman Irions, seconded by Commissioner Lightsey, and passed unanimously.

6. **COUNTY MANAGER.**

- A. **County Manager Correspondence.** County Manager Clark Harrell stated that he will be bringing bids to the Board on March 17, 2026 related to road resurfacing to Hopewell Church Road, G Street, Butts Mill Road, Hall Drive, James Road and Robin Drive; that preparation work will begin after the bid award and the project should be complete by June. Mr. Harrell informed the Board that he has been meeting with the TIA (Transportation Investment Act) Office and that the funds for the Man O'War Trail have increased by approximately \$1.1 million. He said that the project is shaping up and surveying will be going on. Mr. Harrell further advised that he has been watching the State House; that the House Resolution (HB 1114) failed and is expected to be brought back to the Legislature tomorrow.

7. **COUNTY ATTORNEY.** County Attorney Russell Britt stated that he did not have any further business to come before the Board this evening.

Chair Andrews recessed the meeting at 6:47 p.m. until the 7:00 p.m. public hearing.

Chair Andrews called the meeting back to order at 7:00 p.m.

8. **PUBLIC HEARINGS AT 7:00 P.M.**

- A. **Application of JCG Foods LLC/Georgia Power Company – Clay Gardner to amend the text of the Unified Development Code, Accessory and Temporary Use Table (located in Article 2, Table 2-2, pg. 2-30), to add solar collection systems as a Special Use to the M-2 (Heavy Manufacturing) zoning district.** Chair Andrews called the Public Hearing to order at 7:00 p.m. and introduced the Application of JCG Foods LLC/Georgia Power Company – Clay Gardner. Mr. Clay Gardner was available to respond to any questions from the Board. Mr. Gardner stated that he works for Georgia Power and that he is requesting to add solar collection systems to M-2 zoning to enable businesses to install solar systems to offset costs from the provider.

Chair Andrews asked if there was anyone that would like to speak in favor of this application.

There being none, Chair Andrews asked if any one would like to speak in opposition to the application. There being none, Chair Andrews closed the public hearing at 7:05 p.m.

The motion to approve amending the text of the Unified Development Code, Accessory and Temporary Use Table (located in Article 2, Table 2-2, pg. 2-30), to add solar collection systems as a Special Use to the M-2 (Heavy Manufacturing) zoning district was made by Commissioner Lightsey and seconded by Commissioner Gantt.

In response to a question from Commissioner Grant, Community Development Director Brian Williams advised that the Special Use related to solar collection systems will work in M-2 the same as A-1 currently.

The motion passed unanimously.

- B. **Application of Rex Atkinson/Amanda Canada to amend the text of the Unified Development Code, Accessory and Temporary Use Table (located in Article 2, Table 2-2, pg. 2-30), to add fiber optics junction building to the Accessory and Temporary Use Table and making it allowable by Special Use permit to the A-1 (Agricultural/Forestry) zoning district.** Chair Andrews called the Public Hearing to order at 7:07 p.m. and introduced the Application of Rex Atkinson/Amanda Canada. Ms. Amanda Canada was available to respond to any questions from the Board. Ms. Canada stated that the proposed change is being requested so that a fiber optics junction building can be built in A-1. In response to questions from the Board, Ms. Canada stated that they are prefabricated buildings (approximately 964 square feet); that companies are now installing “double wide” buildings; that the buildings are needed every so often to connect the fiber; and that the buildings are too large for a right-of-way easement.

Chair Andrews asked if there was anyone that would like to speak in favor of this application.

There being none, Chair Andrews asked if any one would like to speak in opposition to the application. There being none, Chair Andrews closed the public

hearing at 7:11 p.m.

The motion to approve amending the text of the Unified Development Code, Accessory and Temporary Use Table (located in Article 2, Table 2-2, pg. 2-30), to add fiber optics junction building to the Accessory and Temporary Use Table and making it allowable by Special Use permit to the A-1 (Agricultural/Forestry) zoning district was made by Vice-Chairman Irions, seconded by Commissioner Lightsey, and passed unanimously.

C. **Application of Timberland 109, LLC, to rezone 586.45 acres, located on Map 084, Parcel 045, Land Lots 282, 262, 283, 96, 97, Land Districts 17th and 18th; Rezoning from A-1 (Agricultural/Forestry) to R-1 (Low Density Residential) for a conservation subdivision with single family homes; Current use is wooded property; proposed use is for a conservation subdivision; property located 1.25 miles southeast of the intersection of McKee Road and GA Hwy 315, Waverly Hall, GA.**

Chair Andrews called the Public Hearing to order at 7:14 p.m. and introduced the Application of Timberland 109, LLC. Andy Welch, representative for Timberland 109, LLC was available to respond to any questions from the Board. Mr. Andy Welch informed the Board that John Rodgers and his wife are also in attendance this evening and reviewed the PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Welch stated that the subject property is 586.45 acres, zoned A-1, owned by Timberland 109, LLC, and, unlike the other subdivisions zoned R-1, that this one would be an R-1 conservation subdivision not an R-1 conventional subdivision.

In response to a question from Commissioner Gantt, County Attorney Russell Britt advised that if the Board changed that Code in the future that the Board could make it more restrictive.

Mr. Welch advised that the Code requires that they develop a master plan; that the master plan is buildable later; that lot yield went down to 179 lots; that 179 lots probably won't be achieved; that open space is 306 acres; that 52.3% of the property will be undeveloped and remain in a natural state; that this is the best use while preserving areas; that this is exactly what is written into the Code to protect topographical challenges, wetlands, and flood plains; that there will be public water and septic systems; that lots will be 1 acre to 3 1/4 acres; that lot density is .31; that only a third of the acres are used; that there will be stormwater management with conservation and preservation of natural areas; that a playground area and three offstreet parking spaces are included in the master plan which has to show amenities; that a lot of the lots back up to the open space; that the layout is conducive to having a rear yard and not having a neighbor; and that a phasing plan will be required and wanted to give the Board a sense of how this would go over time.

In response to questions from the Board, Mr. Welch stated that he will commit to the phasing plan with no phase 4 until 2029.

Mr. Welch advised that there is no mass clearing and grading; that it is supposed to be a slow process and that is why there is a phasing plan; that RVCRC has already recommended approval; that the proposed development appears consistent with local documents; that he read that the conservation subdivision was allowed to develop with A-1 zoning; that Staff disagreed and recommended denial and request R-1 zoning; that they are doing what Staff and the Planning Commission has recommended; that the Planning Commission denied the Preliminary Plat while zoned A-1; that the home prices will be from \$450,000 to \$600,000; that the homes will be 2,500 to 3,600 square feet; that there will be minimal impervious surfaces with less water into detention system; that lots will be grassed; that a traffic letter was submitted as part of DRI process; that there are low impacts of traffic; that they are required to install decel lanes; that in the conditions states installation of acceleration and deceleration lanes; that a traffic study is required and that there will be an analysis of 315 and Old McKee Road intersections; that these conditions are reasonable and they will accept them; that they anticipate that some lots will not perk and, therefore, not built upon; that the undeveloped property will be deeded over and open space protected under restrictive covenants; that a schedule of phasing is a pretty accurate depiction; that in the landscaping plan there is a 100' natural buffer along entirety of McKee Road with a vegetative screen; that Staff reports recommend approval with conditions; that there is a precedent for the rezoning to R-1; that conservation is suitable to this property; that half of the property will be conserved; that the development will not adversely affect surrounding properties; that with the 100' buffer no lots are abutting the property line; that Staff acknowledges that there is limited economic use; that ESPLOST be used to generate to raise funds for

schools; that this will help in expanding school room capacity; that the Comprehensive Plan supports the rezoning request; that each lot will still have to meet Health Department requirements; and that he requests that they vote to rezone property with conditions and phasing plan.

Chair Andrews asked if there was anyone that would like to speak in favor of this application.

Brian McKeen, citizen who lives on O'Neal Road, stated that he commends the large number of Harris County citizens that showed up; that for the most part he wants the same change they want but from a more holistic standpoint; that he doesn't care one way or another about this particular subdivision; that he is here because he is an individual property owner – and citizen – interested in rights of property owners across the county; that they can't arbitrarily ignore property rights; that the decision doesn't just affect McKee road but the entire County; that he wants to see how the Board votes on a legal issue and the application of the laws that the Board passed; that he commends the Chair for preservation of rural nature; that how the Board votes on a legal decision impacts all of them; that the vote will impact the entire community; that the Board are stewards of our tax dollars; that legal requirements are only valid when the masses agree; that issues such as school enrollment will be brought up; the the school enrollment numbers are down; that the projected number of students from houses in this development will be approximately 25 new students per year; that the lot size is an issue; that the lot size is not dictated by the Applicant but by this Board; that does not support argument for denial; that more cars does not equal too many cars; that the Comprehensive Plan states that new growth and development are appropriate for a County road and not a private road; that if denied due to road, that the Board would now be holding individual property owners responsible for failure to take action on their own Comprehensive Plan; that if there is a safety issue, fix it; that he lives off of 219 and they have more traffic on their 2 lane road than McKee Road – including 18 wheelers; that he understand concerns but it is the County's responsibility to fix that and take accountability; that it is inappropriate to deny based off of "I don't like it;" and that he is interested to see how the Board votes – as a servant leader to make a hard decision or as a politician.

Chair Andrews asked if any one would like to speak in opposition to the application.

Sharman Dryden, citizen who lives on Ossahatchie Creek Road, advised that she lives on the curve; that she has has seen two wrecks in front of her house and has nearly been hit three times; that people pass from behind; that safety is an issue; that young drivers will use Ossahatchie as a cut through; that there are two houses close to the road at McKee and 315 so they can't widen the road right there to allow the turns for large trucks; that traffic is heavy; that there are potholes on the road; that there will be increased numbers of school buses; and that safety is the biggest issue.

Thornton Jordan, citizen that lives on Diamond Road, stated that he doesn't get any mail; that he would like to know who will be liable for failed structures; that there should be language in contract and money in escrow to address future stream degradation; that the east side of the property is unbuildable and labeled as greenspace; that he wonders if the developer will be free to sell to another developer and would that developer then be required to build to this plan; that McKee Road experiences brown outs and that there will be increased utility costs to customers; and that he wonders if the developer intends to live in the subdivision and experience what neighbors will experience.

Lauren Dimitri, citizen who lives on McKee Road, stated that she is directly adjacent to this property and owns 13 acres; that she has been there for about nine years; that 52.3% of the property can't be developed; that there are massive elevation changes; that the engineer stated there are massive septic tank plans that fail in Harris County; that only 12 lots exceed 2 acres; that the Superintendent has concerns about the proposal; that the purpose of the UDC and Comprehensive Plan is to protect citizens – not for developers; that they don't know who the builder is; that there has not been careful review and analysis; that she leans heavily in favor of denial; that surrounding areas are all agricultural and rural; that Abberly Lakes has 150 homes; that they cannot sustain more development; that over a 5-year period, there will be no peace and quiet with machines running all the time; that the property could be turned into 10 acre estates or cultivated as agriculture; that McKee Road is a tiny County road with "no thru truck" signs; that entrances will frame a dangerous area of road; and that it will be a risk to life and property.

Jacqueline Moyer, citizen who lives on Franklin Creek Drive; stated that she counted how many houses are in the area – 146 homes – to the point 1.2 miles on McKee Road; that this development will double what we already have; that people that will move here will be families; that there will be more cars going up and down the road; that she is concerned about the kids riding buses and whether more can be afforded; that there is an online petition signed by residents of the area; that they don't want this; that people want the country life; that they want 10 acres; that they don't want to see their neighbors; that they are making themselves into a middle Columbus; that it took the volunteer fire department 25-26 minutes to get to the fire; that they don't have their own police department in the area; that they need to make the development 10 acre lots and build more infrastructure; and that people will buy them.

TJ Higgs, citizen who lives on Abberly Lane; stated that they are short bus drivers; that kids are riding 3 to a seat and sitting on the floor; that there will be trespassing on adjacent land; that we have Ellerslie Park and don't need to duplicate; that they need to uphold the intent of the UDC and Comprehensive Plan; that they should deny this rezoning; and that the Ellerslie Volunteer Fire Department is 4 miles away from Abberly Lane and had a 27 minute response time.

Jesse Landrigan, citizen who lives on McKee Road, stated that the Sheriff's Office will feel the strain; that there is population density in the areas; that it will no longer be a rural area but urbanized; that they should develop with 10 acre lots; that he would have loved a 10 acre lot with a house but none were available; and that the land needs to be developed smartly without overloading schools, buses, and school services.

Eric Kuhlenberg, citizen who lives on Boyd Court; stated that he isn't going to remind the Board of their duties; that he wonders how much is really set aside for conservation and how much is because the land can't be built on; that it should be based on total buildable instead; that there is a data center being proposed in Muscogee County; that they need to think 3-4 years in the future; that the traffic study should not be completed during the summer when school is out; and that these changes should be considered when Harris County can accommodate these changes.

Daphne Graves, citizen who lives on Voorhees Road; stated that she is quite interested in what the Planning Commission duties are; that she wonders if they make recommendations based upon the best interests of the County; that she would like to thank all for the opportunity to speak but is not sure it really matters; that she wonders how many have made up their minds and are just checking boxes; that they have heard why it isn't a good idea right now; that citizens strongly against any development; that they have to remember that Mr. Welch said if not approved that we will see what happens; that a lawsuit might be what happens; that she doesn't see how suing a county you want to develop in helps; that opinions against rezoning are stronger and stronger; that "Mr. West Point" doesn't count as being for or against; that said he wasn't for or against; that tonight he was for; that his speech tonight was better than last time; and that the Board needs to listen to those that elected them.

Holly Hicks, citizen that lives on McKee Road; stated that she is absolutely terrified of McKee Road; that she contacted the builder and thought would get better when construction finished; that kids can't ride bikes down McKee Road; that 6 years ago, Abberly Lakes and Southhaven met with Dr. Andrews and discussed the danger of the bus stops; that they were promised stop signs, bus stops moved, and that speed bumps could be a possibility; that she contacted the school district to get the bus stop changed; that Mr. Welch stated that people should have the chance to live here; that there is a large military population in Abberly Lakes; that numbers can be skewed and that they aren't numbers or addresses; that there is responsible growth and irresponsible growth; that they can't approve; and that it is not safe.

Madelyn Grace McKee, citizen who lives on Breckenridge Drive in Upatoi; stated that she takes homeschool classes in Harris County; that she has been in Upatoi for over a decade; that she loves this area and just started driving; that her mother is concerned about her driving on McKee; that people are speeding around corners on tight road; that they bought their home because it has 5 acres; that they want to have space and privacy and chickens, sheep, and cows; that this is a rural area; that they are losing that and believes that citizens don't want to be urban area; that they can have residences under current zoning with just larger-sized lots; that just because progress is progress doesn't mean it is good; and that this is not good progress.

Amber Jackson, citizen who lives on McKee Road; stated that she relocated from Kennesaw; that she took some persuading to agree to country life; that this is one community; that she has bonded with students and peers; that they will be affected daily by this development; that it is right at the curve of McKee Road; that she fell in love with the woods; that she had no idea that Abberly Lakes was coming; that 3 children have almost been hit by cars; that a dog was hit by a car; that she did not move for it to feel like Kennesaw; that she has concerns with EMS; that she grew up able to ride her 4 wheelers; that they do not chose to be metro Atlanta or metro Columbus; that residents are still paying to fix issues; that the best way to conserve is to not put anything on it; that electricity flickers; and that she wonders if the Ruby Data Center site is owned by the same people.

Steven Bradley, citizen who lives on McKee Road, stated that no one moves to Harris County wanting to live in Columbus; that he has just under 5 acres; that neighbors don't want to give up their land; that they want it to be rural; that they want to keep it similar to how it is; that he likes the country life; that he wants it to stay country; that he moved to Harris County partly because he didn't want to be in Muscogee; that we are going to be another Muscogee County; that older houses will continue to depreciate; that there are 180 single family homes available in this County; that he likes his privacy; that they can build on larger lots; that they can make money without fleecing the people; that a 100 foot buffer is not that far; and that they have quarterbacks that can throw farther.

Joshua Hendrax, citizen who lives on Gambel Court, stated that he didn't plan on speaking; that he is from New York City and spent 20 years in the military; that when he arrived in Harris County that he fell in love with community and Harris County; that he coaches their kids; that he has 5 boys; that he stayed for the community and the lifestyle; that he wants to stay here; that they need to think about the next 20 years and what the affect will be 20 years from now; that he wants his kids to have the same lifestyle they have now; and that developers will continue to ask for more.

Kevin Smith, citizen who lives on Abberly Lane, stated that he is a native of Harris County; that he loves Harris County and the rural feel; that he is opposed to 1 acre lots; that voters had a survey and said they wanted 2 acre lots; that he has been around development – good and bad; that they need to get ahead of developers; that the lots are so close on Abberly Lane; that it looks like a patio home subdivision; that developers are going to make the most money that they can; that there were some great times and then subdivision developed; that trucks will be going up and down the roads; that they are now being asked to enjoy those sounds again; that the Board has heard that citizens don't want this; that maybe Rodgers can build on 4-5 acre lots; and that the Commissioners need to listen to the citizens.

Richard Flanders, citizen who lives on Boyd Branch Drive, stated that he wanted to add his voice; that he has been here 24 years; that he saw on the internet that there was a policy to have minimum of 2 acres; that in 2022 it was on a ballot and approved again by majority of taxpayers; and that he wants to know how the Board can override the ordinance and circumvent the law.

Andre Bass, citizen who lives on Boyd Branch Drive, stated that there are issues with busing; that he has had repeated returns to pick up his daughter due to there not being enough bus drivers; that schools are crowded; that there needs to be additional infrastructure and metal detectors; and wonders where funding is coming from; that more cars are more opportunities for accidents; that insurance is going to go up; that internet service is bad and that more people will make it worse; that infrastructure needs approving; and that they need to work with the private sector to invest.

Brad MacDonald, citizen who lives on GA Hwy 315; stated that he has lived there since 1965; that progress is inevitable but it needs to be controlled progress; that we have outgrown our infrastructure; that he personally likes the country life; that if you want to live in a subdivision, live in Columbus; that people want privacy; that there will be no privacy; that we love our County; and that all they ask is to think this through.

Timothy Hudson, citizen who lives on Wood Duck Hollow, stated that he has been here for 1 1/2 years; that he has ridden throught most of the County; that there are more subdivisions than any county in the Sstate of Georgia; that McKee Road is congested; that there will be accidents; that safety comes first; that he wants to spend his money here; and that they need safety.

Anne Marie Agers, citizen who lives on Village Parkway, stated that she has been thinking about traffic and infrastructure; they they should not let a \$1.5 million extortion lawsuit scare them; and that the Board needs to consider Harris County residents.

Ruth Owen, citizen who lives on Willow Beach Road, stated that 12 of the 180 homes are on 2 acre or larger lots and that 160 houses are on lots smaller than 2 acres; that conservation does not help with clay soils and that there is no where to remediate; that Harris County moved to a 2 acre minimum; that it is greedy to put houses this size on 1 acre lots on red clay soil; that the builder's representative will rely on Health Dept approval and perk test but that isn't a guarantee; that lots need to be at least 2 acres so there isn't another Melody Lakes situation; and that septic is not sustainable for a 1 acre lot.

Leisha Haracourt, citizen who lives on Mckee Road, stated that she moved there in 2005; that the end of road was a dirt road; that there were covenants that expired; that she has noticed a huge difference in water quality; that prices will go up; that she 3 grandchildren and drove them to school because they would have had to ride the bus for 2 hour; that traffic is horrible; that schools are crowded; that damage from previous construction was never repaired properly; and that infrastructure needs to be addressed before adding more.

Nick Kozee, citizen who lives on Mustang Trail, stated that County Line Road is a pinch point; that it doesn't allow for the extra traffic; that the road should be straightened; that the County will have to foot the bill; and that infrastructure needs to be imporved before more vehicles are added.

Trenton Newsome, citizen who lives on McKee Road, stated that he wonders if there is anything that will prevent an expansion; and that 810 acres are co-owned by Timberland Investments.

Sharon Haskins, citizen who lives on Franklin Creek Drive, stated that she wants to reiterate everything that she has heard; that she has concerns with water pressure, electricity, and cable service; that her water pressure is 42 psi; and that there seems to be a common family name between the proposed data center and this development.

Gene Parnell, citizen who lives on Whisperwood Court, stated that he has concerns with traffic, car accidents, and what time buses will come with more being added.

Mr. Welch stated that a lot of people that have moved to Harris County; that they moved in and now don't want others to move in; that they love the land and they love the location; that people move in from out of state; that why should a public body deny the privilege to moving to this community; that the Chairwoman of the Planning Commission stated that they are not in charge of the School Board; that there have been discussions about water pressure and County Staff has measured a pressure of 91 psi; that people want more restaurants and stores; that restaurants and stores come to areas with population density that justifies a new store or restaurant; that he thanked people in attendance for their military service and that it affords them to be here tonight to grant a rezoning of this property; that many great people have moved into this community; that this subdivision provides the next generation of young people so they may be future leaders and future firefighters; that the next generation comes from development such as this; that he wants to enhance Harris County and build on that foundation; that the future is a good future; that there were lots of questions about 2 acre lots; that 2 acre lots are a standard lot size except in a conservation subdivision; that they are preserving 52% and rest is for subdivision; that there has been conversation about 10 acre lots; that in a standard subdivision that 10 acre lots not permitted; that Article 5 leaves out A-1 from conventional subdivision zoning; that they are asking for something permitted and legal; that the Comprehensive Plan does call for this to be a suburban area; that it has developed that way over time; that people asked how they know other areas won't be developed; that they won't be because the code prohibits it; that the required deed restriction will be filed which prohibits the development; that it is not the same as covenants; that they are going to follow the code; that adjacent areas could not be developed due to conserved areas; that he wanted to hit some of the questions posed; that it is imperative to provide answers to the public; that everyone has a Constitutional right to speak; that everyone has a right to their property; that they have to put the Board on notice of those rights or they lose their protection of their rights; and that they are asking the Board to follow their own Code.

Chair Andrews closed the public hearing at 9:27 p.m.

The motion to deny the Application of Timberland 109, LLC, to rezone 586.45 acres, located on Map 084, Parcel 045, Land Lots 282, 262, 283, 96, 97, Land Districts 17th and 18th; Rezoning from A-1 (Agricultural/Forestry) to R-1 (Low Density Residential) for a conservation subdivision with single family homes; Current use is wooded property; proposed use is for a conservation subdivision; property located 1.25 miles southeast of the intersection of McKee Road and GA Hwy 315, Waverly Hall, GA was made by Chair Andrews and seconded by Vice-Chairman Irions and Commissioner Lightsey.

Commissioner Lightsey stated that there are 30 restaurants in the County; that in 1993-1994 they went from 1/2 to 1 acre, in 2003-2004 from 1 acre to 2 acres, and then had the largest growth; that people continue to talk about 2 acres; that he was blessed to get a little more himself; that he can't overlook traffic issues; that he was with EMS for 30 years; that McKee is a bad road; that it has built up over the years; that infrastructure does need to change; that he has the GDOT traffic counts and there have been 19 motor vehicle crashes between 2024 to current; that safety is his concern; that he loves this County; that his family is dear friends with the Rodgers family; that his heart is torn; that he hears the people; that he feels for Mr. Rodgers and his hat is off to him for sitting in this room; and that he appreciates him being here.

Commissioner Grant stated that he was the only commissioner that voted against the UDC; that he didn't like them then and he doesn't like them now; that they have to decide to go with Codes over citizens; that they have to consider property owner rights vs. citizens; that it is hard to go against something that is already approved; that he feels for each and every one here; that there is the Constitution and they have to follow rules; that he may not agree with them and may not like them but there is a consequence when they break it; that the UDC should be fixed; and that neither side will be happy.

Commissioner Gantt agrees and is not crazy about the Code as it is; that we can do better; that this group has complied with everything that the Code requires them to do ; that the Board is expected to be rational and not emotional; that why are they here if they aren't going to abide by the Code; that he wishes that they could negotiate; that traffic is definitely an issue; that he wishes Mr. Rodgers and his group had proposed something about the roads; that maybe they could have spoken about construction on other subdivisions; that this is not a first; that there are a lot more rural areas than where they are; that it is what it is; that traffic has gotten worse; that kids need to get to school safely and that they should have trucks wait to show up to give the roads a chance to decongest.

Chair Andrews stated that she knows that there are some people in this community that think she goes straight to "no;" that previously that she voted "yes;" that it is clear in the Comprehensive Plan to maintain rural feel – agricultural and rural residential – suburban/rural residential; that McKee Road isn't on the outskirts of a city; that when she thinks about the City of Columbus that she thinks of downtown; that the Future Land Use Plan and Comprehensive Plan talk about about the sense of place – to develop and maintain sense of place; that a sense of place is a place like McKee Road where you have large lots; that she can't not know what she knows about the school district and being an educator; that it is very difficult to overcome the growth; that they added 10 classrooms but still today have modular units here and there; that kids have to be in seats before new schools are built; that Legislators are determined to pass property tax relief with HB 1116 and that over the course of years property tax on homesteads will go away; that the Harris County School District is the most adversely affected and Harris County is the second most adversely affected; that she doesn't go straight to "no;" that we have public hearings to hear their voices and not to just check the box; that if you have lived here a day, week, month or decade that she pays attention to what they say; that District 5 when she first ran was all the way through Waverly Hall and almost to 208 but because of increased population is now smallest in geographic size with the largest population; and that GDOT is reactive not proactive.

Further discussion included that pending legislation can be considered; that if the legislation were to pass that the revenue stream from the houses will go away and then decreases faster than able to levy sales tax for it; that the master plan is a beautiful master plan that backs up to green space but doesn't fit into sense of place on McKee Road; that TSPLOST might help but Harris County is the only county in the region that voted against it; that we should have a sense of place; that the UDC takes away our sense of place; that it would fit if there were 2 acre subdivisions all around it; that Ellerslie Place is over a mile away; that County Manager Clark Harrell has listened to the comments of the citizens; and that the citizens concerns are not unheard.

The motion to deny passed with three in favor (Andrews, Irions, Lightsey), and two opposed (Grant, Gantt).

9. **ADJOURNMENT**. The motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Gantt, seconded by Vice-Chairman Irions and Commissioner Lightsey, and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

Susan Andrews, Chairman

Attest:

Andrea Dzioba, County Clerk