

RICHLAND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
July 9, 2020 Zoom Meeting

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[Members Present: Jason Branham, Heather Cairns, Stephen Gilchrist, Christopher Yonke, Gary Dennis, Jr., Bryan Grady, Terrence Taylor, Beverly Frierson; Absent: Mattauer Carlisle]

Called to order:

MR. PRICE: Mr. Chair?

CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, you can hear me.

MR. PRICE: It's actually 3:02 and I believe we can begin the meeting.

CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, can you hear me okay? I don't seem to be coming through. Mr. Price, can you hear me?

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir, I can hear you.

CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, great.

MR. DENNIS: This is Gary Dennis, I can hear you.

CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, great guys, thank you so much for responding.

Well thank you all for joining us on our July 9th, second Zoom call for the Richland County Planning Commission. Please allow me to read this into the Record. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act a copy of the Agenda posted on our bulletin board and was also sent to radio, TV stations, newspapers, and persons requesting notification. So we thank all of you for being here with us, those that are viewing us via Zoom and those that are viewing us on YouTube, thank you for your participation today. Mr. Price, are there any amendments to the Agenda?

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir. You should've received an update last night, it was, I think it was a minor update and it was regarding the street name approval request list where we added an additional street to that list.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay.

2 MR. PRICE: And for that and just in case for those who haven't, who may not
3 have received it, it would be the sixth street added which is Riley Estate Lane, and the
4 applicant is Shirley Rump. And this is part of the, as we've termed it the family heir
5 subdivision or more specifically subdivisions exempt from road standards. And it's
6 located on tax map #24414-01-16 and 22. And that was the only update to your
7 Agenda.

8 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, do we need to make a motion to accept that
9 amendment to the Agenda? Mr. Price?

10 MR. PRICE: Yes.

11 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. Is there a motion to amend the Agenda to
12 include the information regarding the road name?

13 MR. BRANHAM: I so move.

14 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, is there a second?

15 MALE: Second.

16 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay Mr. Yonke, moved by Mr. Branham and
17 seconded by Mr. Yonke. All in favor? We have to say, I guess we could signify by roll
18 call vote?

19 MR. PRICE: We can do the roll call.

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay.

21 MR. PRICE: Alright, Branham?

22 MR. BRANHAM: Aye.

23 MR. PRICE: Grady?

1 MR. GRADY: Aye.

2 MR. PRICE: Cairns?

3 MS. CAIRNS: Aye.

4 MR. PRICE: Gilchrist?

5 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Aye.

6 MR. PRICE: Yonke?

7 MR. YONKE: Aye.

8 MR. PRICE: Taylor?

9 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.

10 MR. PRICE: Dennis.

11 MR. DENNIS: Aye.

12 *[Approved: Branham, Grady, Cairns, Gilchrist, Yonke, Taylor, Dennis, Frierson; Absent:*
13 *Carlisle]*

14 MR. PRICE: And it passes.

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. Next on the Agenda is our Consent Agenda. Is
16 there a motion the Consent Agenda?

17 MS. CAIRNS: I believe that, as I understand it right now Case No. 2, no Case
18 No. 1, 20-013, there has been opposition from the community so that one we'll be
19 pulling from the Consent Agenda. I do not know of any objection to Case No. 20-018. If
20 there is one if somebody could let me know.

21 MR. PRICE: We have not received any opposition to this request.

22 MS. CAIRNS: And do any of the Commission Members wanna have discussion
23 on the second case on the Agenda? Okay, I'll use the silence as a no. So I believe that

1 – I would make a motion that we approve the Consent Agenda as presented, excluding
2 from it Map Amendment No. 1 which is Case 20-013 for which we will have discussion.

3 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, is there a second?

4 MR. BRANHAM: I second.

5 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, all in favor in adopting the Consent Agenda as
6 stated please signify by roll call vote.

7 MR. PRICE: Branham:

8 MR. BRANHAM: Aye.

9 MR. PRICE: Grady?

10 MR. GRADY: Aye.

11 MR. PRICE: Cairns?

12 MS. CAIRNS: Aye.

13 MR. PRICE: Gilchrist?

14 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Aye.

15 MR. PRICE: Yonke?

16 MR. YONKE: Aye.

17 MR. PRICE: Taylor?

18 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.

19 MR. PRICE: Dennis.

20 MR. DENNIS: Aye.

21 *[Approved: Branham, Grady, Cairns, Gilchrist, Yonke, Taylor, Dennis, Frierson; Absent:*
22 *Frierson]*

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, great. So we will move to our first Map
2 Amendment.

3 **CASE NO. 20-013 MA:**

4 MR. PRICE: Okay, Mr. Chair?

5 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes sir, Mr. Price?

6 MR. PRICE: Alright, the first case is Item 20-013 MA. The Applicant is Anna
7 Fonseca. The location is 1113 Ridge Road. The Applicant is requesting to rezone 191.2
8 acres from Rural to Residential, Single-family, medium-density, or RS-MD. Staff's
9 recommendation was for approval and this was based on the, the approval is based on
10 that the proposed rezoning is consistent with the objectives outlined in the
11 Comprehensive Plan for residential development in the neighborhood, medium-density
12 future land use designation. Per the Plan the neighborhood, medium-density
13 designation recommends medium density residential neighborhoods and supporting
14 neighborhood commercial scale development designed in a traditional neighborhood
15 format. These neighborhoods provide a transition from neighborhood, low-density, to
16 more intense mixed residential high density urban environments. Further, the Plan
17 recommends medium density residential neighborhoods designed to provide a mix of
18 residential uses and densities within neighborhoods. Likewise, the rezoning would be
19 consistent with the recommendations of the Lower Richland Strategic Community
20 Master Plan for this area, which was adopted in 2014. And I will also state that we do
21 have a number of comments regarding this. I will read the statement from the Applicant
22 into the Record but I will also, we also have 34 comments from citizens opposing the
23 request and we also, and for these cases, due to its location and its proximity next to

1 the military base, in this particular case Fort Jackson, we have reached out to them for
2 any comments they have. While they expressed initial concerns with the development,
3 they were not able to give us a formal response but it is our understanding that they will
4 provide a formal response to County Council by the zoning public hearing meeting
5 which is scheduled for the 28th of this month.

6 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay.

7 MR. PRICE: Okay? Alright, so I will start by reading the comments from the
8 Applicant. From Anna Fonseca: We are requesting to rezone approximately 191 acre
9 parcel of rural to residential, medium-density which is currently surrounded by single-
10 family, high density and rurally zoned property. We believe the medium density zoning
11 would be a good transition from the higher density zoning. The large acreage of the
12 property allows for the ability to preserve and create large areas of open space and
13 more flexibility of innovative design. We understand the importance of creating a
14 neighborhood that compliments the surrounding community while also providing a
15 mixture of residential densities attracting a wider variety of home ownership. We are
16 sensitive to the area's topography, the surrounding properties and the community at
17 large and would therefore be diligent in developing a neighborhood that brings value
18 and sustainability to the community.

19 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. That's all from the Applicant?

20 MR. PRICE: Yes.

21 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Alright, Mr. Price. Are there any questions for the Staff
22 or the Applicant based upon the information submitted?

23 MR. BRANHAM: Mr. Chair, I've got a couple questions for Staff.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes sir, Mr. Branham.

2 MR. BRANHAM: Thank you. Do we have any additional information on the basis
3 of the Army's expressed concern?

4 MR. PRICE: Mr. DeLage, if you could address that?

5 MR. DELAGE: Yes, sir. So much wasn't provided beyond just the initial contact.
6 They said that they needed some additional time to kinda gather that and give a written
7 comment per the enabling legislation or the state legislation regarding development
8 within the 3,000' military zone. So they wanted to add something a little bit more official
9 to be submitted as part of the Record. But other than just saying that they had some
10 concerns and that they were putting that information together, I didn't get anything
11 specific beyond that.

12 MR. BRANHAM: Okay. Thank you. My second question, as it relates to the
13 strategic community master plan for Lower Richland that was referenced in the
14 Department's report, what I located on the County website I think is the same report
15 from 2014, and I'm looking at page 19 which is a map that shows an area for future land
16 use classes and as best I can tell this area was labeled as rural residential. There was a
17 transition area but it was closer to the City of Columbia. Does the Staff have any
18 comment on that? Or any clarification?

19 MR. DELAGE: Yes, sir. Give me just one moment to pull up the master plan so I
20 can make sure I'm on the same page.

21 MR. PRICE: You say that was on page 19, Mr. Branham?

22 MR. BRANHAM: Yeah, printed in the bottom left corner it said page 19. I think it
23 was page 27 of the file as it opened up.

1 MR. PRICE: Okay, and you're going by the, this is the map that actually shows
2 the existing community node?

3 MS. CAIRNS: Jason, can you repeat what map you're finding this as future use
4 for rural?

5 MR. BRANHAM: Yeah, the document's called 'Lower Richland County, Richland
6 County Strategic Community Master Plan', it's on richlandcountysc.gov, it's 123 pages
7 as it opens up. And as it opens up on the web it's page 27 within my browser, but within
8 the document as far as how the pages are labeled it's after page 18 and before page
9 20.

10 MS. CAIRNS: Yeah, and actually I have that same document up on my screen
11 and this parcel is, actually lands in the pink area.

12 MR. PRICE: That's the transitional area. Yes ma'am, you're correct.

13 MS. CAIRNS: And so it is in the suburban transition area, not the rural
14 residential.

15 MR. BRANHAM: The map was quite blurry through my browser so I was having
16 a hard time reading the street names.

17 MS. CAIRNS: But if you go, actually if you go to page 20 you can, while the
18 name's not labeled you can, just looking at the road pattern there's a distinct V, there's
19 two distinct V's and this one is very much in that pink, not the yellow.

20 MR. DELAGE: Yeah, and my apologies. Since I'm screen sharing I had to run
21 and go grab the paper copy, but I think Mr. Branham, if it's, maybe if that's the same
22 one that I'm looking at here on this copy, I don't know if it's referencing – there is one
23 that shows it in the green area as rural, but it's referencing the previous comp plan; I'm

1 not sure if that's the same one or not cause it's page, the actual physical page copy is
2 20, but there is a map in there that does show it as rural as a reference from a previous
3 comprehensive plan.

4 MR. BRANHAM: Okay.

5 MR. DENNIS: Yeah, I was with Mr. Branham on that, and then after I printed it
6 out and kinda enlarged it I found it to actually be in the transition area. I noticed the
7 same thing Mr. Branham said, I think it was Friday of last week when I was looking at it
8 and I had some concerns. And then when I did some more digging I found out. For
9 future I would like to have those maps in a pdf where we could blow them up more than
10 in a little comprehensive plan, cause it is very hard to really see some of these maps,
11 where they're at, and it's, between Google or GIS, the comprehensive plan and a
12 computer screen, it takes a while to figure it out when you can't read it.

13 MR. PRICE: Yes, sir, we'll be sure and make that correction next time.

14 MR. GRADY: So I have some additional questions based on this same
15 document. So you know, being someone who's fairly new to being involved in the
16 planning processes, to what extent would Staff suggest that the designation of suburban
17 transition is related to the existence of the Southeast Richland Neighborhood Master
18 Plan for the Garners Ferry and Lower Richland intersection? Cause I reviewed that plan
19 as well and that sorta has a plan for a substantial mixed use neighborhood to be
20 developed on that site, which clearly does not fit the current land use condition. So to
21 what extent are those two things correlating with each other and to what extent should
22 we view the future designation of this area as suburban as being contingent on that?

23 MR. PRICE: Mr. DeLage, I'll defer to you on this.

1 MR. DELAGE: Yes, sir. Yeah, no it's just looking – I just wanna make sure I'm
2 understanding the question. So, and answering it correctly, put it that way. So as far as
3 the kinda relation you mentioned about a mixed use development, are you saying in
4 particular to this development being a mixed use development or just relation to other
5 mixed use developments? I just wanna make sure I'm answering correctly.

6 MR. GRADY: Well, so in the page after [inaudible], so page 20 in the document,
7 page 28 in the pdf, there's a description of the suburban transition area that this site is
8 located in. And based on a few different points it leans heavily on this 2005 Southeast
9 Richland Neighborhood Master Plan that refers to that specific, that dashed circle on the
10 map around the intersection of Lower Richland and Garners Ferry. So it seems to me
11 when a previous plan indicates that that site was designed to be far more intensely
12 used, did that make a decision toward indicating that this should be a higher density
13 region? So basically what I'm suggesting is because that thing that was planned 15
14 years ago and never really got built, should that inform our decision on future land use
15 decisions in this area?

16 MR. DELAGE: Well, I should say at least just based off of the SERN(?) for that
17 node that was created, there are a lot of approved or previously approved planned
18 development districts within that area. Some are developing out now. I apologize, I don't
19 know the name of the gas station that's there but, you know, as part of that PDD that
20 was approved, but the SERN should definitely be viewed as an intended or
21 recommended for intense development as far as because it's at a crossroads, because
22 of the approved development and the existing development around there. However, I
23 think as you kind of move out from outside the SERN where this particular location is,

1 you know, that suburban transitional guidelines from the Southeastern Richland
2 Neighborhood Master Plan would be something that is more focused in beyond just that
3 particular node at SERN at the Lower Richland/Garners Ferry area. I think some of the
4 – while it may not necessarily be a mixed use development or at least the zoning that is
5 being requested is not. One of the things that Staff looked at with the recommendations
6 is that it basically has the, to promote a variety of housing types as well and it also goes
7 on to say, including townhomes and apartments. And then also, you know, there's other
8 things to look at such as promote development that's respectful with existing
9 neighborhoods as well as natural, agricultural, historical resources. So there's a variety
10 of different points that are made about that suburban transitional area that I think would
11 be kind of one of those factors that kinda helped guide in your decision today, in
12 addition to looking at surrounding land uses, you know, infrastructure, and then also the
13 surrounding zoning districts as well.

14 MR. GRADY: Okay. I have some additional questions but I'll leave it to other
15 Members of the Commission for now.

16 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, Mr. Grady. Any additional comments for
17 the Staff before we hear additional comments from the public? Okay Mr. Price, well we
18 can, it's my understanding that we do have some folk that are in opposition to this, so.
19 It's my understanding also, Commission Members, that there are a number of inquiries
20 for this particular case and we certainly want to, not only value the time of the folk that
21 presented the information to the Commission, but also to ensure that we're getting all
22 the information that we need to have. And so as we go through this process if there are
23 some reoccurring themes, Mr. Price, please inform us of that so that the Commission

1 can make some decisions about more specifically, you know, how do we ensure that we
2 don't limit folk's interest but we capture what people's interests may be, particularly as it
3 relates to opposition, if in fact it becomes a consistent theme.

4 MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

5 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you.

6 MR. DENNIS: Real quick, in my packet – I know you guys got some opposition
7 stuff – in my packet though I had three oppositions in my packet. I don't know if
8 everybody got those? They were in an envelope. So if you –

9 MR. PRICE: Mr. Dennis, we did – the Planning Commission, we did get a few
10 letters that were addressed directly to the Planning Commission and so those were
11 included in your package.

12 MR. DENNIS: Okay. So you already have the one from Linda and David
13 [inaudible] and [inaudible] Sloan and –

14 MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

15 MR. DENNIS: - okay.

16 MR. PRICE: Yeah, so we've received those and again, since those were
17 submitted directly to you as Planning Commission Members, those were included in the
18 package that was delivered to you. And also, thank you for reminding me, but you also
19 received copies of the, a petition for, or I guess in opposition to this particular request.

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes.

21 MR. PRICE: So again, normally we don't really read the petition and the number
22 and the names of the people, even when we have public, you know, meetings in

1 person. So in this case we just wanted you to have that for information and we would
2 not read that into the Record.

3 MR. DENNIS: Okay. Just wanted to make sure those three that I had in my
4 packet are read for public knowledge.

5 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. Mr. Price?

6 MR. DELAGE: So, Dear Planning Commission Members, my name is Laura
7 Hughes and I live at 555 Penn Road in Hopkins, South Carolina. I appreciate the
8 opportunity to express my thoughts about rezoning the acreage at 1133 Ridge Road. I
9 am opposed to the rezoning from Rural to RS-HD for the following reasons: we have
10 two well-constructed plans, the 2005 Southeast Richland Neighborhood Master Plan
11 and the 2014 Richland County Strategic Community Master Plan guiding our actions.
12 Both plans have designated this area as rural. Much thought, research and resources
13 went into these plans and they should be honored. The RU district is intended to
14 provide areas for low density, agricultural uses and very low density single-family
15 detached residential home construction. Preservation of open space farmland in rural
16 areas and protection of existing rural communities are the stated objectives. The
17 Richland County Strategic Community Master Plan Roadway Statistics note, attracted
18 volume is projected to increase by 85% for Leesburg Road and 77% for Garners Ferry
19 Road in 30 years spanning from 2005 to 2035. The infrastructure needed to support,
20 that accompanies high density housing is not currently available. Thank you for your
21 time and service to our community. Kind regards. Next one is, I say no to the rezoning
22 on the Ridge Road property, 20-13MA. This rezoning will only have a negative effect on
23 the Lower Richland Community. I've lived here for 35+ years. I moved here because it's

1 rural, I stay here because it's rural. My neighbors and I enjoy the wildlife, fresh air and
2 quietness of the rural setting and we want it to stay. I suggest we stick with the Strategic
3 Community Master Plan for Lower Richland and visions of the future where
4 communities continue to grow and prosper and land is valued for the natural agricultural
5 or historical importance are conserved. Most of our water is supplied by wells. It's a
6 major concern of ours that rezoning for a crowded development will contaminate our
7 water. Also, our roads are few and narrow, our schools are small; wall-to-wall
8 neighborhood developments will cause major congestions on our roads and
9 overcrowding in our school. This is a military fly zone, this also needs to stay rural
10 safety reasons. Last but not least there's an abundance of wildlife here including
11 threatened and endangered species such as the pleated woodpecker, milkweed,
12 essential for the Monarch butterfly, and our beloved whippoorwills. Please do not let this
13 rezoning go through, it would be devastating to our small and quaint community. Thank
14 you. And I apologize again if I mispronounce any names. Macon and David Blackwell at
15 4600 Old Leesburg Road, Hopkins, South Carolina. My name is Elzie Harrison and I am
16 a 20 year resident of the Lower Richland community at 117 Clearview Drive, Hopkins,
17 South Carolina. I am writing to have my comments read on the Record as part of the
18 Planning Commission being scheduled for July 9, 2020, to discuss rezoning the RU to
19 medium density of this property located on Ridge Road. I am opposed to the request as
20 I was approximately [inaudible] meetings ago when another rezoning attempt was made
21 for the property by a developer. To rezone this property for medium density and allow
22 for construction of medium density construction would be a disservice to the rural area
23 that we all enjoy and raise our families. First, the infrastructure that we have in this area

1 is developed for rural designation and not for medium density. If approved we would find
2 ourselves with continuing decay and overuse of infrastructure we have in our area,
3 which is mainly made up of two-lane roads already crumbling as it is. Leesburg Road,
4 Lower Richland and Ridge Road are already heavily trafficked areas with the Fort and
5 Camp McCrady traffic, as well as residents. To continue to add to this with medium
6 density construction would overtax the area. Secondly, as a retired military resident I am
7 concerned about this rezoning and construction due to the local military installations.
8 Fort Jackson, McCrady Joint National Guard base; if it is not within the buffer in this
9 massive planned area, it is very close. The buffer area was designed to limit
10 construction in these areas so as to maintain the military bases and help prevent
11 citizen's complaints from noise as well as flyovers, etc. To allow medium density
12 construction would possibly result in the loss of our military bases as the line between
13 them will become in contention in the future. The residents adjoining and within this
14 neighborhood in this area choose this area for the rural nature to include the
15 spaciousness of our lots and properties, we are a close-knit community even though we
16 are spread out, Richland County is rapidly developing its rural areas into urban areas
17 and this action would be detrimental to this area. I urge the Commission to recommend
18 denial of the rezoning and maintain the rural designation of said property. Thank you for
19 allowing me to be heard. Elzie Harrison, Jr. and then the address was already
20 previously stated. The next one is, Dear Planning Committee Members, as retired
21 residents living within one mile of the proposed area since 1983, my husband and I
22 would like to express our concerns and disapproval of the request for zoning changes
23 on the property located at Ridge Road. All the homes in this area are planned rural lots

1 with mostly one home per two acres. We located to this area for that reason and most of
2 the residents have been residents for many years and are retired. We love and value
3 the wildlife and peace and quiet in this area. The idea of medium density is quite
4 disturbing to us and many of our neighbors. There are issues of increased traffic and
5 possible accident increases, the law enforcement department is already spread thin, the
6 roads in this area are all two-lanes, there is no public transportation, fire and ambulance
7 service would be overburdened, property values will decline, our home that's located off
8 the ridge with a pond that would be subject to run off. Several neighbors also have wells
9 for water. We have no desire to be incorporated into the City of Columbia which may be
10 the result of sewer lines, etc. The developers who want to have our zoning changed do
11 not live in our area and have no interest in the impact this would have on our
12 community. Thank you for your understanding the community and our distress of this
13 idea of rezoning Ridge Road acreage. We are most definitely against the zone change
14 in our rural County community. Sincerely, Marvin and Paula Rhodes, 548 Penn Road,
15 Hopkins, South Carolina. And then the next one is, To Richland Planning Commission,
16 as a longtime resident of Penn Road I am making the request that Planning
17 Commission not change the zoning of the property on Ridge Road. It would be a
18 detriment to the residents in this section of Richland County. This is a quiet community
19 with low crime rate and peaceful living. That is why the property is zoned the way it is so
20 that it can only have one home constructed on one or more acres. With what is
21 proposed many things will have a negative effect on this area; crimes will increase,
22 schools will be overcrowded, if able to able to handle the influx at all, taxes will continue
23 to rise and the property values will decrease, septic tank contamination will destroy

1 wells, law enforcement is already thin, roads can't handle the added traffic, no public
2 transportation available, fire and ambulance services would be overburdened. There's
3 no objection to homes being constructed but the [inaudible] should fall within the already
4 established guidelines. Unfortunately I don't see a name here, but. The next comment
5 is, I would once again like to express my concerns about the request to rezone the
6 above property from rural to medium density. The request does not fit within the scope
7 of the Southeastern Neighborhood Master Plan we agreed to with County Council in
8 2014. The Ridge Road area is a rural community that is the reason most of us chose
9 this area for our homes. We enjoy a peaceful lifestyle with little crime. Developing 109
10 acres into medium density housing will increase traffic, destroy our peaceful lifestyle
11 and increase crime. The Southeast section of Richland County is already
12 accommodating increases in low income housing and other problems that come with
13 them. I think we have accepted as much as we should be required to accept. Lower
14 income and medium density housing will have negative impact on our housing values.
15 We take great pride in our area and we want our home values to increase and not
16 deteriorate. Our road infrastructure will not be able to handle the increase of traffic that
17 medium density homes will create. Ridge Road, Harmon Road and Lower Richland
18 Boulevard are all two-lane roads with no sidewalks. Our schools are already at full
19 capacity. Lower Richland High School particularly cannot accommodate the addition of
20 students that medium density housing will bring. We have lived off Ridge Road for 35
21 years, we love this area. We understand progress but we deserve good progress. We
22 want progress that continues our rural lifestyle, does not diminish our property values.
23 The Southeast should not become the dumping ground for transplanted, low income

1 housing from the City of Columbia, nor dense housing. Thank you for considering my
2 opinion. Deborah and Johnny Tyson, 528 Penn Road, Hopkins, South Carolina. Alright
3 the next one is, I am voicing opposition to the rezoning the above property for a medium
4 or high density as it has been petitioned by the landowner. The following reasons are
5 my concerns: as a 46 year resident of the Clearview Drive cross street with Ridge Road
6 area and 23 year veteran state law enforcement officer, the rezoning does not fit inside
7 the scope of the Southeast Neighborhood Master Plan. The Richland County Council
8 spent one year and \$300,000 to create the current Southeast Neighborhood Master
9 Plan and the rezoning is inconsistent with the plan. It proposes a threat to the base, the
10 closure of McEntire Air Force Base. McEntire National Guard base generates \$1.7
11 billion to Richland County in jobs and in revenue to area businesses each year.
12 McEntire needs to maintain a crash zone of a five mile radius for F16 jets which land
13 there daily. McEntire is on the BRAC list for potential base closures and any negative
14 growth in the area would increase the chances of base closures. The current
15 neighborhood master plan is to keep the area rural. We want to stay rural and keep the
16 \$1.7 billion in Richland County. There will be an increase in crime and lack of law
17 enforcement, fire and EMS. The schools are already at full capacity. The Southeast
18 Neighborhood Plan addresses the need for new schools but no work has been done
19 yet. Road infrastructure cannot handle the increase of traffic that comes along with low,
20 medium or high density. There is no public transportation. The sewer and water needed
21 for the development will impact current residents' wells which we use for our drinking
22 water. Federal money being used for environmental impacts and potentially low income
23 housing. The parcel of land has historical artifacts such as Native American pottery,

1 arrowheads, etc. In the past these items have been found by residents of Ridge Road
2 and residents of its connecting roads. The rezone will have a significant impact on our
3 property values. Kindly, Brian Bennett, 236 Clearview Drive, Hopkins. Alright.

4 MR. PRICE: Okay Tommy, I'll start with the next one.

5 MR. DELAGE: Sure, thanks.

6 MR. PRICE: Alright, The issue at stake is the proposed rezoning of the rural 189
7 acre parcel, tax map 24900-07-03 owned by Winding Path, LLC. Rural development
8 such as these completely ignore several pillars of the previous agreed-upon Richland
9 County Strategic Community Plan. The current developer purchased the property
10 knowing it is rural. The developers clear cut the tract. It is my understanding that the
11 developer is now proposing a high/medium density neighborhood which would be next
12 door to an existing high density neighborhood. The development in question threatens
13 the unique bio-diversity of the Cedar Creek watershed in Richland County. We border
14 the subject property. Our home is on Cedar Creek, a major feeder for the Congaree
15 National Park. This area's watershed directly affects the National Park. Congaree
16 National Park preserves the largest tract of old growth, bottomland hardwood forest left
17 in the United States. It's crucial and actually it's our responsibility to protect this area
18 from reckless development that will permanently destroy what Richland County and
19 South Carolina proudly preserve and is now designated as a national park. Please
20 understand, we have no problem with smart, well planned development in areas that
21 are already zoned accordingly for projects with those specifications. This is not one of
22 those. We should be careful of allowing ill-conceived developments too close to Ft.
23 Jackson and McEntire Air Force Base. Disregarding the spirit of the military

1 compatibility zone outlined in the Richland County Strategic Community Plan could
2 jeopardize the military's long-term objectives for our area. We wish to see Hopkins and
3 the Lower Richland communities improved with well-planned, sensible zoning as
4 opposed to becoming the neglected out of sight, out of mind dumping ground for
5 developers who do not share our vision, do not call this rural area home and arrogantly
6 ignore the plan that Richland County has already developed. Please help us. M.
7 Whitner Slagvault. I apologize if I said that incorrectly. [Inaudible] Grass Farm, Hopkins,
8 South Carolina. To Whom It May Concern, this communication is to voice our opinion
9 regarding the requested zoning change of a section of property located at 1113 Ridge
10 Road in Hopkins, South Carolina. The zoning change request is to rezone from rural to
11 a rural – high or medium density. We are opposed to both for the following reasons: we
12 purchased our property and built our home here in 2004. The area was zoned rural at
13 that time and it's the primary reason we purchased and decided to remain in Richland
14 County. We felt at that time that the investment of equity and time was solid. The
15 addition of a subdivision as proposed would nullify that thinking and drastically impact
16 property values. Number two, basically all residents along the Ridge Road corridor that
17 runs from the top of Horrell Hill at Garners Ferry Road to Lower Richland Boulevard
18 near Leesburg Road, live on acreage that exceeds two acres per home. We love the
19 rural lifestyle and the quiet and separation this area allows. To place a high or medium
20 density subdivision in this area which would potentially accommodate more than 1,000
21 homes, would ruin this quiet, rural area forever. Number three, to place a subdivision of
22 the size and dimensions in this rural area would most certainly cause a major decline in
23 property values that would impact every property owner and resident in this area.

1 Number four, Ridge Road is currently a major thoroughfare for persons traveling back
2 and forth between Leesburg Road and Garners Ferry Road. Many of the routes provide
3 access to both the back entrance to Ft. Jackson and the main entrance to McEntire Air
4 National Guard Base. Adding the traffic that would come from a subdivisions would
5 create a major and safety problem for all residents of the area that Richland County will
6 be forced to address before the first house is sold. Bottom line, we can only ask of the
7 Planning Commission that the Members seriously consider what problems changing this
8 zoning would create for the residents of the area and for the Lower Richland
9 community. Placing a subdivision of medium and high density homes in a rural area
10 without the infrastructure required to support it is, in our opinion, ridiculous. We
11 respectfully ask that this rezoning request be denied. Please contact us directly if you
12 require further input or would like to discuss. Regards, Terry and Debbie Wells, 519
13 Penn Road. Dear Planning Commission Members, I am urging you to deny the
14 proposed rezoning change for this property on Ridge Road for the following reasons:
15 One, the infrastructure of the area will not support such a drastic increase in population
16 density, specifically. Two, the roads are two-lane and Ridge Road is a winding road with
17 short visibility ranges. Three, there is no water or sewer system. Installing many septic
18 tanks would jeopardize the quality of the well water we use. Four, the public schools in
19 the area are not designed to absorb the increased population. Five, there is no public
20 transportation in the area. Six, allowing this change will greatly jeopardize the viability of
21 McEntire Joint National Guard Base which currently employs 2350+ people and brings
22 \$180 million into Richland County annually. Department of Defense's base realignment
23 and closure committees consider housing developments near military installations to be

1 a critical factor in selecting installations to close. Also, please review the Joint Land Use
2 Study of November 2009 that covers this part of Richland County. This study was
3 conducted jointly by the Central Midlands Council of Governments, City of Columbia,
4 City of Forest Acres, Kershaw County, Richland County, Ft. Jackson, McCrady Training
5 Center and McEntire Joint National Guard Base, and contains pertinent
6 recommendations for land use in this area. Please take these important factors into
7 consideration when making your decision and keep this property zoned Rural.

8 Respectfully, Retired Colonel Richard W. Noble, 1391 Ridge Road. I am writing to
9 express my concerns for the rezoning of the land on Ridge Road that could bring up to
10 another 1000 homes to our area if approved by the County Council. I have lived in the
11 area for over 16 years and enjoy the rural landscape, peace and open spaces. We
12 purposefully chose this area because it afforded us the large lot size of at least one acre
13 between housing. And as someone who has lived in the Northeast area of Clemson
14 Road, it was critical when house hunting that we selected an area that was a direct
15 opposite of the congested areas of the Northeast that we were leaving. We found that
16 here and now our way of life is being challenged by developers who would like to
17 transform this area into a high to mid density development. Please be clear, I am not
18 opposed to development. I believe everyone should have the right to own land or
19 property and to raise their families in a safe area with access to good schools,
20 shopping, recreation and entertainment. With that being said, I do not believe that
21 overwhelming our current two-lane road access, Ridge Road, would be in the best
22 interest of our current community. We currently have adequate schools which are either
23 at or over capacity as well as roads that lack sidewalks and bus access. To insert

1 residents into an area that cannot support the amenities would be a disaster. My
2 questions to you as well as the developer are: will you provide green space, will you
3 install sidewalks, will this be a community that you personally want to butt up to your
4 rural property? In closing, I add that I am extremely disappointed that the previous land
5 use proposal of 2006 has not been implemented or followed as this is not the first nor
6 last objection to the development of the aforementioned property. I am also
7 disappointed that our local representation on this matter has not factored in what the
8 community wants but rather seems to focus on the developer's interests. Sincerely,
9 Wyleen Gaither, 101 San Carlos Court, Hopkins, South Carolina. As an adjacent
10 landowner and resident of this area I need to express my concerns about the rezoning
11 in this case. Following is a list of facts I think should be considered: disruption of large
12 wooded area, incomplete use of existing housing development areas, adverse effect on
13 area wildlife, lack of existing essential services, proposed density of housing not similar
14 to area properties, increased risk of flooding and erosion due to natural flow disruption.
15 Steven [inaudible], 4624 Old Leesburg Road, Hopkins, South Carolina. Tommy, I'll turn
16 this back over to you at this time.

17 MR. DELAGE: Yes, sir. Alright, Dear Chairman Gilchrist and Board Members,
18 Don't be emotional. This is the rule for a business letter and I am painfully aware that
19 this is a business situation. It would be dishonest in pretending that this is not a heartfelt
20 letter. This is my home, the land we moved to 30 years ago to raise our family, where
21 we see deer almost daily, fish in the pond and we just saw our first pair of painted
22 buntings. These are the woods where my son found an incredible piece of ancient
23 pottery and last weekend we found an extraordinary arrowhead. This area still has

1 history lessons to teach us if we allow it. Cedar Creek and the surrounding watershed
2 area feeds the Congaree National Park within its champion trees, oxbow lakes and
3 incredible biodiversity. The park exists due to the campaign to stop the exploitation of
4 the area of champion trees, the largest individual tree of its species, they don't grow
5 overnight. If we were not emotional about preserving what is unique and beautiful about
6 our community, what kind of people would we be? I can't imagine not caring about how
7 my actions impact other people, especially something as fundamental as their homes.
8 Profits are not emotional, bank accounts, mortgages and taxes are just numbers. We
9 are more than just numbers, we are families and nature lovers. We are distressed and
10 fearful community members and neighbors. We are average people who made a
11 decision to purchase land and make our homes in rural South Carolina. We are just like
12 you and we count. We are scared that crime will increase; the recent burglary at my
13 home was part of a frequently occurring crime situation that our community is
14 experiencing. We are fearful that it will escalate within heightened density, not know if
15 our quality of life will be honored in the future and not knowing if Winding Path, LLC will
16 be allowed to forever alter the destinies of the residents in this area. I will enjoy today
17 and hope that I have the good fortune in the throw of seeing lightening bugs, hearing
18 whippoorwills or watching the heron fly, looking for a glimpse of a nesting pair of bald
19 eagles, or in which tree the fox squirrels have moved to, and a multitude of other
20 remarkable events that make this place home. Please hear us and let us count for
21 something. Respectfully, Elizabeth [inaudible], Harmon Road, Hopkins, South Carolina.
22 My name is John F. Wogey, and again I apologize for these names, and I live at 108
23 San Carlos Court, Hopkins, South Carolina. I am writing to express concern regarding

1 the request to rezone 1113 Ridge Road, 191 acres, from rural to medium density.
2 Surely you have access to records from 2005 concerning the rezoning of the same
3 parcel. The primary reasons from our residents are articulated in the current petition and
4 I and other community members have signed and forwarded to your attention. I would
5 like to mention four issues not specifically delineated in the petition. The most recent
6 joint claim document by Ft. Jackson and McEntire Air National Guard Base cites
7 increasing population density as a major threat to continuing operations and
8 development of these installations. Within that document the potential population
9 projected for this area by 2035 would be exceeded by this single proposed
10 development. Traffic congestion on Leesburg Road will not be solved by the promised
11 road widening from Lower Richland to I77. Garners Ferry traffic will decant along Ridge
12 Road to improved route closure of Wildcat Road, ease some of the traffic which use
13 east Ridge Road. Currently traffic backs up the length of the exit ramp, leading from I77
14 to South Leesburg Road, which is dangerous and attests to the current volume. This
15 rural area is rich in biological diversity and would be negatively impacted through the
16 loss of habitat compression. I have studied and taught in biological and environmental
17 fields for more than 50 years and would be more than willing to provide the details
18 should you wish. Many of my neighbors moved to this community to escape negative
19 issues associated with crowded suburban development. Sincerely, John F. Wogey. We
20 understand there is a request to change a section of the area from rural designation to
21 medium density. Everyone in this area lives on 2+ acres. We do not wanna see this
22 change. I do not know the people [inaudible] most likely they will not move into the area
23 themselves. Please do not approve this change. Terry and Sharon Edwards, 531 Penn

1 Road, Hopkins, South Carolina. To say that I am disappointed in your approval for the
2 property to be rezoned as a rural medium density is an understatement. This area
3 simply cannot support the additional 900+ homes as well as the traffic on a two-lane
4 road. I do not understand your acceptance for this growth with all the issues that
5 currently face Richland County, including the improper infrastructure to handle that
6 many additional homes. This is a quiet, rural area. I would hate to see another cookie-
7 cutter crap subdivision with substandard materials while asking ridiculous asking prices
8 pop up without preserving the integrity of the area. I forgot to throw in the equally crappy
9 businesses and apartments I am sure you will approve on this acreage. I am well aware
10 that once you stamp your approval and shake your hands and move on to destroying
11 the next area of Richland County. Margaret Osborne, 1231 Ridge Road, Hopkins, South
12 Carolina. Good afternoon, I am sending this letter in response to the attempt to have the
13 property on Ridge Road in Hopkins rezoned from rural to medium density housing. I
14 have lived on Ridge Road with my wife for 28 years as she has lived here 41 of her 49
15 years. Her grandmother built and ran a nursing home that still stands with her children
16 for over 40 years before she passed. I tell you this to impress upon you how much it
17 means to all of the families that reside here in this community to preserve this peaceful
18 and beautiful neighborhood. The introduction of this type of housing will have a
19 tremendously negative effect in so many ways. Our schools are already overcrowded so
20 how would they handle 900 more families; along with that I couldn't imagine how Ridge
21 Road, Lower Richland Boulevard and Leesburg Road could sustain an additional 2,000
22 to 3,000 cars per day. That would mean huge spikes in traffic accidents and unbearable
23 wear and tear on the already compromised road conditions. The people on the Ridge

1 Road area moved and stayed here so they could get away from crowded streets and
2 neighborhoods further in the city. We greatly value our way of life and we have all
3 worked so hard for it, and I am pleading for you all to please honor the humble request
4 of your constituents and keep this zoning change from happening. I thank you for your
5 time and hopefully you will vote to suppress this request that would inevitably cause
6 considerable harm to a wonderful community. Chris Fletcher, 1646 Ridge Road.

7 MR. PRICE: Tommy, I'll take over now.

8 MR. DELAGE: Alright.

9 MR. PRICE: Alright. I am requesting that you deny the request to rezone this
10 property from rural to any other zoning specification. This area is not suitable for the
11 type of development that would be allowed under any type of zoning other than rural.
12 The infrastructure as a whole cannot support it. This area has always seen tremendous
13 growth recently. Farmland and wooded areas have been wiped clean. With the new
14 neighborhoods built off of Lower Richland Boulevard and Highway 378 recently, the
15 Lower Richland ecosystem and wildlife have already suffered enough. The Ridge Road
16 property is within the upper Cedar Creek watershed. The watershed cuts across it. This
17 is one of a few creeks supplying the Congaree National Park. Putting a sizable
18 neighborhood on top or through this watershed will significantly impact this valuable
19 resource. It also feeds a number of private ponds and provides well water to area
20 residents. We do not want city water as an alternative as we do not want to be annexed
21 into the City of Columbia. This land also has two forested wetland areas that do not
22 need to be disturbed. The more disturbance within the watershed and wetlands, the
23 greater the negative impact. The property is directly in the middle of the military's Joint

1 Land Use agreement between McEntire and Ft. Jackson. Developing this land would be
2 detrimental to military operations resulting in potential base closure of McEntire with an
3 annual revenue loss of \$180 million per year. Continued development would affect flight
4 plans, crash zones and transportation issues for those two bases. Since the County is
5 currently in the middle of a development code assessment to change the zoning
6 districts, any current zoning requests that have a moderate to severe effect on the
7 surrounding area need to be postponed until the new zoning designations are in place.
8 Likewise, due to Covid-19, any moderate to severe rezoning requests need to be
9 postponed until the communities impacted are permitted to attend meetings and
10 hearings in person instead of us voicing our concerns by letter and watching via
11 YouTube. We have a large number of elderly in our area that do not have the means of
12 sending emails and letters and using YouTube so our community is losing a very
13 valuable voice. Thank you for your time in reviewing our concerns. Cynthia Harrelson,
14 1317 Lower Richland Boulevard. I object to the rezoning of the property on Ridge Road.
15 I did not move to Clearview Drive and pay the price I paid for a home to end up being in
16 the middle of a subdivision. Matter of fact, that's why we moved to Clearview, all homes
17 were on two to four acres. K. Brown. Richland County Planning Commission, we are
18 Willie and Jennifer Sanders. We live at 1133 Ridge Road with our 13 year old daughter,
19 Rachel Sanders. The property is next door to us. My husband along with many others
20 on Ridge Road use our surroundings as a therapeutic remedy to symptoms of PTSD.
21 The quiet, picturesque beauty of this rural area is medicinal. He and others have served
22 their country and deserve a community that will serve them by providing a quiet place to
23 heal from a career of military service. Number two, the Southeast Neighborhood Master

1 Plan is specific to District 11 and took more than one year to develop at a cost of over
2 \$300,000 dollars. The plan is set to develop the one mile radius located at the
3 intersection of Garners Ferry Road and Lower Richland Boulevard. It is a contract that
4 Richland County developed with its citizens. Please honor our agreement. It proposes a
5 threat to base closure of McEntire Joint National Guard Base. McEntire generates \$180
6 million dollars each year. It needs to maintain a crash zone of a five mile radius for the
7 F16 jets which land there daily. McEntire is on the base realignment and closure list for
8 possible for base closures and any growth changing the rural character in the area
9 would increase the chances of base closure. We have invested a lot into our home and
10 land. Please reject the rezoning request. Thank you, Willie and Jennifer Sanders.

11 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Mr. Price?

12 MR. PRICE: Yes?

13 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Let me just interrupt you here for a just a second. We
14 certainly appreciate all those comments and I wanted to give you and Mr. DeLage a
15 break to pause for just a moment to see if any of the Commissioners have any
16 comments at this time regarding the letters. I appreciate you reading them, I'm actually
17 following along and I've read through the remaining letters that are also oppositional to
18 this particular map amendment. So I just wanna take a quick moment to pause to see if
19 there were any Commissioners that had anything to comment on, any comments on any
20 of the letters or the case thus far.

21 MS. FRIERSON: Chairman, this is Beverly Frierson, can you hear me?

22 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes, Ms. Frierson.

1 MS. FRIERSON: I have read that which we were sent and I listened to that which
2 was read and I know you're trying to be fair, especially in light of the fact that people are
3 not there in person to voice their approval or opposition. But I personally feel that we've
4 heard enough now to make an informed decision.

5 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, Ms. Frierson. Are there any other additional
6 comments on that?

7 MR. DENNIS: I actually have one myself. You know, I'm looking through this and
8 I've heard everything going and everything that they've referenced going back, when I
9 look at the Comprehensive Plan dated 17 March 2015, putting the pieces together, this
10 area actually falls within the neighborhood, medium density area. Granted it's already
11 zoned rural, but it looks to me like a lotta the people might have had outdated
12 information and they keep saying 'their agreement'. From what I understand is this area
13 was picked for this type of growth. And I understand their concerns and all that, but as a
14 Planning Commissioner, you know, we have to listen to them and we try to be as fair
15 and just as we can. However, we're also bound and held by our Comprehensive Plan
16 for the future, and to me it's looking like the Staff agreeing to approve this, I understand
17 why they are. I mean, and they've given a lotta good instances not to approve it, but
18 when you look at the roads at 8600 capacities but the average is 1500 a day on Ridge
19 Run, you know, everything that we have in the traffic characteristics and the community
20 master plan is pointing for our growth in Richland County to allow this type of
21 community. And I wholeheartedly believe in landowners' rights, but in cases like this
22 they still have their rights to their area but somebody else that has bought something,
23 bought a tract of land in an area that is planned for development up to, from – my color

1 code says medium density neighborhood – I think that, you know, we've had enough
2 opposition to know that the surrounding people do not want it, but however, the County
3 adopted this Comprehensive Plan, like I said on March 17th of 2015, and you know, as a
4 Planning Commissioner we have to go by our Comprehensive Plan.

5 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, Mr. Dennis. Mr. Price, I do have a question.
6 I think earlier Mr.DeLage mentioned that after reaching out to Ft. Jackson they didn't
7 have any comments but they were concerned about it, is that a right characterization of
8 what was said during that exchange?

9 MR. PRICE: Yes, sir. Based on the email that we received they do have some
10 concerns with the development itself. However, our contact with the base says he
11 needs to run it up the chain to get some additional comments from I guess the higher
12 ups. And once he receives that he will provide that information to Staff and we hope to
13 have that in time for the zoning public hearing meeting.

14 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: But he never gave any indication on what those
15 concerns might be.

16 MR. PRICE: No, sir. Mr. DeLage, are you aware of any?

17 MR. DELAGE: No, sir, he was not specific per the email, just that they were
18 concerned with the proposed rezoning request.

19 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, what about McEntire, anything from McEntire?

20 MR. DELAGE: We did not include McEntire as they are outside of the 3000'
21 buffer in their installation.

22 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Very good, okay thank you. Any additional comments
23 from Commissioners?

1 MR. BRANHAM: Mr. Chair?

2 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes sir, Mr. Branham?

3 MR. BRANHAM: I would just offer, again for the group and for the public who
4 might be listening, under our Commission's Rules of Procedure, specifically §10, part D,
5 it says, The Chairman shall have the right to limit discussion on any agenda item except
6 that reasonable opportunity should be provided to all wishing to speak, and that
7 redundant comments should be minimized. So I wonder if Staff is in a position to advise
8 the Chair after their review of the written submissions, whether there's any new or novel
9 contributions that ought to be read or whether the Chair ought to consider ending the
10 public participation portion at this time.

11 MR. PRICE: I don't want you to make any determination on whether, you know,
12 you want to hear any of the remaining comments. However, our review of all of the
13 comments, including those that are remaining, most of their concerns are pretty similar
14 to what you've heard, you know, regarding traffic, the density, the character of the area,
15 the concerns for the military base, and the concerns with the Congaree National
16 swamp. You know, those are pretty consistent with the comments that you've heard
17 before.

18 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Mr. Branham, thank you for those comments. I have
19 actually been following along with the Staff and I concur that the remaining comments
20 on the information are very similar to some of the information we have already received.
21 So with that –

22 MS. CAIRNS: I'll try and [inaudible] just a little bit. I also think, I mean, what's
23 interesting listening to all the comments is I do look forward to the day that we have a

1 zoning classification where somebody who truly wants to live out in the middle of
2 nowhere can have some reasonable assurance that's outside of a fundamental change
3 in a neighborhood the property doesn't become subdivided, cause even if it stayed rural
4 it could have, you know, $\frac{3}{4}$ acre lots. And so, you know, that's very suburban in feel. But
5 I do think that, you know - sorry about the phone, there's another one in here - the
6 Comp Plan does matter. I mean, we do have authority and ability to contradict the
7 Comp Plan and contradict Staff recommendation, you know, if we have reasons that
8 make sense to do so. And I just think that this is one of those situations where, you
9 know, for many years this area has been seen as an area for growth; I think it's
10 unfortunate that the public, you know, that somehow, you know, between the maps and
11 all that we have that didn't recognize this isn't an area that's been recognized as a
12 transitional density, you know, our package indicates that it will be serviced by City of
13 Columbia water and sewer so there's not gonna be any threat to the septic systems and
14 wells out there with what's going on with this level of density. So, I mean, if I'm wrong
15 correct me in a heartbeat, but - so I mean, basically what I hear is that we'll be nice,
16 and I think that part of our new plan is to have somewhere that can be zoned in a
17 manner that it's reasonable to expect that it won't be anything but large lots.

18 MR. GRADY: So if I could just jump in in response to Commissioner Dennis'
19 comments earlier.

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes sir, Mr. Grady.

21 MR. GRADY: So I was also, of course, reviewing the Comprehensive Plan and
22 the description of a medium density [inaudible] which as he says is the current
23 designation. There are a lot of components and sort of requirements of what would go

1 into a medium density area that are not met, and so I, you know, I kind of wanna get a
2 feel and I actually drove out there on Sunday, honestly, to get a feel of what this
3 community is like. And particularly if you look at the transportation section, you know,
4 first off in the guidance it says that there's not a currently scheduled upgrade for the
5 roadways in the area. And it says, upgrades to arterial and collector roads should
6 include the 4H Transportation Office's driving and transit, walking and biking. Given the
7 currently land use pattern, that's simply not going to be viable in an area that far out.
8 There's no, as several have commented there's no public transit access, there's limited,
9 there's simply zero walking and biking infrastructure and even if there was it's unclear
10 what would be within a reasonable walking distance. As I noted earlier it seemed as
11 though reading the Lower Richland plan that it was based on this concept that the
12 Garners Ferry/Lower Richland area would be redeveloped at a higher density with a
13 variety of uses and that there would be the idea that this would be sort of a suburban
14 area in service of that node, which more or less did not get developed as originally
15 envisioned in the plan. So I feel like while that is the Comprehensive Plan designation
16 for the area, the sort of development that would take place if this zoning change went
17 through does not seem to be in line with the vision of a medium density neighborhood is
18 as articulated in the plan. And I guess my question for Staff would be, was that part of
19 the decision to recommend approval of this change, and if so how was that weighed
20 against other factors?

21 MR. PRICE: Mr. Grady, just to answer your question, so I want to make sure I'm
22 understanding. You're asking what factors Staff used to make our recommendation?

1 MR. GRADY: Right. So there was a lot of emphasis on, well it's, essentially the
2 argument that Mr. Dennis made, that if, well it's medium density neighborhood on the
3 Comprehensive Plan, therefore this is an appropriate land use; whereas, the actual
4 description of what a medium density neighborhood is would require substantial sort of
5 infrastructure upgrades, transportation upgrades, as well as a more balanced land use
6 in the immediate area, whereas immediate is largely low density residential, not in the
7 technical zoning sense but in the broad descriptive sense, with limited amenities, limited
8 employment opportunities, things of that sort. So how much of it is based on the color
9 on the map and how much of it is based on what the current condition of the area is?

10 MR. PRICE: Well, when Staff is preparing their report to send to the Planning
11 Commission Members and also County Council and also for the public to read, our
12 determination on whether a request – and I'm, don't know if I wanna use that term
13 determination – our recommendation for approval or denial is just based on what was
14 found within the Comprehensive Plan. So in these cases we look that the request lies
15 within the area that was designated for a certain zoning designation and growth
16 according to our Comprehensive Plan. So our recommendations are just based solely
17 on that. We don't really get into necessarily the infrastructure or whether it can be
18 served, those things typically come about during discussions with the Planning
19 Commission and then ultimately County Council.

20 MR. GRADY: Okay, that's helpful. Thank you.

21 MR. PRICE: And also, maybe I wanna chime in on one bit of information that just
22 kinda came to us. This area I think was, is designated to be served by the City of
23 Columbia, however our Richland County Utilities Department has reached out to me

1 and notified me that through some agreement with the City, that this area will be served
2 by the Richland County Utilities as opposed to the City of Columbia.

3 MR. BRANHAM: Mr. Chair?

4 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes sir, Mr. Branham?

5 MR. BRANHAM: It seems as though we've moved to the debate and discussion
6 portion of the case, and I just wanted to share some thoughts that I had. So I happen to
7 have grown up in this area and so Ridge Road, for anyone who hasn't been there, it's a
8 pretty windy road and it's got a lotta changes in elevation as well. That's a real pretty
9 place. But the scale and the scope of the proposed rezoning along with the density that
10 would be there, it's an interesting thought to think of adding 1000 dwelling units, maybe
11 2000 cars onto Ridge Road, you know, maybe 3000 residents or something like that if
12 those numbers all followed through. That's a pretty major project for Ridge Road. From
13 what I could see there were no lots on Ridge Road or in a neighborhood fronting Ridge
14 Road that were any smaller than one acre. These would be, I think it was 8500 square
15 feet lots or something like that. And, you know, it's [inaudible] to look at this as a
16 transitional area. I looked at page 20 on that community master plan for Lower Richland
17 and, you know, that transition areas, some of the nodes there include that it should
18 promote development that's respectful of existing neighborhoods as well as natural,
19 agricultural and historic resources. If we vote to rezone this we vote to license, like a
20 fundamental change to the character of Ridge Road. I know there's some higher density
21 developments that are very near the subject tract but they front other roads. And I think
22 maybe up until, up to present time Lower Richland Boulevard looks like something of an
23 informal line of demarcation for this transitional area where there is a good bit of density

1 up to Lower Richland Boulevard. But then to the east of it, which this tract is and which
2 Ridge Road is, it's a very different nature. And I know that population growth is
3 occurring and development is continuing to occur, but I would express concern that just
4 a scale of potentially having an additional 1000 houses on that small winding kind of
5 rural road there. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Thank you, Mr. Branham. Any additional comments on
7 this case? We are in the discussion phase now and thank everybody for their
8 comments. So are there any additional comments? Anybody wanna make a motion on
9 this case? I just wanna comment, piggyback on what Branham just said. In proximity to
10 Ft. Jackson, I guess I'm a little concerned as to why they just indicated that they were
11 concerned but didn't express what that meant with regard to this particular
12 development. And also just a point of interest, how far away from the entrances of Ft.
13 Jackson is this particular property? I have a difficult time trying to see this on my stuff,
14 my computer here. But Tommy, can you look at that for me?

15 MR. DELAGE: Yes, sir. Give me one second to open this up.

16 MR. PRICE: Are you concerned with as the crow flies or you want actually the
17 normal vehicular pattern?

18 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Are you asking me that?

19 MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Whatever, it doesn't matter.

21 MR. PRICE: Makes a difference just to let you know.

22 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yeah. I just wanna know how far it is, that's all I care
23 about.

1 MR. DELAGE: So based on this, so that entrance is roughly 4741'. Let me zoom
2 in, I wanna make sure – and that's probably more realistically the main entrance in here
3 and, there we go. There you're looking at roughly almost 9000', 8853' is what it's
4 coming up as. As the crow flies.

5 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Got it.

6 MR. YONKE: This is Chris, can I ask a question?

7 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes sir, Mr. Yonke, go right ahead.

8 MR. YONKE: On Richland Maps are we able to look at the JCUB layers? The
9 Joint Accountability Use of the military uses? It extends just past just the entrances, it's
10 more on the boundary. There's, you know, training and noises that happen on base that
11 our military would like to be able to continue to use, you know, and they'd like to
12 continue to train there. And as we build a subdivision like this of this density, you know,
13 that's a concern that we've heard from a lot of the citizens. There's also, speaking for
14 McEntire, there's flight paths that come near this area so that might also limit some
15 training as well. I live on this side of town and Ridge Road is very scenic, just to
16 piggyback again on Mr. Branham, there are changes in topology and the houses are
17 pretty spaced apart. Those are my findings in researching this, that's all I have for right
18 now.

19 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, thank you, Mr. Yonke. Any additional comments,
20 Commissioners? Are there any motions on this particular case? Any comments, any
21 motions?

22 MR. BRANHAM: Mr. Chair, I'll make a motion to send this to the Council with a
23 recommendation of denial.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. And Mr. Branham, since that would be a motion
2 against the Staff recommendation, you would need to give a reason as why we would
3 go against that recommendation from Staff.

4 MR. BRANHAM: So there's four main factors that we're supposed to look at as a
5 Commission under §26-52 of the Richland County Code of Ordinances and so the need
6 and justification for the change, I didn't hear anything compelling, that's first. The
7 second, the effect on the property and any surrounding properties, substantial
8 significant change, to me that's perhaps one of the most compelling factors; the traffic,
9 the potential explosion to the population, the impact on the road, and the change to the
10 fundamental nature of the immediate area. Number three, the amount of land in the
11 general area having the same district classification. I mean, that is as has been
12 described, there are a couple of areas with a higher residential density but there are
13 many, many others with a lower density. And then as far as the relationship to the
14 purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, again I think there's been a lotta good discussion
15 about the fact that this is identified as a transition area, medium density area, and what
16 that really means and some of the factors that ought to be considered, including that
17 respect to the existing neighborhoods. I feel like this would be a fundamental change to
18 the character of that area, to the existing neighborhoods. It would be, would not be in
19 line with the character of the surrounding area. So that's the basis for my motion.

20 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Is there a second?

21 MR. YONKE: Second.

22 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Discussion, any additional discussion? Ms. Cairns?

1 MS. CAIRNS: I just think it's interesting cause I sort of listening to Mr. Branham's
2 justification of going against Staff, I think that those justifications could basically be used
3 any time we're looking at converting farmland to development. And or, you know, open
4 space to development, this isn't farmland, I'm overstating a little bit. But I mean, you
5 know, we are a community that experiences growth, I like to see infill, true infill, not
6 supposed infill, you know, this eating up of landscape is not something that I support as
7 a fundamental premise. But I just think it's interesting cause I think if you, you could take
8 that logic and extend it to basically say we could almost never rezone anything that had
9 rural around it, so.

10 MR. BRANHAM: Could I –

11 MS. CAIRNS: I'm not trying to be difficult, but –

12 MR. BRANHAM: No, I understand completely. If I could just respond. I do think
13 it's a matter of degrees here and so 200 acres at the proposed density, again being
14 about 1000 dwelling units with one ingress and egress onto that two-lane road, to me
15 it's a matter of degrees, so that's quite an extreme change. So certainly not anti-
16 development in principal just a matter of degrees there.

17 MS. CAIRNS: I mean, it's just interesting though that sometimes the large tracts
18 let you accomplish, I mean, if you look at the development just north and slightly east,
19 you know, where that's a very dense development that there's an enormous amount of
20 land, I believe that's preserved to open. Maybe it's just future, but I don't know, I guess I
21 don't know what that extra land left over around that [inaudible] so I shouldn't speak to it
22 cause I really don't know what its status is. But, I don't know.

23 MR. BRANHAM: No, good conversation in my opinion.

1 MS. CAIRNS: I mean, I can totally see, I can totally appreciate the different, the
2 disgust in essence of people who want to live in, you know, semi-rural and rural type
3 environments when something like this shows up. And I think that the single access
4 onto this road is an issue, I agree with that, so. But sometimes you have to be bold, I'm
5 not sure this is the right time to be bold, I don't know.

6 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Any additional comments?

7 MR. TAYLOR: I also think – I'm sorry, this is, may I speak, sir?

8 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Who's this?

9 MR. TAYLOR: This is Terry.

10 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Oh, Mr. Taylor, go on ahead, absolutely.

11 MR. TAYLOR: Yeah, and I agree with what's been said thus far but with the
12 additional pieces of the military I don't think everyone's gonna be this close to the
13 military installations, as well as for that area, the overcrowding of the schools. It just
14 seems like the infrastructure's not there for a move like this as well, would be my
15 opinion.

16 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, thank you sir. Any additional comments? This
17 case has been moved and properly seconded to send forward to Council with a
18 recommendation of disapproval based upon the recommendations of Commissioner
19 Branham. Are we ready for a vote?

20 MS. FRIERSON: Ready.

21 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: All in favor signify by roll call vote.

22 MR. PRICE: Okay. Branham.

23 MR. BRANHAM: Aye.

1 MR. PRICE: Grady.

2 MR. GRADY: Aye.

3 MR. PRICE: Yonke.

4 MR. YONKE: Aye.

5 MR. PRICE: Carlisle.

6 MR. CARLISLE: Aye.

7 MR. PRICE: Cairns.

8 MS. CAIRNS: I'm gonna say no.

9 MR. PRICE: Dennis.

10 MR. DENNIS: Nay.

11 MR. PRICE: Gilchrist.

12 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: No. We have Ms. Frierson.

13 MR. PRICE: Okay, I'm sorry.

14 MS. FRIERSON: Nay.

15 MR. PRICE: Excuse me, Mr. Taylor?

16 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.

17 MR. PRICE: Okay. Just wanted to make sure I have this correct. So the motion
18 was for denial.

19 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Correct.

20 MR. PRICE: Okay. If you don't mind I would like to do that roll call again. Just
21 wanna make sure. So the motion is for denial. Mr. Branham.

22 MR. BRANHAM: So I vote aye, in favor of denial.

23 MR. PRICE: Grady.

1 MR. GRADY: Correct, aye, in favor of denial, yes.

2 MR. PRICE: Yonke.

3 MR. YONKE: Aye, in favor of denial.

4 MR. PRICE: Carlisle.

5 MR. CARLISLE: I am in favor of denial.

6 MR. PRICE: Cairns.

7 MS. CAIRNS: No.

8 MR. PRICE: You're against it. Dennis.

9 MR. DENNIS: No.

10 MR. PRICE: Gilchrist.

11 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: No.

12 MR. PRICE: Frierson.

13 MS. FRIERSON: Nay.

14 MR. PRICE: You're voting against the motion?

15 MS. FRIERSON: I am voting against the motion and in support of the Staff
16 recommendation.

17 MR. PRICE: Okay. Mr. Taylor?

18 MR. TAYLOR: Aye.

19 MR. PRICE: You're voting for the motion?

20 MR. TAYLOR: Correct.

21 *[Approved to Deny: Branham, Grady, Yonke, Carlisle, Taylor; Opposed: Cairns, Dennis,*
22 *Gilchrist, Frierson]*

23 MR. PRICE: Okay. With that, the motion passes 5/4.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. And again, for those that are listening, we are a
2 recommending Body to County Council. They will meet on July the 28th, Mr. Price will
3 that be a Zoom call as well?

4 MR. PRICE: Yes, sir. It will. And also I would just like to, you know, for those who
5 are listening and those who submitted comments, those comments will also be provided
6 to County Council in advance of the meeting so they won't have to necessarily submit
7 additional comments for this particular request.

8 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, great. Alright, thank you very much. I think that
9 is all that we have on the Agenda with regard to map amendments. The next item on
10 the Agenda is Other Business. Action.

11 MR. PRICE: We don't have any Other Business at this time. Mr. DeLage, do you
12 have any comments about the Land Development Code rewrite?

13 MR. DELAGE: Yes, sir. Thank you. Just real briefly, you know, we're still in the
14 process of the public review of the combined modules, so module 1 that came out in
15 2019 and then the second module that came out, of course, earlier this year. So we're
16 continuing to receive input and work with our [inaudible] as well so we can make sure
17 that we get a refined version that will be ready to go, hopefully to County Council and to
18 y'all sometime in the fall. So I just wanted to bring that up and, of course, as we get
19 closer to that in the fall we, based off of some of that suggested input that is valid,
20 meaning that, you know, we found that either there's issues or something needed to be
21 tweaked based on guidance or that input, we'll make sure to bring that to you and
22 highlight those as well.

1 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Mr. DeLage, just a quick comment on that. So, and
2 thank all of you for the great work that you've been doing. Am I to assume that we're
3 gonna have something to present to the public in early 2021? As an official document?

4 MR. DELAGE: If adopted we're hoping to actually have that this fall. Mainly what
5 we're doing now is some of those suggested changes that have come through from
6 stakeholders [inaudible] little things have been found that need to be tweaked or
7 potentially modified, we're in the process of doing that at the same time, so we'll bring it
8 back before you before we officially bring it back before you for potential adoption. That
9 way y'all can take a look at it, see what those changes are, we can have some
10 discussion about those changes and then probably at the next session, your regularly
11 scheduled session, at that point we would then bring it for, as an official document. But
12 some of this stuff, you know, potential just depending upon some of the input that we
13 receive, you know, this month. But that's our timeline so you should be seeing it sooner
14 rather than later.

15 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, great. Alright, Chairman's Report. I just wanna
16 thank again the Staff for organizing our Zoom calls and appreciate what you've been
17 doing to help us in that regard. Don't know when we'll have an opportunity to be live
18 again in the County facilities but we will follow the lead of County Council and the
19 County in that regard. And so I don't have much on a report today except for to thank
20 the County Staff for making sure that we're still able to conduct our business. Planning
21 Director's Report.

1 PLANNING DIRECTOR: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't have anything additional
2 other than the results from the last zoning public hearing which you can find on page 17
3 of your report.

4 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, great. Well, if there's nothing else.

5 MR. PRICE: Mr. Chair?

6 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Yes.

7 MR. PRICE: Prior to you leaving, I think you're correct, we don't know when
8 we're gonna have an in-person meeting any time in the near future. So as such, and
9 something that we've touched on on and off over the past couple of years and I think
10 this would be an opportune time for Staff to, since we will not be meeting in August, we
11 don't have any cases in August, we follow the lead of Council for the month, but what
12 we will do as a Staff, we're gonna work on the Rules of Procedure and see if we can try
13 to incorporate, you know, this new normal we have of Zoom meetings on how we want
14 to handle this, especially as we deal with the public, just wanna update our rules. And
15 so what we will do is we'll try to work on those and then send them to you prior to a
16 September meeting, and if y'all don't mind if you can make any comments or
17 recommendations based on those and then we can try to formulate that into a, you
18 know, a document for you for the September meeting.

19 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay. No, that'd be great. We will look forward to that.
20 Is that it, Mr. Price?

21 MR. PRICE: That is it.

22 CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Okay, I'll accept a motion to adjourn.

23 MR. GRADY: I'll make a motion.

1
2

CHAIRMAN GILCHRIST: Alright, thank you. Everybody have a great one.

[Meeting adjourned]