



**GADSDEN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, February 11, 2016  
6:00 p.m.**

Board of County Commissioners Chambers  
7 East Jefferson Street  
Quincy, Florida 32351

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**Present:** Commissioner Regina Davis, At - Large Member, Chair  
Commissioner William Chukes  
Commissioner David Tranchand  
Commissioner Dr. Gail Bridges – Bright  
Commissioner Doug Nunamaker  
Commissioner Lori Bouie  
Commissioner John Youmans (arrived late)  
Commissioner Roger Milton, School Board Representative  
David Weiss, County Attorney  
Allara Gutcher, Planning & Community Development Director  
Jill Jeglie, Senior Planner  
Willie Brown, Principal Planner  
Beryl H. Wood, Deputy Clerk

**Absent:**  
Commissioner Gerald McSwain  
Commissioner Edward J. Dixon  
Commissioner Frank Rowan  
Commissioner Marion Lasley

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Davis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with a quorum present. She then led in the pledge of allegiance to the US Flag and asked each person to silence their electronic devices for the duration of the meeting.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Each member present stated his name and district for which he represents and the new member was welcomed Mr. Doug Nunamaker.

3. **APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no amendments to the agenda.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 12, 2015, December 3, 2015, and December 10, 2015**

**NOVEMBER 12, 2015**

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER DR. BRIDGES – BRIGHT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER MILTON, THE COMMISSION VOTED 7 – 0, BY VOICE VOTE, FOR APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 12, 2015 PC MEETING MINUTES.

**DECEMBER 3, 2015**

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER BOUIE AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER MILTON, THE COMMISSION VOTED 7 – 0, BY VOICE VOTE, FOR APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 3, 2015 PC WORKSHOP MINUTES.

**DECEMBER 10, 2015**

UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER TRANCHAND AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER BOUIE, THE COMMISSION VOTED 7 – 0, BY VOICE VOTE, FOR APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 10, 2015 MEETING MINUTES.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

5. **PUBLIC HEARING (Legislative) (LDR-2016-01) – Consideration of text amendments to Chapters 2, 4, 5 and 7 of the Land Development Code to address Solar Power Generation Facilities (solar farms) and Solar Energy Systems.**

Jill Jeglie, Principal Planner, gave the review and the recommendation of amendment to the Gadsden County Land Development Code (LDC) to address 'Solar Power Generating Facilities' (solar farms) and 'Solar Energy Systems'. She said this item was heard at a Planning Commission public hearing on September 17, 2015 and a public workshop on December 3, 2015 to discuss amendments to LDC to address solar power generation facilities (SPGF) and solar energy systems (SES).

At that workshop Planning Commissioners would send any comments they wanted incorporated to staff and staff would provide them to all the Planning Commissioners. She said they did receive two sets of comments and they are provided as attachments to the agenda report. They also discussed the solar energy systems. One of the proposed amendments in front includes one major change and that was: At the

workshop they had the discussion that we should not regulate the solar energy systems. Those are the systems that would be on houses and businesses and that we would concentrate on the solar power facilities. We did remove the section of the Code we purposed amending with the exception of some language included that references the Florida Statutes and basically states that nothing in our regulations would prohibit and have the affect of the installation of solar energy systems. The majority of the amendments you have in front of you pertain to the solar power generation of solar farms. I did include a table that is a part of attachment 1: A table that changes as proposed to the Code. At the meeting there was discussion of possibly changing and increasing the setbacks. She mentioned there was also discussion regarding height. She stated she had not made any changes to those sections.

Chair Davis had concerns on the table. She said with there being comments from Starting with Table 1 popularity.

Ms. Jeglie led the discussion and went through tables starting with Table 1. Solar Energy Generating Facilities – Existing & Proposed Code Review. In the Recommendations column is where you will see recommendations.

Table 1. Solar Energy Generating Facilities – Existing & Proposed Code Review			
	Existing	Proposed	Recommendations – PC from meeting
Definitions, Add Solar related (Sub. 2102)	None	Solar Access, Solar Collector, Solar Energy System, Solar Farm, Solar Power Generation Facility	No additional comments - recommendations
Future Land Use District (Sub. 4103, 4700 & Tables)	None	AG -2 (10+ acres) AG -3 (20+ acres)	No additional comments - recommendations
Setbacks (Table 5203.3.4 & Sub. 5204.D.2.a.)	None	50+feet from all property lines (Front, rear, side). 100+ feet from right -of - ways	No additional comments - recommendations
Height (sub. 5204.D.2.d)	None	Ground mounted facilities conform to principal structure height requirements for AG-2 or AG-3.	No additional comments - recommendations
Fences (Sub. 5204.D.2.d)	None	6'ft. minimum security fence enclosing ground mounted facilities interior to buffers and setbacks.	No additional comments - recommendations

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On-site power lines & interconnections (Sub. 5204.D.2.e)	None	Required to be underground	No additional comments- recommendations
Minimum Site Size (Sub. 5204.D.2.f)		Required to be underground	No additional comments - recommendations
Reflection Angles (Sub. 5204.D.2.g)	None	Require reflectors not to direct glare onto residential area. (This may not be an issue based on discussion with Mr. Chentnik.)	No additional comments - recommendations
Abandonment (Sub. 5204.D.3)	None	After 2 years without energy production	No additional comments - recommendations
<b>Buffer Requirements (Sub. 5204.D.2c &amp;5302.4)</b>			
Width & Opacity	None  Existing Buffers Type A- 50' to separate industrial from residential uses. Opaque from the ground up at least 6' in height. Type B- 25" to separate commercial, light industrial, & public uses from residential uses. Opaque from the ground up to at least 6' in height.	Type D – Fifty feet (50') minimum between solar power generation facilities & adjacent property in the Rural Residential Future Land Use category and existing platted residential subdivisions.  A minimum of one hundred feet (100') wide adjacent to collector or arterial roadways.	No additional comments - recommendations
Buffer Materials	Solar – None. May utilize a masonry wall, berm, planted or existing vegetation or any combination thereof which maintains a completely opaque buffer. If vegetation is to be used, then a seventy percent (70%) opaque buffer shall be required at planting, and be	Type D- Vegetation is required to be seventy percent (70%) opaque at planting and a minimum of six feet (6') in height and one hundred (100) percent opaque within two (2) years. Fences or walls may be utilized to meet opacity provided that they are a minimum	No additional comments - recommendations

	capable of full height and opacity within three years.	of six (60 feet in height, opaque and located interior to vegetation. Vegetation is required to be fifty (50) percent opaque at planting and a minimum of six (6') feet in height within two (2) years.	
<b>Solar Energy Systems</b>			
none	None – Statutory Reference added.	Nothing in this regulation is meant to prohibit or have the effect of expressly prohibiting the installation of solar energy systems pursuant to Chapter 163.04 (4) Florida Statutes.	No additional comments - recommendations

**Commissioner Dialogue**

*The chart that is provided in the last column shows the final result of each of the definitions.*

**Table 1.**

**Definitions** - No additional comments.

Commissioner Nunamaker confirmed they were only discussing the solar farms and related issues.

**Setbacks** - No additional comments.

**Height** – No additional comments.

Commissioner Bouie mentioned her concerns with the terminology of home heights.

Ms. Jeglie stated that this was only for solar farms not residential.

Commissioner Nunamaker asked was there public concern with the height.

Ms. Jeglie said no, they did have consultant come and speak on the height, and he felt it was ok.

**Fences** – No additional comments.

**On-site power lines** – No additional comments.

**Minimum Site Size** – No additional comments.

**Reflection Angels** – No additional comments.

**Abandonment** – No additional comments.

Commissioner Youman asked what happens if they don't remove in required time.

Ms. Jeglie said that would be a matter of Code Enforcement.

**Buffer requirements**

Commissioner Nunamaker asked would this be a natural buffer or planted buffer.

Ms. Jeglie commented that it would have to reach a capacity standard, so if there isn't enough natural vegetation, they would have to do plantings.

Ms. Jeglie commented on the buffer. She said it should be 70% opaque and 6ft in height with 100% opaque in 2 years. The buffer standards also include a tree every 50ft; it's a certain height standard tree.

Commissioner Chukes asked was there a concern with two-story houses concerning buffers.

Chair Davis commented that discussion took place in residential and this is only solar farms.

Ms. Jeglie added that Commissioner Lasley was also concerned with farms. She said one thing she could add was looking at the buffers now for industrial uses, which are as intense if not more, buffer is 50 ft adjacent to residential.

**Solar Energy Systems** – statutory language – no comments.

Chair Davis asked for public comment and there was none.

Ms. Jeglie commented in subsection 4103 page 2, the first paragraph where you come to the underline, where it says solar power generated facilities. Make an amendment

where they will allow Ag 2 and Ag 3 on attachment 2 first: add solar power generate facilities are also a permanent use in Ag2 and Ag3.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER DR. BRIDGES – BRIGHT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER TRANCHAND, THE COMMISSION VOTED 8 – 0, BY VOICE VOTE, TO ACCEPT THE SOLAR ENERGY GENERATING FACILITIES WITH THE AMENDMENTS TO SUBSECTION 4103 BY ADDING SOLAR POWER GENERATE FACILITIES ARE ALSO A PERMANENT USE IN AG 2 AND AG 3.**

6. **PUBLIC HEARING (Legislative) (SSA-2016-001) – Consideration of Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map amendments changing the Future Land Use category on 5.97 acres from the various categories to the “Public” Future Land Use category.**

Mrs. Gutcher said this resulted as a discussion and request of the Concord Volunteer Fire Station. As they came forward they discovered that the land use category for that property, which is near Havana is not public for institutional. They need for it to be in order to receive the appropriate designation. It currently is rural residential and is located on map 3 in the packet referenced at this meeting.

She commented they decided to go ahead and look around the County at the remainder of Fire Stations that are only in the unincorporated portions of the County.

It resulted in needing an adoption of several small scale amendments to the Future Land Use Map.

The amendment has been determined to be a small – scale amendment pursuant to §163.3187 (1), Florida Statutes as an amendment that involves ten (10) acres or fewer, and the cumulative impact annually of the acreage for all small-scale planned amendments has not exceeded a maximum of 120 acres in a calendar year. This amendment package is the first small – scale request of 2016.

Commissioner Dr. Bridges -Bright asked what public comment was heard by the citizens.

Chair Davis called for public comment and there was none.

**UPON MOTION COMMISSIONER DR. BRIDGES - BRIGHT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER MILTON, THE COMMISSION VOTED 8 - 0, BY VOICE VOTE, TO RECOMMEND THAT THE BOCC ADOPT THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENT AS DRAFTED OR AMENDED AND SUBMIT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, AS REQUIRED.**

7. **PUBLIC HEARING (Legislative) (LPA-2016-001)– Consideration of a Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map amendment changing the Future Land Use category on 25.52 acres from “Agriculture-3” to the “Recreation” Future Land Use category.**

Mrs. Gutcher commented this was a parcel the County had recently acquired in the St. Hebron Community and would be used as a park. The property owners have granted sell of the property to the County. This property is located a couple of miles off of Point Milligan Road on Fantana Trail and borders a creek to the east. The County anticipates utilizing this as a park. The current designation is not appropriate for the use of the park. She said they are requesting a change from the 25 acres from Agriculture 2 to a Recreational Category. She recommended they make the recommendation subject to creation of a parcel.

She then turned her attention to the monitor where she said the red boundary is where the park would be located and it is the property the County has acquired. However, the property owner is still in need of coming to apply for a subdivision, because they do own a piece to the west of the Fantana Trail that needs to be subdivided by parcel id number. She referenced the triangle that was shown to the west of the red shape in the yellow is still a part of the parcel id number, so they will just have the 25 acres. The Staff recommendation is contingent upon that happening and it would then move forward to the County Commission.

Commissioner Nunamaker asked was the county going to buy this property.

Mrs. Gutcher replied the contract was still pending based on subdivision of the property.

Commissioner Nunamaker also asked was the sale of the land a condition of acceptance of the park.

Mrs. Gutcher stated to her knowledge, the sale of the land was not conditional to the use of the park. It is the County’s intent to buy the land.

Commissioner Dr. Bridges – Bright asked would the County be bound to make this a recreational park.

Mrs. Gutcher said the intent is to make this a park, contingent upon the sale of the land.

Chair Davis called for public comment.



**Public Comment**

Charles Flowers, 7999 Frye Road, St. Hebron Community, Chairman of Community of Concerned Citizens spoke in support of the park and amendment change.

Commissioner Dr. Bridges- Bright asked had they talked about keeping the park up and clean, the process.

Mr. Flowers the vision is to have someone there onsite, but we have no details but we will be involved.

Commissioner Chukes inquired would it be fenced.

Mr. Flowers said he was not sure, that would be a county decision.

Commissioner Youman said in purchasing the property you want it to separate the parcel on the west side of the road from the parcel on the east side.

Mrs. Gutcher replied on the map the red would become the park and the other part would become residential.

Commissioner Bouie asked would the community be in support of the park.

Mr. Flowers said they would and there is no opposition to having the park.

Chair Davis said she would like the purchasing of the property to be contingent upon being separated.

Mrs. Gutcher said the property owner needs to apply for the subdivision at this time. However, it is still pending. The recommendation is contingent upon them coming in and applying.

Attorney Weiss commented the County has approved and executed the contract the contract is expressly contingent upon subdivision of the property. If there is no subdivision then the contract would fall through. It's not contingent upon this change in land use, but we need it to have the proper land use to create the park. He said before you, is the change on the Future Land Use Map, but it is contingent upon subdivision approval.

Commissioner Nunamaker said the west side is already rural residential and the east side is Agriculture 2. He said you would not need a Land Use Amendment to do the subdivision.

Mrs. Gutcher commented that he was right. You don't need the land use amendment to do the subdivision, but you do need it to create the park.

Commissioner Dr. Bridges – Bright spoke in support of approval, contingent upon the property being subdivided. She said she would like to see it look like the park in Bainbridge, Georgia.

**UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER DR. BRIDGES- BRIGHT AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER YOUMAN, THE COMMISSION VOTED 8 – 0, BY VOICE VOTE, FOR APPROVAL CONTINGENT UPON SUBDIVISION APPROVAL.**

#### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

8. **PLANNING COMMISSIONER QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

There were no additional comments.

9. **DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Mrs. Gutcher commented that there would be no March meeting. She also referred to the handout given to the Commission; it was the updated Comprehensive Plan. She asked that they add to make sure they have the most recent version.

**ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION, THE CHAIR  
DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:44 P.M.**

**GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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**REGINA DAVIS, CHAIR**

**ATTEST:**

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**BERYL H. WOOD, DEPUTY CLERK  
For NICHOLAS THOMAS, CLERK  
Gadsden County, Florida**