

# Ordinance on trees heads to hearing

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## 300 people pack meeting

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Greenville County on Monday took another step to becoming greener.

An ordinance that would require developers to landscape parking lots and leave more trees and shrubs when developing subdivisions was given approval for a first hearing and subject to a public hearing by Greenville County's Public Service, Planning and Development Committee.

The ordinance, which is supported by developers, then goes to the County Council for final approval.

An estimated 300 people attended, forcing the meeting to be moved from a conference room to the large auditorium. A citizens committee of planners, developers, landscapers and environmentalists spent several months developing the proposal.

Many were wearing stickers saying GREENville County, with GREEN being in the color green. Some bore signs saying, "Keep the Green in

## PLAN

FROM PAGE 1B

Greenville," and "Save Our Trees."

The ordinance was originally placed before the committee last August, but was sent back to the citizens advisory committee for revisions.

Councilman Mark Kingsbury said the public hearing will be held in May.

Diane Eldridge of Upstate Forever, a group that supports careful planning and zoning, said a lack of zoning has led to acres of land being clear-cut, cookie-cutter subdivisions, strip malls, big box stores and massive parking lots.

The ordinance calls for 25 percent of parking areas for office and commercial buildings over 60,000 square feet to be constructed using grass to re-

duce the amount of impervious surface.

All new off-street parking lots with 10 or more spaces will have to establish roadside buffers and an average of one tree for every 60 feet of road frontage.

All new off-street parking lots with 60 or more spaces will have to have interior planting islands with a minimum planting area of 8 feet by 18 feet long, with one tree for every 15 parking spaces and one shrub for every five parking spaces.

The ordinance encourages the use of existing trees. The bigger the tree, the higher the development credits given to the developer.

Also, a root protection zone of a 1-foot radius for every inch of tree diameter will be required.

Exceptions to the landscape requirements include any parking lot used for auto displays related to auto sales.

greenvilleonline.com 3B