

# Group pushes for 'smart-growth' rules

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Upstate Forever, a "smart-growth" advocacy organization, has urged the Anderson County Council to pass new development regulations without diluting them further.

As the council prepares for a workshop on changes to a set of land-use ordinances Thursday, Upstate Forever's Diane Eldridge called the proposed set of changes a "conservative tweaking long past due" that had already received an unprecedented amount of public input.

She urged the council to pass the ordinance as is.

"It's amazing to me there's been

such an outcry over such small changes to an ordinance," Ms. Eldridge said.

The council workshop and a Dec. 17 public hearing will cap more than two years of discussion and debate on the ordinances involving signs, roads, land use and subdivisions.

Anderson County Council member Larry Greer has said he wants the revisions to become law Jan. 7, his last meeting as chairman.

County Planning Director Jeff Ricketson has said repeatedly that he sees the changes as a "starting point" on an admittedly politically charged issue.

"Passing this land use ordinance is

a necessary step toward better quality development in Anderson County, but I don't think it's a sufficient step," Mr. Ricketson said.

In a letter to the council earlier this fall, Ms. Eldridge praised council members for taking the initiative to review and revise the ordinances for the first time since 1987, noting that the county is growing by 39 people each week.

She said the county had done an admirable job of balancing the interests of the community at large with the interests of property owners.

She did say, however, she would have liked to have seen some regulations promoting mixed-use develop-

ment between commercial and residential to cut down car trips, cluster development incentives to preserve open space, and special regulations for growth corridors.

In particular, the Greenville-based organization praised changes:

- ◆ Allowing small developments to move forward without the need to submit a costly drainage plan.

- ◆ Creating a 50-foot buffer for rivers, creeks and streams during construction to prevent silt and other building materials from washing into them.

- ◆ Encouraging developers to retain full-grown trees on land under development wherever possible.