

# City OKs land use map

Greenville Journal  
3/27/09

By Charles Sowell  
Staff Writer

Mayor Knox White was the sole dissenter when Greenville City Council approved a land-use map as part of a long and involved process of updating the city's comprehensive plan.

Two residential property owners, Bruce Polhamus and John Rodgers, objected to the plan, asking that it be tabled and alternatives considered.

"I think we ought to consider the door we're opening up here," Rodgers said.

It was a sentiment echoed by the mayor and council members Amy Ryberg Doyle and J. David Sudduth who worried the map, as it is, would open the door for developers to go hunting for sites where as many as 15 residences could be crammed onto an acre of land.

Barry Nocks, chairman of the city's planning commission, said developing the new comprehensive plan has been ongoing for nearly 18 months. More than 1,300 people have had input and that the concept of letting design rule over density as a defining factor was crucial to the plan's success.

Broadly speaking that means zoning and



South Carolina law requires cities to redo their comprehensive plans every 10 years.

stringent design factors set to match the neighborhood involved will be defining factors in what kinds of development are allowed in any given area of the city.

Councilwoman Diane Smock told Rodgers and Polhamus the city was coming hard against a deadline on finishing the comprehensive plan and delay wasn't really an option at this point.

The city is required by state law to come up with a new comprehensive plan every 10 years. The last plan was approved in April of 1999, the current plan is due to be approved by May, at the latest.

Nancy Fitzer, education director for Upstate Forever, came out strongly in favor of the plan. She was joined by Betty Farley of the Greenville County School District in urging council to adopt the plan.

Overall, the land use map reflects the desires of participants in the comprehensive plan process. They have told the planning commission that they want to see more density in the city, more mixed use neighborhoods and a more bike and pedestrian friendly environment.

Nocks said much of the plan, as it stands now, is based on other successful design-

driven plans used by other cities.

"What works for one neighborhood would not necessarily work for another," he said.

The key will be in developing standards that reflect the desires of each neighborhood.

It would take a couple of months to come up with the standards after the plan is approved, council was told.

Nocks said the zoning and existing usages will be the defining factors in the interim.

"Zoning won't be changed," he said.

And, as City Manager Jim Bourey noted, those factors rule in development issues in cities all across the country.

In other action, council approved annexing 14.116 acres of land at East Main Street and Woodside Avenue on first reading. The annexation also set a temporary zoning classification of I-1, industrial, and R-9, single family residential, for the area.

Resolutions were also passed to provide an evaluation performance bonus for the city manager, city attorney and municipal judge.

Contact Charles Sowell at 679-1208 or [csowell@greenvillejournal.com](mailto:csowell@greenvillejournal.com).