

## LOCAL NEWS

# County growth plan has opposition

More changes possible before final vote

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Greenville County's once-a-decade growth plan built over 18 months ran into a range of public criticism Tuesday, from property rights activists who called it Marxist to environmental groups who said it lacks teeth.

The state-mandated plan, shaped by dozens of citizen meetings, includes "suggestions" that, if implemented, could dramatically change how the county

would treat new development, weighing projects less on a tract-by-tract basis and more on how they fit into neighborhoods, corridors and commercial hubs.

Dozens of property owners booed and jeered the entire premise in a public hearing Tuesday, refreshing a staunchly held view in rural parts of the county that any new regulations are an unwelcome extension of big government.

William Grissop said eight of his grandfathers fought King George for the right to freely own land and challenged the county's ability to tell him how to use it.

John Bynum suggested the county take the plan

and "shoot it up to the moon" while considering a reprise of the state's Civil War stand for local rights.

Bob Davis said regulations for sustainable growth are "nasty Luciferian lies" that he contrasted with God's sustenance for the prophet Elijah the Tishbite, and urged an applauding audience to use "brass knuckles" in the fight for property rights.

Supporters of the plan assured a crowd of dozens that they aren't Marxists and that the entire point is to head off the kind of haphazard sprawl that has strangled Atlanta communities while protecting the rural Greenville land opponents are worried about.

Mary Lou Jones, a 43-year Greenville resident, said property owners must work together to preserve God's creation for their grandchildren.

Scott Thompson said he wants to protect property values before inevitable growth causes problems. Brad Wyche, executive director of Upstate Forever, lauded the plan's robust public input but said all the real policy changes are confined to an appendix with no concrete plans for implementation, and that it risks gathering dust.

County Council members took pains to point out that the plan isn't legally binding, and added language Tuesday that pledg-

### THE PLAN

- Allows more development mixing within three areas: Residential communities, activity centers and connecting corridors.
- Identifies priority districts for future infrastructure: Berea, Donaldson and the area between Greenville and Mauldin.
- Calls for new legislation to implement the changes.

es not to trample on property rights or force northern county residents to accept zoning.

They then approved the plan while holding open the door for more changes before a final vote.