



Chatham County Planning Board Agenda Notes

Date: September 2, 2014

Agenda Item: VIII. 3

Attachment #: None

Subdivision

Conditional Use Permit

Rezoning Request

Other: Text Amendment

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| Subject: | A request by John E Booth Farms, LLC, Kathryn Butler, for an amendment to the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance Section 10.13 Table of Permitted Uses. The request is to add the use of Event center and associated retail, including weddings, receptions, parties, gatherings, tastings including service of food and drink, both outdoor and indoor, arts and craft shows, stage shows, music events, business meetings, exhibition shows, trade shows and outdoor movies (no drive ins); provided however, said uses limited to events involving fewer than 300 simultaneous attendees. Uses requested to be allowed in the O&I, B1, NB, CB, and RB and as conditional use permits in the R-5, R-2, and R-1 Districts. |
| Action Requested: | See Recommendation |
| Attachments: | None |

Introduction & Background

A legislative public hearing was held on this request September 15, 2014. Planning staff presented the application and the applicant's attorney, Nick Robinson, spoke.

Over the last several years, the Planning Department has received numerous requests for small scale event venues for activities such as weddings, birthday parties, corporate meeting space, etc. The Table of Permitted Uses in Section 10.13 of the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance doesn't have a clear category in which these types of activities can be permitted. The applicant owns a parcel of land that, in her opinion, is well suited for such use but that the Zoning Ordinance has been left in a state of ambiguity where the small business can locate.

In 2008, numerous revisions were made to the Zoning Ordinance. Since then there have been several modifications and adjustments as projects progressed in order to make sure the next submittal didn't suffer undue delays. The amendment was a large project undertaken to further enhance streamlining the permitting processes. Although at the time,

there was no way to know every possible situation that might arise until it was requested. This is arguably one area of the ordinance found to be lacking based on the number of requests received on an almost monthly basis.

The biggest area of concern for planning staff is there are currently no standards in which to aid in approving such uses that would provide further protection for landowners adjacent to these types of events. An additional amendment to Section 17 is recommended by staff as noted below.

Discussion & Analysis

Planning staff has reviewed the wording submitted by the applicant and are requesting a revised wording for the category in order to create a more specific and detailed understanding of what is permitted with the use. We are also adding an additional set of standards to accompany these types of uses. When there is a broad description of a use, there will be fewer issues if the applicant knows what the standards and/or limits are. The proposed standards are directed towards the protection of adjacent or adjoining property owners as well as the event holder.

Proposed revised wording for the category in Section 10.13 is:

Events Center Limited

Proposed definition for Section 7 Definitions

Events Center Limited – a venue to allow for various gatherings such as weddings, receptions, arts and crafts shows, corporate meetings, outdoor movies (no drive ins), etc. on a smaller scale and which can be indoor or outdoor or a combination thereof. Please refer to Section 17.7 of this Ordinance for further standards. All other standards of this Ordinance shall also apply.

Proposed addition of **Section 17.7 Standards for Events Center Limited**

This section is intended to provide the opportunity for smaller scale event centers to serve as a venue for business opportunities and gathering space in the county while protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the community. All regulations in the Zoning Ordinance shall apply unless expressly allowed or modified in the below standards:

A. Size and Capacity Limits –

1. All structures shall be limited in size to no more than 5,000 square feet, or any combination of such, not to exceed 5,000 square feet.
2. Capacity is limited to the restrictions of the building and fire code.

B. Accessory Uses Permitted –

1. Accessory and/or ancillary uses shall be those directly related to the event being held. Examples are food and beverage service, dance floors, outdoor speakers, music, festive lighting, decorations, tents, etc.

C. Signage Allowed –

1. Event advertising shall be limited to the permanent on premise signage as allowed in Section 15 of the Zoning Ordinance

Proposed Table of Permitted Uses

| DISTRICT | R-5 | R-2 | R-1 | O&I | B-1 | NB | CB | RB | IL | IH |
|----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Event Center Limited | | | | | P | P | P | P | | |

Recommendation

It is requested the Planning Board review the modified request at this time. Planning staff recommends approval of the proposed category with the associated standards as presented to the Planning Board.

If the Board finds the amendment to be consistent with the Land Conservation and Development Plan, the Board may adopt a consistency statement and recommend approval to the Board of Commissioners.

If the Board finds the amendment to not be a reasonable request and inconsistent with the Land Conservation and Development Plan, the Board must transmit a statement of inconsistency with the adopted plan and a recommendation of disapproval to the Board of Commissioners.