

## **..TITLE**

Legislative public hearing request by the Chatham County Board of Commissioners to amend Sections 7.2, Definitions; 10.13, Table of Permitted Uses; and 17.8, Standards for Sexually Oriented Businesses (new section) to add standards for Sexually Oriented Businesses.

## **..ABSTRACT**

### **Action Requested:**

Public hearing request by the Chatham County Board of Commissioners to amend Sections 7.2, Definitions; 10.13, Table of Permitted Uses; and 17.8, Standards for Sexually Oriented Businesses (new section) to add standards for Sexually Oriented Businesses.

### **Introduction & Background:**

During the April 18, 2016 Board of Commissioners meeting a public hearing was scheduled to amend the Zoning Ordinance to include standards for sexually oriented businesses. Currently, sexually oriented businesses (S.O.B.) are only permitted in the unzoned parts of the County. However, when those areas are zoned as R-1 and R-5, the Zoning Ordinance must be amended to reflect the new county-wide zoning; the County cannot prohibit sexually oriented businesses outright, but is afforded the opportunity to regulate their location and certain operational characteristics in an effort to ensure identified negative secondary impacts are mitigated.

As defined within N.C.G.S. 14-202.10, sexually oriented businesses are, “Any businesses, or enterprises that have as one of their principal business purposes, or as a significant portion of their business, an emphasis on matter and conduct depicting, describing, or related to anatomical areas and sexual activities.”

The proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance establish criteria for such businesses including separation requirements from identified uses such as places of worship, schools, parks, and residentially zoned properties. The proposed amendments would allow for their development consistent with applicable State and Federal requirements.

### **Discussion & Analysis:**

In support of recommended land use regulations, staff offers the following information with respect to addressing identified secondary impacts. A summary authored by David Owens of the UNC School of Government (available at <https://www.sog.unc.edu/resources/legal-summaries/regulating-sexually-oriented-businesses>) provides background information, an overview of constitutional issues, and considerations for implementing regulations for sexually oriented businesses. Additional information is also provided in Chapter 26, Regulation of Adult Businesses in Land Use Law in North Carolina, Second Edition, also authored by Mr. Owens.

Several studies have also been prepared evaluating the secondary impacts of sexually oriented businesses and have found that these businesses can negatively affect surrounding properties. The secondary effects can result in increased crime rates, prostitution, illegal drug sales, and depreciation in property values. Additionally, the negative impacts of sexually oriented businesses can increase when they are located in close proximity to other businesses that serve alcohol. The following is a list of studies that have evaluated these impacts:

- A 2013 study completed for Louisville Kentucky by Eric S. McCord and Richard Tewksbury evaluated the secondary effects of sexually oriented businesses and found that these uses increase crime levels and negatively impact surrounding property. The study can be viewed by utilizing the following link:  
<http://secondaryeffectsresearch.com/files/McCord%20and%20Tewksbury,%202013.pdf>.
- A 2011 study, entitled *The Association of Adult Businesses with Secondary Effects: Legal Doctrine, Social Theory, and Empirical Evidence* authored by Alan C. Weinstein and Richard McCleary also evaluated the negative secondary impacts of the sexually oriented businesses. This study can be viewed at:  
<http://secondaryeffectsresearch.com/files/Cardozo%20Law%20Review.pdf>.
- 1996 report completed by the American Center for Law and Justice, *NLC Summaries of "SOB Land Use" Studies*, provides a historic overview of these businesses and their effects covering several years and multiple jurisdictions throughout the United States. The evaluation found that these uses have negative secondary impacts on surrounding communities and can be exacerbated when located near other businesses that serve alcohol. A summary of this report can be viewed at:  
<http://secondaryeffectsresearch.com/files/Land%20Use%20summary%202005.pdf>.
- A 2005 report completed by Duncan and Associates for Kenton and Campbell Counties in Kentucky, as well as the Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission, *Recommendation: Zoning for Sexually Oriented Entertainment & Related Businesses*, was the second phase of an evaluation of these uses. The report provided a framework and recommendations for implementing zoning regulations for sexually oriented businesses. This report can be viewed at:  
<http://secondaryeffectsresearch.com/files/Zoning%20for%20Sexually%20Oriented%20Entertainment%20and%20Related%20Businesses.pdf>.
- A 2008 study, *Survey of Appraisers: Secondary effects of sexually oriented businesses on market values. Report submitted to the Texas City Attorneys Association*, completed by C.B. Cooper and E.D. Kelly, found that these uses have a negative effect on single family home and community shopping center values. This report can be viewed at:  
<http://www.stillwater.org/agendas/ccagendas/2009/031609/TXSurveyto49.pdf>.
- The 2000 publication "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Regulating Sex Businesses" by The American Planning Association (Report Number 495/196) provides an another overview of the issues that must be considered with respect to the regulation of sexually oriented businesses.

Staff's review of this background information and studies finds that the secondary effects of sexually oriented businesses have negative impacts on the surrounding area, including additional crime and property devaluation, which will be addressed by the proposed regulations.

Planning staff is providing the proposed amendments that are included in the attachment for consideration to establish definitions and standards for sexually oriented businesses.

**Recommendation:**

Hold the public hearing and refer to the Planning Board for a recommendation.