

## Staff Report

**Subject:** Ordinance Revision  
**Author:** Kimberly Barlett, Planner I  
**Department:** Development Services  
**Meeting Date:** May 21, 2024  
**Item Description:** Consideration of an **amendment** to the **Code of Ordinances Part II- Official Code- Chapter 58- Roads- Article II- County Addressing System**

### Summary Recommendation

In order to establish a procedure for the assignment or reassignment of 911 addresses and street names in unincorporated Effingham County, Staff recommends **approval** of an ordinance revision that will serve the community and the departments that rely on GIS address data.

### Executive Summary/Background

- The purpose of this ordinance is to support the easy and rapid location of properties by law enforcement, fire, rescue, and emergency medical service. personnel in the unincorporated area of Effingham County.
- Establishing a physical addressing process will ensure that the addresses will provide the best information for E-911 from the GIS database which can be used by emergency service providers, as well as by mail delivery services, utilities, delivery services, and others, for the health, safety, and welfare of the people of Effingham County.
- The GIS (Geographic Information System) shall approve street names and assign addresses.
- No building permit shall be issued for any house, building or structure to be erected, repaired, altered, or modified in the county until the owner has applied for a 911 address from the GIS department.
- Assigned 911 address numbers may be fixed to the house, building, structure, or multiple unit development provided that it is not located more than 60 feet from the edge of street. The 911 address numbers shall also be placed on individual mailboxes, curbs, or signs located on the premises in front of the location.
- The general principles of assigning street names street types with descriptions are defined in this ordinance.

### Alternatives

1. **Approve** an **amendment** to the Code of Ordinances **Code of Ordinances Part II- Official Code- Chapter 58- Roads- Article II- County Addressing System**
2. **2. Deny** an **amendment** to the Code of Ordinances **Code of Ordinances Part II- Official Code- Chapter 58- Roads- Article II- County Addressing System**

**Recommended Alternative:** 1

**Other Alternatives:** 2

**Department Review:** Development Services, County Attorney

**FUNDING:** N/A

**Attachments:** 1. Draft of County Addressing System

## ARTICLE II. - COUNTY ADDRESSING SYSTEM

### *Sec. 58-36. – Purpose.*

The purpose of this article is to establish a procedure for the assignment or reassignment of 911 addresses and street names in unincorporated Effingham County. The purpose of this ordinance is to support the easy and rapid location of properties by law enforcement, fire, rescue, and emergency medical service personnel in the unincorporated area of Effingham County. Establishing a physical addressing process will ensure that the addresses will provide the best information for E-911 from the GIS database which can be used by emergency service providers, as well as by mail delivery services, utilities, delivery services, and others, for the health, safety, and welfare of the people of Effingham County.

### *Sec. 58-37. – Definitions.*

Street is defined to include road, drive, access easement, right-of-way access area, highway, or thoroughfare.

Addressing means the assigning of a numerical 911 address, which may also include alphanumeric characters for a building and/or unit, and full street name, to each location within the unincorporated area of Effingham County and replaces any route and box numbers currently in place in the GIS database.

GIS means Geographic Information System, a separate and distinct department of Effingham County government, as established by the Board of Commissioners.

Full Street Name Comprised of four distinct components: pre-direction, street name, street type, and quadrant. Not every street name will have a value for all components.

Pre-direction Indicates the primary compass direction that a street follows from a baseline (i.e., N, S, E, W).

Street Name The principal identifying component of a full street name, which in most cases should uniquely distinguish a street from all others in the county (e.g., Oak, Broad).

Street Type Gives some indication of the primary use, length, or shape of the street (e.g., Lane, Circle).

Quadrant: indicates the street's location relative to the reference point and baselines (i.e., NW, NE, SW, SE).

*Sec. 58-38. – Abbreviations.*

- *Parking Lot = PL*
- *Agricultural = AG*
- *Utility = PU*
- *Water Meter = M*
- *Cell Tower = CEL*
- *Pump Station = PS*
- *Right-of-Way = RW*
- *Common Area = CA*
- *Open Space = OS*
- *Pond = PD*
- *Lift Station = LS*
- *Well Site = WS*
- *Road Sign = RS*
- *Power Pole = PP*

*Sec. 58-39. - Assignment of address.*

The GIS Department is hereby authorized to and shall approve street names and assign addresses within unincorporated Effingham County. All requests shall be submitted by the property owner or agent to the GIS Department. The GIS Department will coordinate street name approval with E-911 and be guided by safety and consistency.

Each house, building, structure, or multiple unit development shall be assigned an address by the GIS Department. A number or alphabetical letter shall also be assigned for each building or structure within a multiple unit development and for each separate occupant or unit within each building or dwelling (examples include, but are not limited to, apartments, office complexes, and shopping centers). Only the address numbers or letters assigned by the GIS Department will be used, and all other numbers and letters shall be removed.

- (a) No building permit shall be issued for any house, building or other structure to be erected, repaired, altered, or modified in the unincorporated areas of the county until the owner has applied for and has been assigned a 911 address from the GIS Department.
- (b) Prior to final plat submission, all land subdivisions that create new public or private streets in unincorporated Effingham County shall be submitted to the GIS Department for street naming approval. Proposed street names shall be submitted on a street layout provided by the property owner or agent to the GIS Department. If street names require resubmission for approval, the accompanying street layout must reflect the street name changes.
- (c) It shall be the responsibility of each property owner, trustee, lessee, agent and/or occupant of each residence, apartment building, business, or industry to display, and maintain, at all times, address numbers as required under this ordinance. All addresses shall be displayed in such a way that they are unobstructed and legible from the traveled street.
- (d) Final approval of any house, building or other structure erected, repaired, altered, or modified after the effective date of this article shall be withheld by the building inspector until permanent and proper address numbers have been displayed as required under this ordinance. The accurate placement and display of address numbers shall be reviewed and verified by the Building Department.
- (e) Corner lots are assigned two preliminary 911 addresses. The address that is not used, based on the facing (orientation) of the home, will be expired from the GIS database. However, when the facing (orientation) is obscured or not visible from the street, or the structure is obviously best reached for emergency purposes by the driveway the address shall be based on where the lot's access intersects the street.
- (f) Notification of address change- When an address is assigned or changed, the following will be notified by the GIS Department:
  - The Property Owner and/or Agent
  - The Tax Assessor's Office
  - The U.S Postal Office
  - E-911
  - Registrar's Office

*Sec. 58-40 – Address Reassignment.*

Because of the nature of addressing, there will be times when an addressed house, building, or other structure needs to be assigned a new address number. An address number may be reassigned if:

- The existing address number is not in sequence.
- The existing address number does not run consecutively in the same direction as the address system.
- The existing address number fails to observe the odd-even protocol.

- A new street is constructed, realigned, or recognized, which results in the most appropriate address for a dwelling to be to the new street rather than to the existing street.
- The existing address number is a duplicate of another address.
- For any reason the access to an addressed structure has changed.

*Sec. 58-41 - Method of display.*

Assigned 911 address numbers may be fixed to the house, building, structure, or multiple unit development provided that it is not located more than 60 feet from the edge of street in front of such location, and the address number must be readily visible from the street by persons traveling along the street in each direction. The 911 address numbers shall also be placed on individual mailboxes, curbs, or signs located on the premises in front of the location, if the mailboxes, curb, or signs are on the same side of the street as the house, apartment, business or other building or location.

If the address numbers are displayed on signs, such signs must be of a durable type, and must be located not more than 60 feet from the edge of street in front of the location. If the street in front of the location is unpaved, said sign should be located not more than 60 feet from the edge of the street nearest the location.

If the 911 address numbers are displayed on curbs, such paint must be of a durable type. The painted address numbers shall conform to county specifications as to size and form, and the quality and type of paint to be used. The address numbers shall be black, four inches tall, on white reflectorized background. The background shall be at least one inch larger than all lettering.

Assigned 911 address numbers must be a minimum of four inches in height. All numbers and/or characters shall be constructed of a durable, weather resistant material and reflective on a contrasting background to be clearly visible. If there is notable wear and tear of the displayed address number and/or characters, they must be replaced immediately.

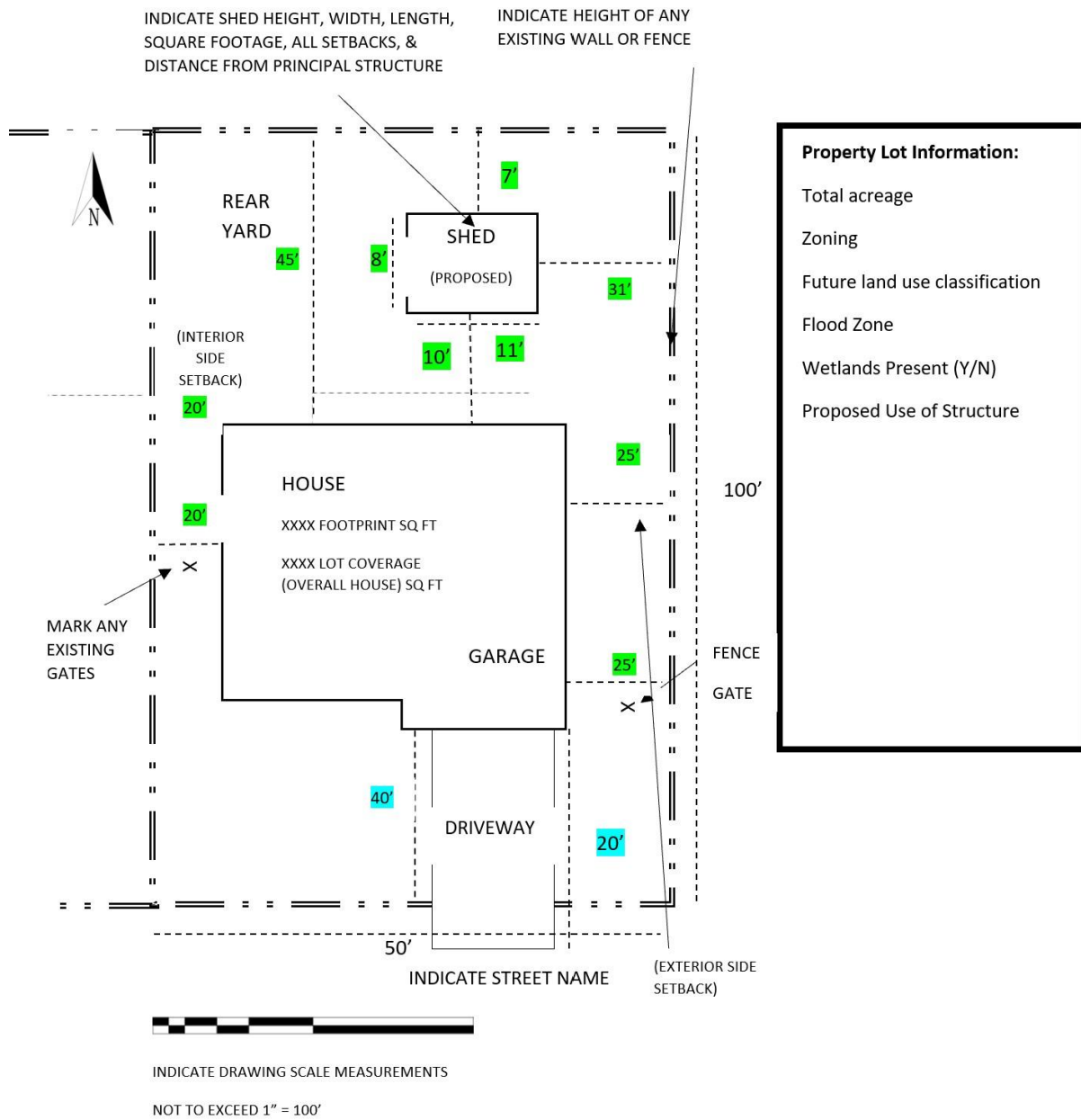
*Sec. 58-42. Applying for an Address.*

Prior to the issuance of any building permit, the property owner, builder, agent, or other responsible person for the proposed building or structure shall procure from the GIS Department

an address for the property. The GIS Department will provide to the owner, builder, agent, or other responsible person documentation verifying that they have procured a 911 address for the specified property.

Addresses will be applied for on the OpenGov Portal. The property owner, builder, agent, or other responsible person shall provide the last recorded plat for the parcel. Additionally, they will submit a plot plan, which shall show the location of the proposed house, building, or other structure to be addressed with accurate measured distance from the proposed structure to each property line and any existing structures or buildings. All proposed multi-structure, multi-unit, and/or multi-floor developments must submit the plot plan with the building layout shown for building and/or unit addressing. Once the GIS Department has completed the administrative review, the Planning Department will review the property to ensure compliancy with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulations, as well as the US Fish and Wildlife wetlands regulations.

Example Plot Plan:



Sec. 58-43.- General Principles of Assigning Street Names.

A) Avoid Duplication

A full street name should be used only once in the county. A street name should also be unique, except that it is acceptable to have one duplicate street name in closed subdivisions (those having access via only one or two entry points), and even in these cases such streets must have a different street type (e.g., Quail Drive, Quail Lane) and one should be a cul-de-sac (or dead-end) intersecting the other at a perpendicular (or nearly perpendicular) angle. Except in this manner, street name duplication - regardless of street type or jurisdiction (city, county, fire, police, or EMS) - should not occur in the county.

## B) Avoid Confusion

A street name should be appropriate, as well as easy to read, spell, and pronounce - even for children in an emergency situation.

1) Names that tend to be mispronounced or misspelled or are difficult to pronounce or spell should not be used (e.g., Javelina, Peony, Weimaraner).

2) Names which have homonyms (i.e., other words pronounced similarly but spelled differently) should not be used on any street and certainly not on multiple streets even if the street type is different (e.g., Steven Lane / Stephen Lane; Disk Drive / Disc Lane).

3) Two-word names or one-word names that can be confused as two-word names should not be used. This avoids the problem of two words being combined into one word, or vice versa, when entered (e.g., Clearlake, Clear Lake, Brookhaven, Baytree).

4) A street name should not contain directional words such as North, South, East, or West. If they are used, it is difficult if not impossible to distinguish the pre-direction portion of a full street name from the street name itself. Northridge is an example of a street name that breaks this rule as well as the two-word rule above.

5) Street names containing punctuation or special characters (e.g., Fishermen's, J.F.K., Holman-Fuller) should be avoided, as punctuation makes street names unnecessarily complicated, and some database programs do not gracefully handle punctuation. Furthermore, words that normally require punctuation should not be used with the punctuation omitted (e.g., Fishermens Landing). Apostrophes, hyphens, or dots may be included, when necessary (to avoid confusion, for example), but it is especially important that special characters such as commas, quotation marks, and asterisks not be used in the case of numbered streets, such as First Street or Tenth Avenue, it is recommended that the names be spelled out as opposed to using numbers with suffixes. This practice allows for the creation of a complete yet strictly alphabetical index.

## C) Avoid Emotion



Except where historically significant, avoid using proper names as street names (e.g., Wilma Calumet Road). While this naming practice may not cause problems today, it will certainly create problems in the future if a name changes or street closing becomes necessary. Furthermore, use of a first and last name usually results in an unnecessarily long street name. It is recognized that many streets already bear names of historically significant individuals and will continue to do so, but the desire to commemorate local history must be tempered by the goal of making street names easy to use for citizens, visitors, and service providers (especially in the area of emergency services).

#### D) Promote Continuity

A continuous street should have one name and one name only throughout its entire length, even if the street changes direction one or more times. In the case of permanent voids (such as a pond or closed railroad crossing) where a portion of a street is permanently closed or non-continuous, the street can have the same name on both sides of the void, if the void can be easily breached by an alternate route. If, however, a new street is added on the opposite side of a permanent void, in line or out of line with an existing street, that new street should be given a unique name. Also, it may be desirable to make exceptions to this "one name" rule in areas where a grid pattern prevails, and streets are named according to their primary direction of travel.

#### E) Keep Names Short

Street names should be made up of one word, preferably of 15 characters or fewer. Remember that a full street name may very well be made up of a pre-direction, street name, street type, and quadrant. Keeping the street name under 16 characters will reduce data entry errors and make the production of street signs more manageable.

#### F) Use Themes

Where possible, use naming themes in subdivisions or even larger geographic areas such as quadrants. Choosing names related to a single theme is suggested as a means of general identification for streets in a subdivision, rather than duplicating the name and differentiating only by the street type designator. As an example, use Jefferson Drive and Reagan Drive rather

than Jefferson Drive and Jefferson Lane. Also, consideration should be given to naming streets in alphabetical order to further aid navigation. Under this system, Alabama Drive, for example, would be nearer the main entrance to a subdivision than would Delaware Drive.

## G) Street Naming

Street types should not be duplicated in street names (e.g. Terrace Court, Trail way, Ally Court). A full street name, which is comprised of four distinct components. a street has a pre-direction, street name, street type, and quadrant which all combine to form a full street name. Every full street name does have four components, but some components may have a null value.

## H) Street Types with Descriptions

### **Alley (Aly)**

A short, narrow passage commonly found between close buildings and not used for through traffic.

### **Avenue (Ave)**

A thoroughfare running principally in an east-west direction and usually terminating at a north- south running street. (Note: Although this directional arrangement is the recommended standard, some cities or counties may already have established grid systems in which avenues run N-S and streets run E-W. In any case, avenues should never run parallel to streets.)

### **Boulevard (Blvd)**

A street divided by a landscaped center or median, often flanked by sidewalks, and generally designated with an alphabetical name (rather than a number).

### **Bypass (Byp)**

A thoroughfare specially designed to allow nearly uninterrupted travel around the periphery of a congested area.

### **Causeway (Cswy)**

A roadway elevated above wet ground or water.

**Circle (Cir)**

A short street that intersects another street only once and terminates in a closed loop.

**Court (Ct)**

A relatively short, uninterrupted dead-end street.

**Crossing (Xing)**

A roadway that traverses an important feature such as a railroad, waterway, mountain pass, or gorge. (Note: In many cases, crossing is a historical designation for what was once the only route of transport over a prominent feature. Many roadways, therefore, retain this designation even if that feature is now passable at many points or has ceased to exist.)

**Drive (Dr)**

A curvilinear street of appreciable length which continues through to other rightsof-way.

**Expressway (Expy)**

A high-speed, limited-access divided highway for through traffic.

**Extension (Ext)**

This street type is not recommended, because it is often incompatible with database standards. If it must be used, it should never be combined with another street type. For example, if Laurel Boulevard is a wide roadway in town with a median, which changes to an un-divided roadway with narrow lanes for a short distance after a "dogleg", the narrower portion may be designated Laurel Extension, but never Laurel Boulevard Extension.

**Freeway (Fwy)**

A high-speed, limited-access divided highway for through traffic.

**Highway (Hwy)**

A designated state or federal highway, usually designed to accommodate a large population of relatively high-speed traffic between cities. U.S. routes are also designated as highways.

**Interstate (Int)**

A road of the highest order which crosses state boundaries, characterized by limited access (usually merge/exit rather than signal controlled), wide right-of-way, and a through-traffic preference. This type is also used to designate a seamless extension of such a road (such as a spur or bypass) which does not cross state lines.

**Lane (Ln)**

A relatively short, uninterrupted street ending in a cul-de-sac.

**Loop (Loop)**

A short street that begins at and ends into the same parent street at two different points.

**Parkway (Pky)**

A special scenic street or park drive.

**Pass (Pass)**

A thoroughfare allowing access around or between obstacles.

**Path (Path)**

A non-urban roadway for low-speed traffic.

**Place (Pl)**

A relatively short, uninterrupted dead-end street.

***Plaza (Plz)***

An urban roadway accessing several commercial centers; also used in industrial parks.

**Point (Pt)**

A roadway allowing access to a bluff, dock, landing, scenic overlook, peninsula, or other terminal point.

**Road (Rd)**

A limited thoroughfare that is frequently used and often allows heavy traffic volume. A road may run in any direction and is normally non-urban although it may extend through an urban area.

**Spur (Spur)**

A relatively short dead-end street, usually allowing access to a staging area or to other types of transportation.

**Street (St)**

A thoroughfare running principally in a north-south direction and usually terminating at an east-west running avenue. (Note: Although this directional arrangement is the recommended standard, some cities or counties may already have established grid systems in which streets run E-W and avenues run N-S. In any case, streets should never run parallel to avenues.)

**Terrace (Ter)**

A roadway flanked by a decline, often with an incline on the opposite side, and in many cases overlooking a river, gorge, park, or other scenic area.

**Trail (Tri)**

Any curvilinear street.

**Walk (Wik)**

A thoroughfare designed to accommodate vehicular and pedestrian traffic, usually with access to recreational areas or storefronts.

**Way (Way)**

A widely applied thoroughfare designation, usually utilized in residential areas for aesthetic purposes.

*Sec 58-44 - Construction, Subdivisions, and Business Licenses.*

- (a) Construction* Whenever any house, building or other structure including residence, commercial, or industrial buildings are erected, repaired, altered, or modified in the unincorporated areas of the county and requires a permit, it shall be the duty of the property owner or agent to apply for an address number, or verify the accuracy of the existing address number through the GIS Department.
- (b) Subdivisions* It shall be the duty of any person who intends to subdivide property to obtain approval from the GIS Department for any proposed street name in the subdivision. The proposed name of the subdivision and proposed street names shall not duplicate or too closely approximate, phonetically, the name of any other subdivisions or streets in the county.
- (c) Business Licenses* All applications for new or renewed business licenses issued by Effingham County will be reviewed by Development Services for accuracy and compliance with this addressing ordinance. Compliance with this subparagraph (c) shall be enforced by Effingham County Code Enforcement.

*Sec. 58-45 Penalty for violation.*

Any property owner, trustee, lessee, agent and/or occupant of each residence, apartment building, business, or industry who fails to comply with the provisions of this article is subject to a warning citation for the violation. If the property owner, trustee, lessee, agent and/or occupant does not comply with the warning citation within 30 days and properly display the 911 address number, that person is subject to a citation for violation of this article.