

Staff Report

Subject: 2nd Reading - Ordinance
Author: Chelsie Fernald, Planning Manager
Department: Development Services
Meeting Date: October 7, 2025
Item Description: Consideration to approve an amendment to the Effingham County Code of Ordinances, *Appendix C – Zoning Ordinance, Article V – Uses Permitted in Districts*

Executive Summary/Background

- At the December 3, 2024, Board of Commissioners meeting, the board charged the Steering Committee with review and input on the final article of the zoning ordinance.
- Since then, the committee and staff have diligently been working to review all of the Residential zoning districts to include R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, and R-5.
- All the residential zoning districts now include clearly defined intent statements that clarify each district's purpose and intended character.
- The Steering Committee recommends that the R-1 zoning district incorporate design standards closely aligned with those of the R-5 district, along with the addition of a 10% open space requirement. This represents a notable change, as the R-1 district currently does not include any open space provisions.
- There was significant conversation and suggestions for the R-5 open space requirements, and the requirement in the R-5 zoning district for open space is suggested at 25%.
- Furthermore, with the proposed higher open space requirements, the county can promote more thoughtfully designed higher-density neighborhoods that offer enhanced aesthetic and recreational value while preserving the rural character that defines the community.
- R-4 is the mobile home/manufactured home subdivision ordinance with conditional uses for Camper/RV Park and Tiny Home Subdivisions.
- The steering committee has revitalized the R-2 and R-3 zoning districts to provide greater clarity and consistency in housing types and ownership structures. R-2 is now designated specifically for fee-simple duplexes and townhomes, ensuring individual ownership of each unit and lot.
- R-3 accommodates a broader range of housing options, including duplexes, townhomes, and apartments, and allows for both fee-simple and in-common models.
- Overall, the zoning districts are more concise, clear, and organized.
- The First Reading for the R Districts was approved at the August 5, 2025, Board of Commissioners meeting.

Alternatives

1. **Approve** an **amendment** to the Code of Ordinances **Appendix C – Zoning Ordinance, Article V**
2. **Deny** an **amendment** to the Code of Ordinances **Appendix C – Zoning Ordinance, Article V**

Recommended Alternative: 1

Other Alternative: 2

Department Review: Development Services, County Manager, Steering Committee,

FUNDING: N/A

Attachments: 1. Draft Ordinances