

**THE FAYETTE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION** held a **Public Meeting/Workshop** on October 18, 2007 at 7:00 P.M. in the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue West, Board of Commissioners Conference Room, Suite 100, Fayetteville, Georgia.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Douglas Powell, Chairman  
Al Gilbert, Vice-Chairman  
Bill Beckwith  
Tim Thoms

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jim Graw

**STAFF PRESENT:** Dennis Dutton, Zoning Administrator  
Robyn S. Wilson, P.C. Secretary/Zoning Coordinator

**STAFF ABSENT:** Pete Frisina, Director of Planning & Zoning  
Delores Harrison, Zoning Technician

**Welcome and Call to Order:**

Chairman Powell called the Public Meeting/Workshop to order and introduced the Board Members and Staff.

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Chairman Powell asked if the P.C. members were in agreement to receive the Minutes electronically. The P.C. members concurred; however, Jim Graw had previously expressed concern because he felt he needed a copy of the Minutes in his hand.

Robyn Wilson explained that each P.C. member could print out the Minutes from their home computer. She advised that the B.O.C.'s packages are totally electronically.

Chairman Powell advised the P.C. that if they found an item in the Minutes which needed to be corrected, they could e-mail Mrs. Wilson the correction and she could advise the other P.C. members of the correction. He added that the permanent Minutes would be available at the Public Hearing for signatures.

The P.C. concurred to begin sending out the Minutes electronically and see how it works.

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**1. Discussion of proposed amendments to the Fayette County Zoning Ordinance regarding Article V. General Provisions, Section 5-17. Height Limitations of Walls and Fences and Article III. Definitions as presented by the Planning & Zoning Department.**

Dennis Dutton explained that the B.O.C. had received a request for relief of a fence which is partially located in the County right-of-way. He said that Staff had requested information regarding the fence height. He stated that he received no information regarding the fence height so he visited the site and measured the fence. He reported that the fence columns measured 7' 2 1/2" and the fence itself measured 6' to 6 1/2' along the boundary of the front yard. He confirmed that the B.O.C. had instructed Staff to address the fence height ordinance and commented that he would like to open the discussion to see if fences should require a permit or how the P.C. would like to proceed.

Mr. Dutton presented the following proposed amendments:

Staff's additions to the current ordinance are indicated in **bold**, underline, and *italics*. ~~Strikethrough~~ indicates deletion.

## ARTICLE V. GENERAL PROVISIONS

### 5-17. Height Limitations of Walls and Fences.

- A. In any residential zoning district, a wall or fence shall not exceed four (4) feet in height within or along a boundary of a front yard, except as otherwise provided herein. No wall or fence shall exceed eight (8) feet in height.
- B. All property zoned A-R where the use of the property is for farming, including the raising and selling of crops and livestock, is exempt from the four (4) foot maximum height requirement.
- C. All property zoned A-R where the property contains telecommunications antennas and towers shall meet all requirements for Security Fencing in the Article V. of the Zoning Ordinance concerning Standards for Telecommunication Antennas and Towers.
- D. As otherwise provided, in any residential zoning district, a decorative wall and/or fence shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height within or along a boundary of a front yard. A minimum visibility of fifty (50%) percent for all decorative walls and/or fences is required. {For more discussion with the P.C.}
- B.E. No wall or fence shall be constructed in a public right-of-way. Any entrance must be at least fourteen (14) feet apart at the driveway to allow for passage of emergency vehicles.
- F. Archways and gateways entry into residential driveways or development entrances are required to have a minimum clearance height of fourteen (14) feet in order to allow for passage of emergency vehicles.

## ARTICLE III. DEFINITIONS

Archway. An arch over a driveway or entrance and constructed of brick/brick veneer, stucco (or synthetic), rock/stone, wood/wood veneer or other architecturally engineered facades which match these materials.

Decorative Wall and Fence. A wall or fence constructed of brick/brick veneer, stucco (or synthetic), rock/stone, wood/wood veneer, wrought iron/iron veneer or other architecturally engineered facades which match these materials. Chain linked, or other wire/wire meshed materials are not decorative walls and/or fences.

Gateway Entry. A landscape feature and/or built decorative feature located at a driveway a residence or a entrance of a development. Such entry structure whether it is attached or detached from the decorative wall and/or fence shall be a separate structure. {Based on the APA, A Planners Dictionary.}

Al Gilbert stated that a fence should require a permit, even though it is external to the house, due to safety issues such as the building materials being properly secured, proper footings, and also electrical issues.

Chairman Powell commented that he did not understand how a fence could be restricted to four feet (4') high and a decorative wall could be restricted to eight feet (8') high along the boundaries of a front yard. He added that the height should be the same for both.

Mrs. Wilson advised that, in the past, the Z.B.A. had denied requests to increase the fence height.

Tim Thoms stated that he did not want to drive by chain link fence after chain link fence.

Chairman Powell said that the purpose of a decorative fence was to keep people out.

Mr. Thoms replied that it was for aesthetics.

Bill Beckwith concurred.

Mrs. Wilson explained that with the large size homes which are built in the County that more and more homeowners are wanting taller fences.

Chairman Powell stated that he did not want to see "compound" type fences.

Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Beckwith concurred.

Mr. Thoms replied that he did not have a problem with "compound" type fences because property owners should be able to have their privacy.

Mr. Dutton reported that the limit of the four (4) foot high fence along the boundaries of the front yard was for safety and visibility issues from the street to assist the Sheriff's Department.

Mr. Thoms commented that he would like to see fences allowed to be eight feet (8') in height and let the market drive the type of fence.

Mr. Dutton remarked that he would like to have various combinations, such as allowing a four (4) foot high decorative wall with four (4) foot wrought iron on top of the decorative fence.

Mr. Thoms and Mr. Gilbert expressed concern about how the public would know about the fence and wall requirements.

Chairman Powell expressed concern about the enforcement of the proposed amendments.

Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Beckwith concurred.

Chairman Powell stated that if the crime rate goes up that there will be more and more requests for taller fences.

Mr. Thoms asked how a gated residence was handled in regards to E.M.S. access.

Mr. Dutton replied that he had spoken with Fire Marshal David Scarborough and he had advised that E.M.S. is usually given a code by the homeowner; however, the homeowner is advised that if there is a locked gate and equipment must be brought to the house by hand then there will be a delay in response time.

Mr. Gilbert suggested that Staff ask the Building Official for input regarding the permitting of fences.

Mr. Beckwith added that Staff should also get input from the Sheriff's Department.

Chairman Powell requested that Staff develop a definition for wall, decorative wall, fence, and decorative fence.

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Mr. Dutton thanked the P.C. for their input and advised that he would discuss walls and fences with the Building Official and Sheriff's Department and also review the proposed amendments for further discussion at the next Workshop/Public Meeting.

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Chairman Powell asked if there was any further business. He advised that he would not be present at the P.C. Public Hearing scheduled for November 1, 2007.

Hearing no further business, Bill Beckwith made a motion to adjourn the Public Meeting/Workshop. The motion unanimously passed 4-0. Jim Graw was absent. The Public Meeting/Workshop adjourned at 8:06 P.M.

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
OF  
FAYETTE COUNTY**

**ATTEST:**

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**DOUG POWELL  
CHAIRMAN**

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**ROBYN S. WILSON  
P.C. SECRETARY**