

Columbia County
Board of Adjustments
May 28th, 2026 05:32 P.M.

The Columbia County Planning and Zoning met in a scheduled meeting held at 971 West Duval Street, in the Tourism Development Council Conference room. The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Jock Phelps followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Roll Call remained the same and was done by the Deputy Clerk Melissa Williams

Members Present:

Mike McKee, Chairman

Gerry Solenski, Vice Chair

Walt Graham

Jody DuPree

Others in Attendance:

Seth Lane, County Planner

Melissa Williams, Deputy Clerk

County Planner, Seth Lane – see attached documents

Special Exception SE-260402: Small Engine Repair Shop at 2378 SW Cypress Lake Road

- Staff: Owner Laura Ray requests a special exception for a small engine repair shop (LDR 4.5.26; buildings ≤2,000 sq ft). Parcel 35-4S-15-00407-101, on outskirts of Cypress Hills subdivision. Natural buffering exists; Staff recommends buffering on three sides adjacent to neighbors if approved. No building permit was found, owner willing to obtain retroactive permit. Letters of support submitted and no code complaints. Business plan provided the hours/scope limited to small engine repair.

Chairman, Mike McKee - Opened Public Hearing:

- Applicant Jesse Harvey, began as hobby expanded via community demand (lawnmowers, golf carts). Will obtain business license after approval and comply

with conditions. Building (450 sq ft) purchased; believed permitted will secure permit (through Elite Buildings, 3–4 weeks). Setbacks compliant; building can be relocated if needed. Scrap removed weekly; privacy fence and natural buffers in place; open to adding trees.

- Gerry Solenski spoke about the setback being correct.
- Jody DuPree asked how he disposes of the lawnmowers he did not use.
- Jessie Harvey stated that the scrap is taken to the junk yard weekly.
- Gerry Solenski spoke about the deed restrictions.
- Discussion: County Planner, Seth Lane does not enforce deed restrictions and none found applicable. Applicant unaware of HOA restrictions.

Chairman, Mike McKee - Closed Public Hearing

- 30-day appeal window noted by County Planner, Seth Lane. The next step is site development plan. Applicant may pursue business license during appeal window at own risk and should obtain the building permit.

MOTION by Jody DuPree to approve Special Exception -SE-260402. SECOND by Gerry Solenski. The motion carried unanimously.

County Planner, Seth Lane – see attached documents

Special Exception SE-260304: Outdoor Storage Yard for Boats, Campers, RVs corner of SW 47 and SW Elam Church

- Agent Wendy Grinnell for owners Verlus Dean and Lynn Hackett requests special exception for outdoor storage. While not listed verbatim, applicant argues similarity to mini-warehouses and heavy equipment sales (allowed by special exception). Many technical items (noise, access, lighting, fencing, parking, setbacks) to be addressed at site development plan stage. FDOT traffic study to determine access/turn lane on 47 if granted. Special exception enables site plan review but does not guarantee approval.
- Walt Graham made a comment about the location.
- Chairman, Mike McKee made a comment is it being used and is there storage behind. Is it fenced in for security?
- Gerry Solenski, is it fenced and do you need a card to open?
- **Chairman, Mike McKee - Opened Public Hearing:**
- Wendy Grennell spoke about the preliminary site plan provided. Bathrooms must be ADA compliant; environmental health to verify septic capacity; paved ADA parking required. Property is being cleaned, and the existing pole barn is in good condition with concrete floor. Storage behind pole barn, fenced and screened; naturally screened by trees; applicant open to privacy fencing.

Storage will be organized with marked spaces; set back 600–800 feet from the road; nearby visible RV park cited as precedent.

- Chairman, Mike McKee made a comment about the traffic.
- Gerry Solenski spoke about one way in.
- Wendy Grennell stated there is one way in and out. The cuts for 47 are already there.
- Jody DuPree spoke about there being no turn lane, 2-way road.
- Jody Dupree made a comment about open storage close to the mini storage opened and closed. Driving by gas things that can blow up and a rural area.
- Wendy Grennell stated that there are parking spaces for certain things. Can not really see it from 47 for the tree covering. Boats and RV and certain parking.
- Gerry Solenski spoke about putting up wind screening and privacy fence.
- Jody Dupree spoke about the storage /campground going in about 400 – 500 feet up the road.
- Wendy Grennell stated that the RV Park going up is 700 – 800 feet up the road and out of view cannot be seen.
- Walt Graham asked a question about the storage being separated.
- Wendy Grennell stated that yes, they are separate.
- **Chairman, Mike McKee - Closed Public Hearing**
- Board Comments: Can recommend access restrictions; site plan handled administratively; agent agreed to meet zoning, FDOT, and lighting requirements.
- Conclusion: Board voted unanimously to approve SE-260304, contingent on a satisfactory site development plan and required agency reviews.

MOTION by Walt Graham to approve Special Exception SE-260304 on the contingent on a satisfactory site development plan and required agency review. SECOND by Jody DuPree. The motion carried unanimously.

County Planner, Seth Lane – see attached documents

Special Exception for a Flea Market (same property near SW 47 and Elim/Eagle Church Road; item referenced as SE 260305 in discussion)

- Proposal: Covered flea market under existing large pole barn; 30–35 vendors; family-friendly activities under roof (no tents). Existing multiple septic systems and large wells noted; compliance with health department required. Attendance

uncertain (few hundred in a day estimate). FDOT may not allow 2 entrances, will wait on the traffic report. See the site developer's plan.

- Gerry Solenski made a request to County Planner, Seth Lane to send an email 24 hours before the meeting (site developer's plan).

- **Chairman, Mike McKee - Opened Public Hearing:**

- Wendy Grennell presented the site plans to Chairman, Mike McKee and was accepted.

Wendy Grennell still under oath, stated that at this time really did not know about the Traffic and Safety at Highway 47 and Eagle/Elim Church Road; past issues from prior uses, potential need for traffic light; FDOT traffic study required; possible driveway limitations. Questions about compatibility with rural character, noise, and scope creep into event center uses. Definitions in LDRs lack precision; enforcement is complaint driven.

Gerry Solenski made a comment about whether it will be booths.

Wendy Grennell answered no it will be tents.

Gerry Solenski made a comment about the resident next to the flea market.

Wendy Grennell answered that only one is a lady and she has a Pet Grooming business and there are 2 big wells.

- Conditions Discussed: Potential limits on days/hours (Thu–Sun, 8:00–18:00), vendor cap (35), under-roof operations, restrictions on tents and large amusement rides, treatment of food trucks, parking/ADA compliance.
- Jody DuPree made the comment about 30-35 vendors and the traffic flow.
- Wendy Grennell answered that at this time we do not know the traffic flow.
- Gerry Solenski made a comment about the noise.
- Wendy Grennell stated that they have talked to the neighbors.
- Public Comment was made by Thomas Bryant after he was sworn in. He stated that he has concerns about the agriculture property issue. He made a comment about the traffic issue but agrees that something needs to be done there. He had a question about if something happened to Mr. Lynn Hackett with the zoning enforcement. How big is the pole barn?
- Wendy Grennell stated that the pole barn is 88 x 42.
- Discussion ensued
- Public comments were made about the traffic from a flea market being there and it being zoned agriculture land for a reason.
- **Chairman, Mike McKee - Closed Public Hearing**

- Staff to draft specific, enforceable conditions (including prohibited large amusement rides) and clarify transferability/enforcement mechanisms.

Walt Graham stated that intersection will be developed eventually.

- Jody DuPree made a comment about site plan approval.
- County Planner Seth Lane stated to look at the simple business plan. Grant certain times only for the Flea Market, if they do not follow code then they will shut it down. Whatever the Board approves.
- Discussion ensued.
- County Planner, Seth Lane spoke about in the LDR there is no definition for Flea Market.
- Chairman, Mike McKee asked for a motion from the Board
- Motion was made by Jody DuPree to table the flea market item to the next meeting (on or after June 25, 2026) to craft precise, enforceable conditions and for the applicant to submit a detailed business plan to define flea market. FDOT traffic study and site development standards will be required. Large-format plans should be provided digitally (PDF) for review. Second by Walt Graham. The motion carried unanimously.

County Planner, Seth Lane – see attached documents

Special Exception SE-260302: Telecommunications Tower, a petition by Joel Rousseau agent for Marvin and Neomia B. Brown, requesting a Special Exception to place a communications tower on the land as described below: Parcel #08-7S-17-09956-000 located at TBD SW Scrubtown Road.□

Chairman, Mike McKee - Opened Public Hearing:

Nex Tower (presented by Darren Taylor; also referenced by agent Joel Rousseau). Proposed 265-foot self-supporting tower in AG zoning (Agricultural Three), about 900 feet off County Road 788 and 350 feet from nearest non-applicant-owned residence. Designed for up to four carriers; T-Mobile as anchor; addresses RF coverage gap (~3 miles from nearest tower). Minimal impacts to traffic, water, and sewer. Staff and outside consultant recommended approval.

- Ownership/Transfer Discussion: Whether the special exception runs with the property or the applicant remains ambiguous in current LDRs. Nex Tower's lease structure (five years with multiple renewals, up to ~40 years) explained; if company dissolves, lease may revert to carriers. Clarification sought for future LDR updates and legal guidance.

- Jody DuPree asked a question about the provider Nex Tower and the 3 other carriers who keep going and what happens next with the special exception and the 20 acres who belong to Marvin and Neomia B. Brown.
- Joel Rousseau spoke about the lease would go back to the carriers.
- Jody DuPree spoke about allowing the special exception.
- County Planner, Seth Lane spoke about the LDR updates.
- County Planner, Seth Lane made a comment about having the Attorney for the Planning and Zoning Board, Patrick Krechowski clean the language up for the special exceptions.
- Attorney to provide written clarification on whether the special exception runs with the land or the applicant and the process upon ownership/lease changes.
- Joel Rousseau spoke about the leased towers being 80 x 80, and under contract with the carriers for 25-30 years.
- **Chairman, Mike McKee - Closed Public Hearing**
- Conclusion: Board approved SE-260302. Attorney to clarify how special exceptions apply upon ownership changes.
- MOTION by Jody Dupree to approve Special Exception SE-260302 on the contingent that the Attorney will clarify how the special exceptions apply upon ownership changes. SECOND by Gerry Solenski. The motion carried unanimously.

Staff Matters:

Approval/Adoption of previous meeting minutes from April 23, 2026

MOTION by Jody DuPree to approve and adopt the previous meeting minutes from April 23, 2026. Second by Gerry Solenski. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business, the Planning & Zoning meeting adjourned at 6:51 P.M.

ATTEST:

Mike McKee, Chairman

Seth Lane, County Planner

