



**PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
1100 Glenn Street
Cooper Room at Opelika Public Library**

(The location for this meeting has moved due to construction in the City Council Chambers.)

July 22, 2025

TIME: 3:00 PM

- I. WELCOME - Some items at this meeting will have a designated public hearing (noted below). Individuals are limited to one 5-minute comment period per public hearing.
- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The City of Opelika Planning Commission held its regular monthly meeting July 22, 2025, in the Meeting Chambers, located at 1100 Glenn Street, Cooper Room at Opelika Public Library. Certified letters have been mailed to all adjacent property owners for related issues.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Lucinda Cannon, Mayor Gary Fuller, Mr. Sheldon Whittelsey, Councilman George Allen, Dr. Arturo Menefee, Mr. Michael Hilyer, Mr. Jay Walters, and Mr. John Sweatman.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mrs. Leigh Whatley

STAFF PRESENT: Mr. Matt Mosley, Planning Director
Mr. Martin Ogren, Assistant Planning Director
Mrs. Dana Gafford, Planning & Zoning Technician
Mr. Scott Parker, City Engineer
Mr. Guy Gunter, City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Lucinda Cannon called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

- A. Previous Minutes
1. Called Meeting - May 1st, 2025

Approval of Planning Commission Minutes for May 1st, 2025

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Director John Sweatman
SECONDER:	Sheldon Whittelsey
AYES:	Chair Cannon, Walters, Whittelsey, Hilyer, Menefee, Mayor Fuller, Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Director Sweatman
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

2. Regular Meeting - May 27, 2025

Approval of Planning Commission Minutes May 27, 2025

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Mayor Gary Fuller
SECONDER: Arturo Menefee
AYES: Chair Cannon, Walters, Whittelsey, Hilyer, Menefee, Mayor Fuller, Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Director Sweatman
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

3. Regular Meeting - June 24, 2025

Approval of Planning Commission Minutes June 24, 2025

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Arturo Menefee
SECONDER: Director John Sweatman
AYES: Chair Cannon, Walters, Whittelsey, Hilyer, Menefee, Mayor Fuller, Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Director Sweatman
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

III. UPDATE ON PREVIOUS PC CASES

Mr. Mosley stated that items 11 and 12 were tabled at the June meeting. The applicant, King Honda, has requested that the items remain on the table. The planning staff recommends these items stay on the table for another 30 days.

Mr. Gunter introduced Robbie Treese as the new Deputy City Attorney. Robbie has been practicing for 35 years. He was in private practice the first four years of his career, then served in prosecution services, and later moved on to be the district attorney in Lee County for six years. He started working for the City Of Opelika on Monday, July 21st, 2025.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

B. PLAT (Preliminary Only) – Public Hearing

4. Summit Point SD, 68 lots, Edgar Hughston Builder, Inc., 2800 block Lee Road 391 (Old Columbus Road), preliminary approval.

Mr. Mosley presented the staff report to the Planning Commission for preliminary plat approval of Summit Point, located on the north side of Lee Road 391, adjacent to the city limits of Lee County. He stated that this item had been before the planning commission previously and was denied due to the length of blocks and how long the road was without any breaks. The applicant has readjusted the design from the original 40 lots to the current 68 lots. The lots range from 15,000 sq. feet up to 18 acres. The lots now have multiple roads coming off of the main road, which alleviates the previous block length issue. He stated that the plat does not meet fire access for the city. It will remain outside the city limits without annexing at this time. It does meet subdivision regulations, therefore the planning staff is recommending preliminary plat approval that would be subject to the following:

- 1. This plat will need to be approved by the Lee County Planning Commission.**
- 2. Add a signature line for the City Planner, Planning Chair, the City Engineer, Opelika Power Services, Opelika Water Board, and Public Works.**
- 3. Lots 1 and 68 shall not take access from Old Columbus Road (Lee Road 391).**
- 4. All utilities shall be underground.**
- 5. Sidewalks shall be required on one side of the street.**

Mr. Parker provided the reports for Engineering, Opelika Water, and Opelika Power Services.

Chair Cannon opened the public hearing.

Tyler Findley of Houghston Homes made himself available for any questions.

Dee Dee Johnson, 520 Lee Road 419, expressed concerns from an adjacent property owners' standpoint, that the lot sizes have been reduced and worries about the type of homes that will be built on the new lots and how that will affect the property values of the surrounding area.

Chair Cannon stated that this would be a question for the developer.

Tony Johnson, 520 Lee Road 419, asked if each lot would have to be perked due to the septic tanks?

Mr. Mosley affirmed.

Mr. Johnson inquired about buffers between existing property and new development.

Mr. Mosley stated that he received an email from Larry & Martha White stating that they are still opposed to the subdivision, but if the plat is approved, they request that large shrubbery be planted as a buffer between the subdivision and Old Columbus Road. A buffer would provide a sense of privacy, decrease road noise and would be aesthetically pleasing to subdivision residents as well as existing homeowners and those traveling on Columbus Road.

Chair Cannon closed the public hearing.

Motion to grant preliminary plat approval with staff recommendations

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Director John Sweatman
SECONDER:	Mayor Gary Fuller
DISCUSSION	Mr. Mosley stated that the planning staff do not require buffers. Chair Cannon stated that the questions presented need to be addressed to the developers as opposed to the Planning Commission.
AYES:	Chair Cannon, Walters, Whittelsey, Hilyer, Menefee, Mayor Fuller, Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Director Sweatman
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

5. Piedmont Farms SD, 33 lots, Waverly Parkway, Blake Rice, BSI, Inc., authorized representative for Piedmont Farms, LLC, property owner, preliminary approval.

Mr. Mosley presented the staff report to the Planning Commission for the preliminary plat approval for the 33-lot, Piedmont Farm Subdivision. He stated that lots 21-24 will take access from Waverly Parkway. Lots 21, 22, and 23 will share access from an existing driveway off Waverly Parkway. Lots 25 and 26 will have a shared driveway off Terracewood Drive. Lots 27-33 will take access from Terracewood Drive. Lots 1-20 will have access from the new road, Mockingbird Drive. Lots 23-33 range in size from 20,000 sq. feet to 1.13 acres and Lots 1-22 range in size from 2 to 10.67 acres. These lots meet or exceed the R-2 lot requirements.

Planning staff recommend preliminary approval subject to:

- 1. Opelika already has a Mockingbird Lane, although not a Mockingbird Drive.**

2. The name and address of the owner/developer should appear on the plat.
3. Add a note to restrict access to Lot 25 from Waverly Parkway.
4. Sidewalks shall be installed on both sides of the street.
5. Utilities shall be underground.

Mr. Parker provided the reports for the Engineering, Opelika Water, and Opelika Power Services.

Chair Cannon opened the public hearing.

Ruth Meadow, 1801 Arrowhead Avenue, asked for confirmation that the utilities would be underground. She stated that there is an existing subdivision that exits onto Arrowhead, and this new subdivision would add additional traffic onto a dead end street and suggested that it become a cul-de-sac instead of an access road. She further asked if there would be septic tanks or sewers?

Mr. Parker stated that he was fairly certain there would be sewer connections on the larger lots. He also stated that engineering looks for interconnectivity between subdivisions. Because this road connects Arrowhead to Terracewood, there will be additional access out of Arrowhead, as right now there is only one. He stated that he believes this is a positive.

Ms. Meadows stated that she feels it is a negative.

Chair Cannon closed the public hearing.

Motion to grant preliminary plat approval with staff recommendations

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Arturo Menefee
SECONDER:	Director John Sweatman
DISCUSSION	Chair Cannon inquired about the lot sizes on Terracewood. Mr. Mosley stated that the smallest one is 95 and the largest is 130.
AYES:	Chair Cannon, Walters, Whittelsey, Hilyer, Menefee, Mayor Fuller, Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Director Sweatman
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

C. PLAT (Preliminary and Final) – Public Hearing

6. Firefly Phase 1 SD, Redivision of Lots 41 to 59, 19 lots, Summer Drive, Spencer Cothran, authorized representative for Holland Homes, Inc., property owner, preliminary and final approval.

Mr. Mosley presented the staff report to the Planning Commission for the request of approval for the preliminary/final redivision of the Firefly PUD. He stated that there are 13 townhomes located on lots 29, 30, 41 to 45, 49 and 51. These were developed along the rear lot line of Firefly, with parking located behind the development. During construction, the parking lot was extended into the open space area. He stated that the applicant is requesting to re-plat the lots so that they are on individual property and not in the open space. The Planning Department staff is recommending preliminary/final plat approval, as there is no public infrastructure related to it.

Mr. Parker provided the reports for the Engineering, Opelika Water, and Opelika Power Services.

Chair Cannon opened the public hearing.

No comments.

Chair Cannon closed the public hearing.

Motion to grant preliminary and final plat approval with staff recommendations

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Arturo Menefee

SECONDER: Director John Sweatman

AYES: Chair Cannon, Walters, Whittelsey, Hilyer, Menefee, Mayor Fuller, Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Director Sweatman

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

D. FINAL PLAT

7. Foxrun Extension SD, 43 lots, Douglas Street, Blake Rice, BSI, Inc., authorized representative for SMB Land, LLC, property owner, final approval.

Mr. Mosley presented the staff report to the Planning Commission for the final plat approval of the Fox Run Extension Subdivision. The development is 304.5 acres. The applicant is proposing a residential development that would be a mix of different unit types. There are a total of 624 single-family detached residential units. The 624 lots are comprised of: 40 fifty-foot-wide lots, 440 sixty-foot-wide lots, and 144 ninety-foot-wide lots. He states that overall, the density of this development is fairly consistent with the R-2 zone. This is R-3 development, approximately just over two units per acre. R-3 is what is currently three units per acre. So this is actually less than what they could develop strictly on an R-3 zone.

Mr. Parker provided the reports for the Engineering, Opelika Water, and Opelika Power Services.

Motion to grant final plat approval with staff recommendations

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen

SECONDER: Director John Sweatman

AYES: Chair Cannon, Walters, Whittelsey, Hilyer, Menefee, Mayor Fuller, Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Director Sweatman

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

8. McCoy Townhomes SD, 21 lots, McCoy Street, John Hamm, authorized representative for Wayne Gentry, property owner, final approval.

Mr. Mosley presented the staff report to the Planning Commission for the final plat approval of McCoy Townhomes Subdivision. He stated that the original subdivision was approved in July 2023 with at least one extension. He stated they are requesting final plat approval for 25 lots on 3.3 acres. The townhomes will be constructed on 21 lots. All the lots are accessed off of a private internal street that goes through the development. The 21 townhome lots exceed the minimum requirements for townhouse developments. Lots 23, 25, and 26 are designated open space. He stated that the one change in the revised plan that was part of the original Planning

Commission approval, is the requirement to dedicate Stowe Avenue to the City of Opelika as a public street for future development.

Staff recommend final plat approval subject to the following:

- 1. All utilities must be underground.**
- 2. Provide a sidewalk along the private drive to extend to McCoy Street on each side. This shall include the developed frontage of the street to be dedicated.**

Mr. Parker provided the reports for the Engineering, Opelika Water, and Opelika Power Services.

Motion to grant final plat approval with staff recommendations

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Arturo Menefee
SECONDER:	Sheldon Whittelsey
DISCUSSION	Director Sweatman asked if the development would be gated. Mr. Parker stated that there was no plan to, but it could be gated.
AYES:	Chair Cannon, Walters, Whittelsey, Hilyer, Menefee, Mayor Fuller, Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Director Sweatman
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

E. CONDITIONAL USE – Public Hearing

9. Anyana Williams, authorized representative for James Kirk, property owner, 1508 2nd Avenue, C-2, GC-S, restaurant

Mr. Mosley presented the staff report to the Planning Commission for the conditional use approval of a proposed restaurant, located at 1508 2nd Avenue, in the C-2 zone of the secondary gateway corridor. The property has a heating and cooling business in the front of the building and the proposed restaurant would be built in the back of the building as a large covered area with a grill, kettle cooker and seating areas. It is being considered for conditional use because the majority of the sales would be to-go orders.

The Planning staff are recommending conditional use subject to the following recommendations:

- 1. Stripe the existing parking lot and proposed parking spaces as shown on the site plan and include a 13 x 18 handicap parking space with handicap parking sign.**
- 2. Screen the dumpster with a solid opaque material at a height, so the dumpster is not seen outside the fence.**
- 3. Install landscaping as shown on the landscape plan.**

Mr. Parker provided the reports for the Engineering, Opelika Water, and Opelika Power Services.

Chair Cannon opened the public hearing.

Anyana Williams spoke on behalf of the proposed restaurant. She stated that they want to have a nice, positive, family-friendly atmosphere where people can enjoy fresh food and occasionally live entertainment.

Chair Cannon closed the public hearing.

Motion to grant conditional use approval with staff recommendations

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen

SECONDER: Mayor Gary Fuller

AYES: Chair Cannon, Walters, Whittelsey, Hilyer, Menefee, Mayor Fuller, Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Director Sweatman

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

F. AMENDMENT TO FUTURE LAND USE MAP and REZONING – Public Hearing

10. (a) Amendment to Future Land Use Map, Ridge Road, 304.5 acres, from a medium density land use category to a mixed-use land use category.

(b) Rezoning Request, Blake Rice, BSI, Inc., authorized representative for Viva Opelika, LLC, property owner, Ridge Road, 304.5 acres, from R-3 and C-2 to PUD (Woodhaven PUD).

The development is 304.5 acres. The applicant is proposing a residential development that would be a mix of different unit types. There are a total of 624 single-family detached residential units. The 624 lots are comprised of: 40 fifty-foot-wide lots, 440 sixty-foot-wide lots, and 144 ninety-foot-wide lots. He states that overall, the density of this development is fairly consistent with the R-2 zone. This is R-3 development, approximately just over two units per acre. R-3 is what is currently three units per acre. So this is actually less than what they could develop strictly on an R-3 zone.

Mr. Parker provided the reports for the Engineering, Opelika Water, and Opelika Power Services.

Chair Cannon opened the public hearing.

Alfred Mitchell, 703 North Uniroyal Road, stated that the power line borders the property and asked if there would be a buffer?

Blake Rice responded that there is a buffer.

Alfred Mitchell asked if the buffer would be left as is?

Blake Rice responded in the affirmative.

Phillip Gorham, asked if there would be damage to the road with the building of all the new homes?

Mr. Parker stated that the quality of the road will be monitored by the city and actions will be taken if the road degrades.

Chair Cannon closed the public hearing.

Motion to send a positive recommendation for future land use development to City Council with staff recommendations

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen

SECONDER: Mike Hilyer

AYES: Chair Cannon, Walters, Whittelsey, Hilyer, Menefee, Mayor Fuller,
Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Director Sweatman
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

Motion to send a positive recommendation for rezoning to City Council with staff recommendations

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Director John Sweatman
SECONDER: Arturo Menefee
AYES: Chair Cannon, Walters, Whittelsey, Hilyer, Menefee, Mayor Fuller,
Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Director Sweatman
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

V. OLD BUSINESS

G. CONDITIONAL USE - Public Hearing

11. Dave King, authorized representative of King Automobiles, Inc., Northwest corner of Dunlop Drive & Hwy 280, C-3, GC-P, Commercial retail. *(This item was tabled at the June 24th Planning Commission meeting.)*

Tabled for August 26, 2025 meeting

12. Dave King, authorized representative of King Automobiles, Inc., Front Corner of Highway 280 Northwest corner of Dunlop Drive and Hwy 280, C-3, GC-P, Commercial retail. *(This item was tabled at the June 24th Planning Commission meeting.)*

Tabled for August 26, 2025 meeting

VI. ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn at 3:54 p.m.

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Director John Sweatman
SECONDER: Sheldon Whittelsey
AYES: Chair Cannon, Walters, Whittelsey, Hilyer, Menefee, Mayor Fuller,
Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Director Sweatman
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

Chairman Lucinda Cannon

Matt Mosley