



PLANNING DIVISION MEMORANDUM

TO: Beaufort County Planning Commission
FROM: Anthony Criscitiello, Planning Director
DATE: March 29, 2010
SUBJECT: Proposed Amendment to the ZDSO to Permit Towing Businesses in the Commercial Regional (CR) Zoning District

A. BACKGROUND

Case No. ZTA-2010-04

Applicant/Owner: Joshua Sigler

Affected Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance (ZDSO) section: Article V, Table 106-1098 (General Use Table)

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST

Mr. Sigler would like to operate a small towing business on US 278 in a Commercial Regional (CR) zoning district. Towing businesses are permitted in the Light Industrial (LI), Industrial Park (IP) and Rural Business (RB) districts, but are not allowed in CR districts.

C. ANALYSIS

Section 106-493 of the ZDSO lists 7 standards (below), any of which is cause for a Zoning Text Amendment. Analysis will address all those that are applicable to this text change request.

Sec. 106-493. Standards for zoning text amendment.

A zoning ordinance text amendment may be approved if:

1. It would implement a new portion of the comprehensive plan or amendment.

(Not Applicable)

2. It would implement and better achieve the comprehensive plan's goals and objectives that have proved difficult to achieve under the ordinance's existing provisions.

(Not Applicable)

3. The ordinance's provisions were inconsistent or unreasonable in light of standards for similar uses.

(Not Applicable)

4. It is necessary to respond to state and/or federal legislation.

(Not Applicable)

5. It provides additional flexibility in meeting the ordinance's objectives without lowering the ordinance's general standards.

Towing businesses are classified in the ZDSO as light industrial uses. These businesses are primarily involved in motor vehicle towing and the storage of vehicles. They may also provide incidental services such as emergency road repair services. Currently, these uses are permitted in the Light Industrial (LI), Industrial Park (IP) and Rural Business (RB) districts, but are not allowed in CR districts

The Commercial Regional (CR) zoning district permits a wide range of retail, service and office uses. These uses often include large commercial activities that serve the entire county and highway oriented businesses that need to be located on major highways. Exterior storage is limited and accessory to the principal commercial use. In southern Beaufort County, CR zoning districts are generally concentrated along US 278. In northern Beaufort County, CR zoning is clustered along US 21, SC 280 and SC 170 in the Burton area. These major roadways are also within the County's Highway Corridor Overlay District (HCO), which mandates additional landscaping and architectural standards intended to enhance and protect the aesthetic quality of development along these highways.

Currently, the zoning districts in the County's ZDSO regulate use over form or design. In this regulatory environment, towing businesses, which typically have large, fenced-in storage areas for cars and trucks and small, accessory dispatch/office facilities, are better suited to light industrial areas that permit similar types of uses than to major roadway corridors that serve as entrances to the County's municipalities.

6. It addresses a new use, changing conditions, and/or clarifies existing language.

(Not Applicable)

7. It clarifies the ordinance or makes adjustments to account for interpretation.

(Not Applicable)

D. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

After review of the guidelines set forth in Section 106-493 of the ZDSO, staff recommends denial of this request.

E. ATTACHMENTS

- Copy of application for Zoning Text Amendment