



MEMORANDUM

TO: Beaufort County Planning Commission
FROM: Anthony Criscitiello, Beaufort County Planning Director
DATE: May 28, 2010
RE: Proposed Changes to Rural Zoning

Background: Last spring at the April 27, 2009 meeting, County Council gave third and final reading to amend the Land Use chapter of our Comprehensive Plan to recommend changes to our rural land use policies to provide greater flexibility to small property owners. This policy change was a result of a public process that took place over the previous year that included two series of meetings in the rural areas of Beaufort County.

The proposed amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance (ZDSO) will implement these rural land use policies. The following is the recommendation that was adopted in our Land Use Chapter in 2009 that is being implemented through this amendment:

Recommendation 4-15: Rural Small Lot Subdivision

Beaufort County should modify the ZDSO to allow for small lot rural subdivisions:

- For areas north of the Whale Branch River and on St. Helena Island, allow parcels of record in rural zones to have three by-right subdivided lots, after which the base underlying zoning density would apply.
- For areas on Port Royal Island outside of the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ), allow parcels of record in rural zones to have two by-right subdivided lots, after which the base underlying zoning density would apply.
- Provide for a minimum lot size of one acre for such by-right subdivided lots.
- In connection with this recommendation, rezone land currently zoned Rural Residential to the Rural zoning designation.
- This policy should not apply to rural and rural residential properties located south of the Broad River, on Lady's Island, on Coosaw Island, and within the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ).

Summary of Amendments

1. An amendment to the zoning map is proposed to change all parcels currently zoned rural residential to rural that are located north of the Whale Branch River, on St. Helena Island, and on Port Royal Island outside of the Airport Overlay District (see attached map).
2. A text amendment to Article 12, Divisions 2 and 3 are proposed to establish the Rural Small Lot Subdivision (see attached text changes).

Summary of Potential Impact of Changes: During the public process that led to the policy changes in the Comprehensive Plan, significant work was done to attempt to assess the impact of the proposed changes to rural. The Planning Department estimates that the proposed changes may result in a slight increase in the total number of properties that could potentially be subdivided and built on. The chart below compares estimated development in St. Helena Island, Sheldon and Port Royal Island for the year 2025 with our existing rural and rural residential zoning and with the proposed changes. St. Helena Island is estimated to gain 536 additional units, Sheldon 77 and Port Royal Island 107.

Region	Existing Number of Dwelling Units	Projected Number of Dwelling Units 2025	Projected Number of Dwelling Units 2025 with Rural Changes
St. Helena Island	4,610	6,446	6,982
Sheldon	2,239	3,283	3,360
Port Royal Island		1,974	2,081

Beaufort County

Proposed Zone District Amendment

From Rural Residential District to Rural
in Sheldon, Port Royal Island, & St Helena Island.
Excluding the Rural Residential within the
Boundaries for MCAS - Beaufort

Affected
Rural Residential
Parcels

AICUZ
Footprint

