

City of Orangeburg
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2026
6:00 pm

Members Present

Guy Best – Chairman
Dr. Shirlan Mosley-Jenkins – Vice-Chairwoman
Paula Payton
Stephon Edwards II
John Wolfe
Vincent Pendarvis

Absent

Jeanna Reynolds

Staff Members

Theresa Williams, Assistant City Administrator
Kenith Salley, Jr., Administrative Coordinator
Clayton Bozard, Director of Innovation & Technology
David Epting, Public Works Director & Building Official
Russell Strosnider, Building Inspector

Citizens from the community 19
Guests (Developers) 1

PUBLIC HEARING 1

Chairman Guy Best opened Public Hearing 1 at 6:00 PM to consider a Zoning District Map change from A-2 Residential, Multi-Unit District to A-3, Residential, General District for property belonging to Maddie FR & Tru Ryder Services, LLC located at 841 Oak Street TMS# 0173-10-10-030.000.

Developer Luis Cardozo from Guss Homes, LLC stated, “I am the builder on proposed changes of zoning. We are trying to change the zoning so we can build student housing due to the demand for the Universities. I will be happy to answer any questions you guys might have.”

Commissioner Paula Payton stated, “I would like to hear more about your project.”

Developer Luis Cardozo stated, “On 841 Oak Street, we have designed four units with four bedrooms as you can see on the rendering. Every apartment has four bedrooms, a living room, and kitchen. We have parking spaces for every bedroom as required. Our intentions are to bring the area up, I do not know if you are familiar with that area over there, it is very stressful, and it needs something a little bit nicer to bring the area up as well. We are trying to bring also more space for the college students, so they can come in and have a place, a nice place to stay and enjoy Orangeburg.”

Commissioner Payton stated, “I want to say, it is a good thing what you are doing for student housing, I just do not see that area for that, since it is an established neighborhood and it is a small neighborhood, and I know that will cause lots of traffic to come through, not only for the people who live there, but then their visitors and things of that nature. Will it be just for South Carolina State students?”

Developer Luis Cardozo replied, “It will be for both Claflin and South Carolina State students’, it is right across the street from the property.”

City of Orangeburg
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2026
6:00 pm

Commissioner Payton stated, "This is what I think about the project, it is a lovely project but is there more land in another place or another spot that has more land that is not already populated, because Oak Street is populated, and students already come up and down on that street, that is my take on it."

Developer Luis Cardozo stated, "I understand, we bought through two properties over there and combine both to create more space. It is a house that is two houses across the street and one next door to us that is basically abandoned, it has nothing over there. I understand the concern about the traffic situation, and there are good neighbors living close to that main road and we will create a little bit of traffic there but also bring life to the end of the street. It looks very dangerous to me if you go there at night, with all those abandoned houses, it really needs more life in that area, with the students there, we will bring security, cameras, and lights to that whole area. It will be a little bit of a give and take; I get what you are saying but also is going to bring things that little area really needs it."

Vice-Chair Shirlan Jenkins stated, "You did mention four bedrooms. How many bathrooms would be in each unit?"

Developer Luis Cardozo replied, "Each unit has one bathroom for each bedroom. So, it has four bedrooms and four bathrooms. We sized the property to commit where there will be no cars parked on the street; all cars will be parked inside. So, every bedroom will have parking space."

Vice-Chair Jenkins stated, "Did you consider the zoning of that property before you purchase?"

Developer Luis Cardozo replied, "No, I did not. When we purchased, I did not know what to do with the property. In the beginning, I was trying to figure out what to build there. We see a demand where all the universities are looking for more places to house students, that is when we decided to design the apartments. Once I went to the city, and I discovered I could not put student housing there if I did not change the zoning, that is why we are here asking for that change"

Commissioner Vincent Pendarvis stated, "As far as security, how would that be managed? That is an area that has a lot of things going on within the campuses and the colleges in that area. From my understanding, there is Peasley Street at the end and an open space at the bottom of the street. I went by to check make sure, so how would the security be managed going in and out? I understand you have parking, but the security is more so a concern."

Developer Luis Cardozo replied, "All the projects that I developed, we have cameras throughout property such as the proximity, with parking lot lights, cameras, and we have staff that will be monitoring all the properties. Just like what we are currently building on Amelia Street, the complexes on Amelia Street we are bringing staff to be able to monitor all the projects. Every project that we build, we are going to have personnel that will manage the property and oversee what is going on around it."

Commissioner Payton stated, "Have you taken any consideration for environmental conditions like drainage, preserving the trees behind the property?"

Developer Luis Cardozo replied, "If you look at that rendering that I presented, once everything is developed, landscape is a part of the permitting we are putting together. There will be a creek in the back, so all of that will be preserved. We will have trees and fencing all the way around the property to enhance whole area, that is a must, we want all the projects that we build to be as nice as possible with landscaping."

City of Orangeburg
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2026
6:00 pm

Mr. Bernard Haire, 919 Oak Street stated, "I have been a resident over on Oak Street for over 55 years. The information I have provided to you is what I received from the City Hall concerning what this project was all about, and it talks about rezoning from A-2 residential, multi-unit district to A-3 residential, mobile home district. What I am hearing is different from what I received. I spoke with the city assistant city administrator, I was told that it is going to be student housing, but that was not what I received officially. I am opposed even to student housing. If we put students on that street right now, there is no way through on Oak Street. Once you get to the park, it is blocked. The parties that will take place, cameras are not going to prevent that. When students want to have a party, they are going to have a party, and that is going to interrupt the peace and quiet that I have enjoyed over 55 years. And for that reason, I am totally against either project, that which I passed to you, or the new proposal I have heard about student housing. I am opposed to it, and I would ask that we deny that request for change in the zoning of that property."

Ms. Mary Dibble, 2642 Lakeside Drive stated, "I have not heard anybody say, or at least clearly say, what impact it would have on individual properties as far as taxes is concerned, as far as the width of the street, people traveling up and down. I would like to have more information about this project. It is a beautiful looking project, but it does not fit in with what is already there. I would be against it also."

Mr. Antonio Sharperson, 851 Oak Street stated, "From what I have seen since we have had housing there for the college students, it is not a bad thing, but there have been numerous times where there have been parties and public safety has come and had to shut them down, the width of the street if you park on both sides does not allow vehicles to pass. When I was working on second shift, I got off from work, and I could not get down the street to get home because the street was full of cars. So, I am against it, too."

Larry McCutcheon, 695 Pikes Creek stated, "I have a question for the committee. Are you considering mobile units? When you say multi-units, is it to change the neighborhood completely?"

Chairman Best asked, "Mrs. Williams. Would you like to address that?"

Assistant City Administrator, Theresa Williams stated, "Yes, I would like to address that. When we sent the initial letter out, the initial letter did reference mobile home district, we corrected that and sent out a second letter. However, just so that you understand, the definition of A-2 does allow for single family and multi-family homes, but it does not allow student housing. A-3 also allows single family and multi-family homes, it does allow for student housing, but it has to be approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals. If A-3 is approved, it does open that area for mobile homes. However, to get this student housing project done, it has to be reclassified as an A-3. Then, if it is approved by City Council, it would have to go to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a special exception to allow for this type of dwelling to be built."

Larry McCutcheon, 695 Pikes Creek stated, Thank you very much for your explanation. I am clearly opposed to that, because it does open up for mobile homes, and I heard your responses relate to parking when there is a party, people park all over the place, and you have an older group of persons who live there, plus it is a historic district to some degree. So, I would hope that you will not consider rezoning the area for the safety of the residents who live there already, and I am clearly opposed to putting mobile units in that area."

City of Orangeburg
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2026
6:00 pm

Councilmember Annette Grevious, resident on Oak Street stated, "I would like to commend Guss Homes, LLC, on the project that they are proposing, the projects that they have already started in our community, and their efforts to assist with student housing. I think Orangeburg offers a lot of land and spaces for student housing. However, I am for preserving our neighborhoods in Orangeburg, this particular neighborhood specifically has older residents, as someone has said previously, while this group may feel that some of those houses are dilapidated or in need of some attention, I think there are individuals who are intending to redevelop those areas and pay some special attention to those areas, while also preserving the neighborhood and the residents that are there, student housing is needed in this community. However, I do not feel that it is needed on this particular street."

Sallie Strong, 361 Boulevard Street stated, "For the past 70 plus years, I have been in that neighborhood from Fair Street to Oak Street, it has always been my neighborhood. When you talk about zoning, we are the zone, and we have had facilities provided for our children by founder, Ms. Zimmerman, for the Peter Street Park. We have had others from other neighborhoods around the city to enjoy it, that is where they came to have fun and fellowship. So would like to preserve the neighborhood, and I am against any other properties being structured."

Ms. Daysell Chavis, 971 Freeland Street stated, "I was born and raised on Oak Street, and I am 92 years old. I live in another neighborhood now, but I visit Oak Street because I have been there so many years, and I'm opposed to this."

Mr. Samuel Huggins, 345 Boulevard Street, "I live on the Boulevard Street just around the corner, and I am totally in agreement with Councilman Haire and Ms. Sallie Strong. I read the first part of information that mentioned mobile homes, and it was said earlier that there is a possibility that that could be slipped in later. I agree with Councilman Haire and Ms. Strong there, because we do not need that type of activity because a lot of us grew up there, and we consider that as homestead and a lot of history. So, we disagree."

Mr. Bernard Haire, 919 Oak Street stated, "It was my intention to mention that redevelopments are taking place on Oak Street. So even though there are places that are run down, there are developers who are doing work over as we speak."

PUBLIC HEARING 2

Chairman Guy Best opened Public Hearing 2 to consider a Zoning District Map change from A-2 Residential, Multi-Unit District to A-3, Residential, General District for property belonging to Maddie FR & Tru Ryder Services, LLC located at 1090 College Avenue TMS# 0173-07-21-001.000.

Developer Luis Cardozo stated, "This is another one of our projects where are trying to put it student housing. It has a different design, but this is very similar to Oak Street. It has four bedrooms with four baths, and same parking space. We will have parking space for every bedroom for the students, and we are asking to change the zone for the building."

Commissioner Payton asked, "How many students would it be per room?"

Developer Luis Cardozo replied, "One student per room. It will be five units with four students per unit, but bedroom wise the same as Oak Street, it only allows one student per bedroom."

City of Orangeburg
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2026
6:00 pm

Ms. Armenta Owens, 2514 Belleville Road stated, "My question is, there are elderly people on the College Avenue area, and I am speaking because I have a person who has just completed the purchase of a home there who was homeless years ago. What happens to the elderly people who cannot afford the housing that these apartments will bring? And I'm against apartments, very much so, because one person can damage and the whole unit is in disarray for several months. So, what happens when these elderly people who are like me, 80 plus years old and older. Where do they go? How can they afford it when they are on low income called Social Security? And as I said, I am against apartments. I am concerned about the elderly, where do they go? What are you going to give them for their property, if it is not keeping up to the new standard?"

Mr. Bernard Haire, 919 Oak Street stated, "I am a lifelong resident of Orangeburg, I was born and raised here, and I have always lived in the city limits. We hear of people that want to do things to improve the neighborhoods, but we ask that you do nothing to destroy historical neighborhoods that exist here. I do not believe that a developer would allow or want this kind of structure building in his or her neighborhood. When you rent an apartment to one student, then you will have five or six living in that same apartment. So, that is overpopulation and cameras are not going to detect the number of students living in those apartments. So, I would ask that this also be denied, this is an established community, and I would hate to see it destroyed."

Councilmember Annette Grevious, resident on Oak Street stated, "I would like to reiterate what I said earlier by commending the developers for their projects but encouraging them to find other spaces in effort to preserve our neighborhoods. Our neighborhoods are an essential part of the city, and we want to do our best to keep it intact. Preservation is a keyword."

REGULAR MEETING

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Wolfe to approve the minutes from February 19, 2026. The motion was unanimously approved.

New Business

Chairman Best stated, "Under New Business to consider a zoning district map change A-2 Residential, Multi-Unit District to A-3, Residential, General District for property belonging to Maddie FR & Tru Ryder Services, LLC located at 841 Oak Street TMS# 0173-10-10-030.000. Mrs. Williams would you like to address the Commission?"

Assistant City Administrator Williams stated, "Mr. Chairman, members of the Planning Commission, the applicant met all of the requirements for consideration for rezoning."

A motion was made by Commissioner Payton, second by Commissioner Wolfe to deny the request. All Commissioners were in favor, Commissioner Edwards opposed. The motion was unanimously denied.

Chairman Best stated, "Under New Business to consider a zoning district map change A-2 Residential, Multi-Unit District to A-3, Residential, General District for property belonging to Maddie FR & Tru Ryder

City of Orangeburg
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2026
6:00 pm

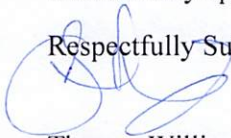
Services, LLC located at 1090 College Avenue TMS# 0173-07-21-001.000. Mrs. Williams would you like to address the Commission?"

Assistant City Administrator Williams stated, "Mr. Chairman, members of the Planning Commission, the applicant met all of the requirements for consideration for rezoning."

A motion was made by Commissioner Payton, second by Commissioner Pendarvis to deny the request. All Commissioners were in favor, Commissioner Edwards opposed. The motion was unanimously denied.

A motion was made by Chairman Best to adjourned, seconded by Commissioner Edwards. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,



Theresa Williams,
Assistant City Administrator