

Madison County Board of Commissioners Approves Zoning Request Despite Opposition

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Madison County Board of Commissioners approved a [previously denied](#) zoning request after several people, over multiple meetings, spoke in opposition to its approval. The approval was during the Board of Commissioners meeting that took place on Dec. 2, 2024 at the Madison County Government Complex. The request involves the rezoning of 16.9 acres from A2 to AR to allow three 5.63-acre splits for homesites.



Madison County Board of Commissioners and the county clerk listen to Conolus Scott Jr., Chairman of Planning & Zoning Commission, speak at the podium about meeting agenda items on Dec. 2, 2024 in the Madison County Government Complex. The meeting covers various issues such as budgeting, taxing, and zoning. (Photo/Andrea Hudson)

The request was made on behalf of Mary German by her attorney, Jeffrey DeLoach, who argued that the request was reasonable and that similar size lots exist in the surrounding area. Two people spoke in opposition to the request including Dale Berrong, who spoke for

several minutes and owns property near the German residence. He claimed that in the past, smaller parcels in the county were illogically zoned.

"Just because of those prior sins doesn't mean that this body has to carry that on," said Berrong.

Commission Chairman, Todd Higdon, seemed to feel differently about Berrong's statements and iterated that a request like German's, aligns with the comprehensive plan.

"Just be careful, when you live in glass houses, not to throw rocks," said Higdon.

The commissioners approved German's request under the conditions that it cannot be divided into more than three parcels and the effective date of the rezone approval would be when the first home is built and an occupancy permit is requested.



University of Georgia Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication student takes notes while in attendance of the Madison County Board of Commissioners meeting on Dec. 2, 2024 in the Madison County Government Complex. The students receive hands-on learning experiences in various media and communication related fields. (Photo/Andrea Hudson)

Later in the meeting, the commissioners also approved the zoning request of Benjamin and Mandy Almand. They requested to rezone their 6.26 acres from A2 to AR to place a second home on the property for Mandy's disabled parents.

Scott Brown, a neighbor of the Almands, spoke strongly in opposition of the request due to privacy concerns. He claimed that he could see the dwelling from the back door of his home. Following the approval of Almand's request, Brown seemed agitated and murmured unclearly in disdain of the decision.

The commissioners selected AMT, [Armentrout Matheny Thurmond, P.C.](#), as the vendor to request qualifications for engineering services for the Madison County water line expansion Community Development Block Grant.

They also approved the proposed amendments to the Fire Protection and Emergency Rescue Services agreement with the original wording of the document, although they did deliberate the phrasing of the financial amounts.

The [agenda](#) for the meeting contained several other matters including the extension of two permits and a discussion regarding 2025 beer and wine license applications. Several vendors had not completed their applications yet.

Why I Wrote The Story

I wrote this story during a course that introduced me to the fundamentals of journalism. The assignment required me to attend and report on a government meeting. It required me to research the attendees and learn the jargon prior to the meeting and speak to sources afterwards. It showed me how much preparation and research goes into reporting and attending events that you may not be familiar with. I believe a solid understanding of a journalist's work is essential to being a better PR professional.