

ST. JOHNS COUNTY
Planning & Zoning Agency
Regular Meeting Minutes
County Auditorium
500 San Sebastian View

Thursday, July 23, 2026, 1:30:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dr. Richard A. Hilsenbeck, District 3, Chair
Judy Spiegel, District 3, Vice-Chair
Gregory Matovina, District 1
Meagan Perkins, District 4
Chuck Labanowski, District 2
Robert Olson, District 5
Henry F. Green, District 5

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

Jacob Smith, Planning Division Manager
Lex Taylor III, Deputy County Attorney
Marie Colee, Assistant Program Manager
Jennifer Gutt, Planning Coordinator

- Call meeting to order
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Reading of the Public Notice statement
- Agency Approval of Minutes: 06/18/2026 and 07/09/2026
 - Motion to Approve by Ms. Spiegel second by Mr. Labanowski (Motion Passes 7/0) with a correction to the effective date for mobile home placement in rezonings (effective 2027).
- Public Comments
 - None

AGENCY ITEMS

1. ZVAR 2026-14 Edgerton Exterior Stair Installation

Request for a Zoning Variance to Table 6.01 of the Land Development Code to allow for a reduced Side Yard setback of five (5) feet in lieu of the required eight (8) feet to allow for the installation of an exterior staircase in Residential, Single Family (RS-3) zoning.

Ex parte communication was disclosed.

Mr. Mack presented details pertaining to the Zoning Variance request.

Agency clarification and discussion regarding the placement of the staircase as well as the potential to move its location as well as renting of the property.

Public Comment: None

Additional Discussion: None

Motion to Deny by Ms. Spiegel second by Labanowski (motion Failed 3 / 4 Dissenting: Green, Olson, Perkins, Hilsenbeck)

Motion to Approve by Perkins second by Green (Motion Passes 4/3: Dissenting: Matovina, Spiegel, Labanowski) ZVAR 2026-14 Edgerton Exterior Stair Installation based upon six (6) findings of fact and six (6) conditions as provided in the Staff Report.

2. ZVAR 2026-16 5068 A1A South Pool.

Request for a Zoning Variance to Table 6.01 of the Land Development Code to allow for a second Front Yard setback of ten (10) feet in lieu of the required twenty-five (25) feet for a Through Lot located next to an unopened right-of-way to accommodate the placement of a swimming pool in RS-3 zoning, specifically located at 5068 A1A South.

Ex parte communication was disclosed.

Mr. McAbee presented details pertaining to the Zoning Variance request.

Agency clarification and discussion regarding the recent acquisition of the property and the hardship already existing at time of purchase and at the same time acknowledging the unopened right of way.

Public Comment: None

Additional Discussion: None

Motion to Approve by Mr. Labanowski second by Mr. Green (Motion Passes 7/0) ZVAR 2026-16 5068 A1A South Pool based on six (6) findings of fact and six (6) conditions, as provided in the Staff Report.

3. ZVAR 2026-17 Jackson Residence

Request for a Zoning Variance to Table 6.01 of the Land Development Code to allow for a Front Yard setback of twenty (20) feet in lieu of the required twenty-five (25) feet to accommodate the placement of a Single-Family residence in RMH(S) zoning, specifically located at 280 Ole Road.

Ex parte communication was disclosed.

Mr. Jackson presented details pertaining to the Zoning Variance request.

Agency clarification and discussion regarding sewer availability vs septic and proximity to open water ways. Discussion between Agency and presenter regarding the possibility of shifting the orientation and location of house on the property.

Public Comment: None

Additional Discussion: None

**Motion to Approve by Mr. Green second by Mr. Olson (Motion Passes 6/1: Dissenting: Matovina)
ZVAR 2026-17 Jackson Residence based upon six (6) findings of fact and six (6) conditions as
provided in the Staff Report.**

4. ZVAR 2026-20 Velkovich AFU

A request for a Zoning Variance to Section 2.02.04.B.16.d of the Land Development Code to allow for the construction of an Accessory Family Unit (AFU) that will exceed thirty-five (35) percent of the square footage of the main use structure, specifically located at 1225 South Winterhawk Drive.

Ex parte communication was disclosed.

Mr. Johnston presented details pertaining to the Zoning Variance request.

Agency clarification and discussion regarding septic field location.

Public Comment: None

Additional Discussion: None

**Motion to Approve by Ms. Perkins second by Hilsenbeck (Motion Passes 6/1: Dissenting Matovina)
ZVAR 2026-20 Velkovich AFU based upon five (5) findings of fact and eight (8) conditions as
provided in the Staff Report.**

5. ZVAR 2026-23 5025 Alta Vista Avenue

Request for a Zoning Variance to Sections 2.02.04.B.12.a(4) and 2.02.04.B.12.b(2) of the Land Development Code to allow for the cumulative height of a fence on top of a retaining wall to be ten (10) feet in lieu of the eight (8) foot requirement and to allow for a fence/wall to exceed the required six (6) foot height maximum if located within the second Front Yard setback of a Through Lot. Along with a request to Table 6.01 to allow for an attached staircase to encroach 7.5 feet into the required second Front Yard setback of 25 feet, in Residential, Single Family (RS-3) zoning; specifically located at 5025 Alta Vista Avenue.

Ex parte communication was disclosed.

Ms. Mapula presented details pertaining to the Zoning Variance request.

Agency clarification and discussion regarding the site development without a permit clarification that the lot is a through lot and there are two front yards, the calculated impervious surface ratio and future possible development meeting county code. Discussion regarding the retention wall height. Clarification regarding

topography of the site and surrounding properties and potential sand dune impacts. Discussion regarding the unopened right of way on Osceola and vehicle access.

Public Comment: None

Additional Discussion: None

Motion to approve by Ms. Spiegel second by Mr. Green (Motion Passes 5/2: Dissenting: Matovina, Hilsenbeck) ZVAR 2026-23 5025 Alta Vista Avenue based upon six (6) findings of fact and six (6) conditions as provided in the Staff Report.

7-minute recess taken.

6. REZ 2026-12 St. Augustine Airport East

A request to rezone approximately 23 acres of land from Open Rural (OR) to Airport Development (AD), specifically located south of Gun Club Road and north of Hawkeye View Lane, approximately 0.30 miles east of US 1 North.

Ex parte communication was disclosed.

Mr. Singletary presented details pertaining to the Rezoning request.

Agency clarification and discussion regarding a drainage ditch that appears to connect with the intercoastal and whether it will be closed as well as wetland mitigation. Clarification regarding future development options as well as buffering near the residential properties.

Public Comment: None

Additional Discussion: None

Motion to Recommend Approval by Mr. Olson second by Mr. Perkins (Motion Passes 5/1: Dissenting: Hilsenbeck, Abstained: Green) of REZ 2026-12 St. Augustine Airport East based on four (4) findings of fact, as provided in the Staff Report.

7. COMPAMD 25-01 Wellhead Protection Adoption Hearing.

Since the original St. Johns County Land Development Code in 1999 and Comprehensive Plan, significant technological and regulatory advancements have been made related to wellhead protection. Based on increased density in the County and its need for future well sites, SJCUD proposes to bring the County Comp Plan and Land Development code into compliance with State law and alignment with current best practices. This Comprehensive Plan Amendment was sent to the State for Review. This is the second reading and public hearing of the proposed Comp Plan Amendment. If approved to proceed through the public hearing process, the Comp Plan Amendment will be sent to the State for recommendations.

Motion to continue to a date certain of August 6, 2026, PZA Hearing (Motion Passes 7/0).

8. LDCA 25-07 Wellhead Protection.

Since the original St. Johns County Land Development Code in 1999 and Comprehensive Plan, significant technological and regulatory advancements have been made related to wellhead protection. Based on increased density in the County and its need for future well sites, SJCUD proposes to bring the County Comp Plan and Land Development code into compliance with State law and alignment with current best practices. This is the first reading and public hearing of the proposed Land Development Code Amendments that correspond with COMP Plan Amendment 2026-01 on Wellhead Protection goals and regulations.

Motion to continue to a date certain of August 6, 2026, PZA Hearing (Motion Passes 7/0).

9. SUPMAJ 2025-29 St. Thomas Island Parkway Cell Tower

SUPMAJ 2025-29 St. Thomas Island Parkway Cell Tower, request for a Special Use Permit, pursuant to Section 2.03.26 of the Land Development Code, to allow for the construction of a 180-foot monopole communication tower and support facilities within Open Rural (OR) zoning, specifically located approximately 0.23 miles east of the intersection between St Thomas Island Parkway and Saint Croix Island Drive.

Ex parte communication was disclosed.

Mr. Wester presented details pertaining to Special Use Permit request.

Agency clarification and discussion regarding Verizon using existing towers versus building an additional tower, the ability to collocate with existing towers, discussion regarding coverage by all providers versus just Verizon coverage.

OCA provides legal guidance regarding hearing this application within the scope of federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Discussion regarding coverages and capacity depicted in the proposed tower location as well as the data amounts and distances covered. Discussion regarding business / real estate discussions regarding the location for the proposed tower. Clarification in the height of the tower being requested as well as the search ring. Discussion regarding the optimal height of the tower as well as the search radius in regard to the collocating as well as service provided. Discussion regarding the effect the two previously active towers have on the area without the proposed tower providing coverage. Continued discussion regarding the collocation anticipated if this tower is approved.

Public Comment:

- Mabel Perez: Opposition
- Dara Marsh: Opposition
- Teresa Foley: Opposition
- Jose Ochoa: Opposition
- Leslie Mosier: Opposition
- Corey Keen: Opposition
- Russell Guin: Opposition
- Dan McGrath: Opposition
- Eric Serrano: Opposition

Mr. Wester provides additional information regarding the application as well as rebuttal and public comment discussion including fall radius, public noticing for the community meeting as well as the PZA hearing itself, buffering and sound impacts regarding the tower site.

Additional discussion between Agency and staff / applicant regarding land identified as Open Rural versus being included in Silverleaf. Discussion of the developability of the land in question. Discussion regarding aesthetics and economic benefit of cell towers.

Third party tower review discussion regarding the process and surrounding towers.

Clarification on conditions that the existing tree coverage must remain which cannot be accomplished today as it has a separate owner and would require public noticing as well as the property owner being aligned with that condition.

Motion to approve by Mr. Matovina second by Ms. Perkins (Motion Passes 4/3, Dissenting: Hilsenbeck, Olson, Labanowski) SUPMAJ 2025-29 St. Thomas Island Parkway Cell Tower based upon eleven (11) findings of fact and subject to ten (10) conditions, as provided within the Staff Report.

5- Minute Recess

10. SUPMAJ 2026-09 Colee Cove Tower

Request for a Special Use Permit, pursuant to Section 2.03.26 of the Land Development Code, to allow for the construction of a 199-foot monopole tower and support facility within the Open Rural (OR) zoning, located on an unaddressed parcel on County Road 13 North, approximately 0.60 miles south of Joe Ashton Road (Parcel ID 013240-0010).

Ex parte communication was disclosed.

Ms. Yorko presented details pertaining to Special Use Permit request.

Agency clarification and discussion regarding compatibility with surrounding rural uses, adherence to scenic highway setbacks and buffering standards, environmental factors such as wetlands and habitat impacts, and technical needs like tower height, fall-zone compliance, co-location capacity, and documented coverage gaps. It also addressed the evaluation of alternative sites, future development potential on nearby parcels, engineering, and geotechnical considerations, and whether the project aligned with the comprehensive plan and criteria for approving a special use permit.

Public Comment:

- Joe McAnarney – Designated Speaker allotted 10 minutes
- Matt Jackson: Opposed
- Robert Durham: Opposed
- Bland Cologne: Opposed
- Kelly Prescott: Opposed

Additional discussion focused on compatibility with the rural setting, fall zone radius, impact to buffers with any potential future tree harvesting, how the tower might limit development potential on adjacent parcels, and addressing safety concerns of the proposed tower as well as the lighting requirements.

Agency discussion regarding the number of developed homes within this area and its impact with future potential development of future homes sites. Elaboration on the difference between the two tower applications provided post motion but prior to the vote.

Motion to recommend denial by Ms. Spiegel second Mr. Labanowski (Motion Passes 5/2: Dissenting: Green and Matovina) of SUPMAJ 2026-09 Colee Cove Tower based upon ten (10) findings of fact, as provided within the Staff Report.

- Staff Reports: No Staff Reports – there will be a workshop regarding legislative session on August 6 and on August 20 is separation distance between alcohol and churches / schools.
- Agency Reports: Potential to expand the APO distance which is currently 300 feet. Clarification of the 5:01pm start of the budget hearing on September 03, 2026.
- Meeting Adjourned at 6:21 PM