

GREATER LOWNDES PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
325 WEST SAVANNAH AVENUE  
Tuesday, May 26, 2026 – 5:30 PM

**GLPC Commission Members Present:** Ron Bythwood, George Foreman, Calvin Graham, John McCall, James Miller (Vice-Chair), Steve Miller (Chair), Vicki Rountree, Brian Touchton, Chris Webb

**Absent:**

Franklin Bailey, Ed Hightower, Tommy Willis

**Staff:** JD Dillard, Lowndes County Planner; UnDrea Dimock, Lowndes County Planning Technician

**VISITORS PRESENT:**

(Sign-In sheet available in file.)

**CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Steve Miller called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Ron Bythwood gave the Invocation. Chairman Miller welcomed everyone to the GLPC meeting and explained that the Planning Commission serves as an advisory (recommending) body to the local member governments regarding land use requests, and the final determination of the requests presented at this meeting will be made by the applicable local governments. Chairman Miller then explained the meeting procedures and announced the dates of the public hearings for the local member governments, as listed on the agenda.

**Agenda Item #2**

**Approval of the Meeting Minutes: April 27, 2026**

Chairman Miller called for additions, questions, and corrections of the April 27, 2026, GLPC meeting minutes. There being no additions, questions or corrections to the April 27, 2026, GLPC meeting minutes, Chairman Miller called for a motion. Commissioner Bythwood made a motion to approve the April 27, 2026, meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Webb second. All voted in favor, no one opposed (7-0). One Commissioner absent for opening. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item #3**

REZ-2026-13                      4843, 4847, 4851, 4855 US Hwy 41. S., Lake Park. GA, 1.35ac  
Current Zoning:                C-H (Highway Commercial)  
Proposed Zoning:              R-10 (Suburban Density Residential)

Mr. JD Dillard presented the request to rezone the subject properties from C-H (Highway Commercial) to R-10 (Suburban Density Residential). The general motivation in this case is for the applicant to develop homesites. The subject properties possess road frontage on US Hwy 41 S,

a State Highway, Park Drive and Cannon Drive, both local County roads. The property is within the Urban Service Area and Community Activity Center Character Areas, and within groundwater recharge area, but there are no wetlands on the property.

Neighboring properties to the North and East are currently zoned R-10 as part of the Land-O-Pines Subdivision, and the Lowndes County Fire Rescue Station at Twin Lakes is planned for the property to the South.

The TRC analyzed the request, the standards governing the exercise of zoning power set forth in 10.01.05 of the ULDC, and factors most relevant to this application, including the neighboring land uses, lot sizes, and zoning patterns, the availability of County utilities, the potential environmental impacts, and therefore recommends approval of the request for R-10 zoning.

There being no questions for staff, Chairman Miller opened the public hearing portion of the case.

Speaking in favor of the request:

- Bill Nijem– 1007 N. Patterson St.

Mr. Nijem expressed that there would be a shared access road located off of Cannon Drive. He also explained to staff there he was present to answer any questions.

Commissioner Rountree inquired if the houses would face in or towards 41. Mr. Nijem answered that they would face in and it would be the existing.

No further questions for Mr. Nijem.

No one spoke in favor or opposition to the request.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Miller called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Graham to recommend approval. Commissioner Rountree second. Six voted in favor, none opposed (6-0-1). Commissioner Touchton recused himself for this item. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item #4**

TWR-2026-01 Salem Church Communication Facility, Old Valdosta Rd. N., Hahira, GA, 25ac, Parcel 0008-010  
Current Zoning: E-A (Estate Agricultural)

Mr. Dillard stated that the case had been withdrawn.

**Agenda Item #5**

CU-2026-03 410 North Barack Obama Boulevard, Valdosta, GA, Tax Parcel 0118B 069  
Current Zoning: R-6 (Single Family Residential)

Ms. Amy Martin presented the case on behalf of Ms. LaToyana Speed who is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow the placement of a mobile home in a Single-Family Residential (R-6) zoning district. The subject property consists of 0.30 acres (13,068-sf) located at 410 North Barack Obama Boulevard, which is positioned on the west side of the roadway between Cypress Street and Green Street. The property is currently vacant and the applicant is proposing to place a 28'x64' (1,792-sf) doublewide owner-occupied new mobile home on the property.

The subject property is located within an Established Residential (ER) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan.

The surrounding area is primarily developed with single-family residential uses, with some churches and small businesses located in the broader vicinity. Based on a review of the surrounding development pattern, most nearby residential structures are conventional site-built homes, particularly along Cypress Street, Green Street, and North Barack Obama Boulevard. There appears to be only one mobile home in the general vicinity, located southeast of the subject property at 613 Green Street (510 feet away). Therefore, manufactured housing is not a prominent or established housing type within this immediate area.

Historically, requests for mobile homes on vacant residential lots have been more appropriate in neighborhoods where there is already an established mix of housing types, including a notable presence of mobile homes or manufactured housing. In those instances, the placement of an additional mobile home is generally more consistent with the existing development pattern and neighborhood character. In this case, however, the immediate surrounding area is largely composed of site-built homes, and the introduction of a mobile home would represent a housing type that is not commonly found within this block or immediate neighborhood.

The proposed placement of a doublewide mobile home on the subject property would introduce a manufactured housing unit into an area that is predominantly characterized by conventional site-built residential structures. Although the proposed residential occupancy of the vacant lot could contribute to reinvestment and productive use of the property, the specific form of housing proposed is not consistent with the development pattern. It should also be noted that the subject property is located along a visible corridor on North Barack Obama Boulevard and near established residential streets. Therefore, the appearance, placement, and long-term compatibility of the proposed structure are important considerations. Further, the subject property is a deep narrow lot which requires placement of the mobile home to be turned "sideways" and not oriented toward the street.

Staff finds that the request does not align with the existing character of the surrounding neighborhood. The limited presence of mobile homes in the area, combined with the predominance of site-built residential structures, indicates that the proposed mobile home would not be compatible with the established development pattern. For this reason, while the property may be appropriate for residential development, staff finds that a site-built single-family residence would be more consistent with the surrounding neighborhood and the intent of the established residential neighborhood. Even a modular home that resembles a site-built home would be a better

alternative (and would not require CUP approval), and both of these options were recommended to the applicants.

There being no questions for staff, Chairman Miller opened the public hearing portion of the case.

Speaking in favor of the request:

- LaToyona Speed – 410 North Barack Obama Blvd.

Ms. Speed stated that she is currently still working on the development of how the home will be finalized and expressed that the foundation of the home would be permanent.

Commissioner Bythwood inquired about her plan for the property. Ms. Speed explained that she would be living there.

Commissioner Rountree inquired if the parcel was wide enough to face the street. Ms. Speed answered yes.

Ms. Martin explained that the home is 65 feet and that it is not suitable to meet setbacks. Commissioner Rountree inquired if the front door would be better suited on the side of the home. Talk amongst commissioners and staff confirmed that this could be a possibility. Commissioner Bythwood inquired if it was the home was a single or doublewide. Ms. Speed answered doublewide. Ms. Martin inquired if there was a possibility that the home could be moved farther back to meet setback requirements. Ms. Speed confirmed the possibility. Commissioner Rountree asked if the request was approved, will setbacks need to be met. Mr. Martin answered yes with a recommendation to include an expiration date of two years. Talk amongst commissioners and staff suggested conditions include an expiration date of two years and to increase setback to 50 feet of yard frontage.

No further questions for Ms. Speed.

No one spoke in opposition.

There being no further questions for staff, Chairman Miller closed the public hearing.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Miller called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Graham to recommend approval with two conditions. Commissioner Bythwood second. All voted in favor, no one opposed (8-0). Motion carried.

**Agenda Item #6**

CU-2026-04                    1711 Ellis Drive, Valdosta, GA, Tax Parcel 0081D 031  
Current Zoning:            O-P (Office Professional)

Ms. Amy Martin presented the request on behalf of Ms. Lincy Hurtado with La Catalina Properties of Georgia LLC, who is requesting CUP approval for a building contractor's office within an

Office Professional (O-P) zoning district. The subject property consists of 1.00 acre and is located at 1711 Ellis Drive, which is along the east side of the street about 300 feet south of Baytree Road. The property currently contains a vacant commercial building (4,265-sf) which was previously the business location for BlackCrow Media. The applicant is proposing to utilize this building as a building contractor's office for her construction company.

The subject property is located within a Community Activity Center (CAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan.

The subject property is located in a developed commercial area near Baytree Road and Gornto Road. The proposed use would occupy an existing building and would not involve the construction of a new structure. The contractor's office would primarily function as an administrative and operational office for the business, rather than as a high-intensity industrial or outdoor storage use.

The surrounding area includes a mix of commercial, service, office, and automotive-oriented uses. Nearby uses visible in the area include businesses such as an oil change service, car wash, convenience store, exterminating service, smoke shop, auto sales, and other commercial establishments. There are also multi-family residential developments and other residential uses located west and southwest of the subject property.

Given the property's location within an existing commercial area, the proposed contractor's office is compatible with nearby land uses, provided the business operates primarily from within the existing building and does not create negative impacts related to noise, traffic, outdoor storage, equipment staging, or heavy vehicle activity. The reuse of a vacant commercial building is also appropriate from a land use and economic development perspective. Occupying the building would help prevent continued vacancy, support reinvestment in an existing commercial property, and maintain the property as an active business location.

Staff finds that the proposed use is appropriate for the site because it would utilize an existing vacant commercial building, reduce the potential for property decline, and support continued commercial activity in an established business corridor. The site's proximity to Baytree Road and Gornto Road provides convenient access to major commercial streets, which helps reduce potential impacts on nearby residential areas. However, because contractor-related businesses can vary in intensity, staff recommends conditions to ensure the use remains compatible with surrounding properties. The contractor's office should be limited primarily to office, administrative, and related business activities.

**Staff Recommendation:** Find consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Conditional Use Review, and recommend approval to the City Council, subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Approval shall be granted for a building contractor's office and related administrative/business operations within the existing commercial building. There shall be no outdoor storage of construction equipment or materials of any kind.

- (2) Conditional use approval shall expire after 2 years from the date of approval if no Business License application has been submitted by that date.

Speaking in favor of the request:

- Lincy Hurtado – 1711 Ellis Drive

Ms. Hurtado stated that building would be used professionally for customers and staff. There would be minimal traffic, five business vehicles, no direct sales would take place, and this building would not include a big operation. Ms. Hurtado also stated that no materials would be stored within the building due to materials being subcontracted out. Ms. Hurtado expressed that the building would be strictly professional and a place for customers to walk through.

No further questions for Ms. Hurtado.

There being no further questions for staff, Chairman Miller closed the public hearing.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Miller called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Hightower to recommend approval with two conditions. Commissioner Webb second. Eight voted in favor, none opposed (8-0). Motion carried.

There being no other business, Chairman Miller adjourned the meeting at 6:06 p.m.

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**Steve Miller, Chairman**  
**Greater Lowndes Planning Commission**

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**Date**