

Mr. Wetherington expressed concern regarding the expense of the new and improved Leland Cypress, and stated that he would have been better off not asking for the variance. Mrs. Hobby stated that she wanted something thick. Vice Chairman Strickland stated that the motion had been made, seconded, and the motion was called and carried with the condition. Mr. Stevenson expressed concern about the buffering and landscaping requirements. Mrs. Tulloch reiterated the difference between buffering and landscaping, and cited the requirements. Mr. O'Neal asked if the solar panels had already been approved. Vice Chairman Strickland stated that the use was permitted by right. Mr. O'Neal stated he did not attend a public hearing for the solar panels. Mrs. Quarterman stated that the solar panels were allowed by right. Vice Chairman Strickland stated that this was purely a variance request for buffering. Mr. O'Neal expressed concern that the plants at Exit 16 were more appropriate for the buffering. Vice Chairman Strickland stated that was an invasive species, and that the use was allowed by right.

Agenda Item # 4: VAR-2019-16 — Hogan (2900 US Highway 41 South)

Vice Chairman Strickland announced the case. Mrs. Tulloch stated that the applicant is requesting a variance to Section 4.03.12 of the ULDC (Lowndes County Unified Land Development Code) as it pertains to general development standards for junk yards or salvage yards. The subject properties consist of a cumulative total 8.01 acres and are located on U.S. Highway 41 South and Wellman Place, Valdosta, Georgia, in an R-1 (Low Density Residential), E-A (Estate Agricultural) and M-1 (Light Manufacturing) zoning districts. Mike West, in his capacity as Office Manager for Frank's Wrecking, submitted the variance application seeking relief from the ULDC's development regulations shown in the above table. Per Mr. West, Frank's Wrecking has been located at its current location for 20+ years. It has been a junk yard/salvage yard from the time of its inception. Currently, the use is deemed as a nonconforming use. Mr. West is attempting to bring the properties into compliance with the local governmental rules and regulations as they pertain to development standards and zoning classification. Additionally, he will be combining the three parcels into one lot and having the same properly recorded. Also, a rezoning application has been submitted to obtain a zoning classification that will allow for a junk yard/salvage yard as a matter of right. Consequently, following through with the rezoning process will be contingent upon the result of the variance request. Mr. West stated the hardship the company faces is the economic feasibility of submitting variances for any future improvements made on-site. As such, a variance to Section 4.03.12 of the ULDC as it pertains to development standards for a junk yard or salvage yard is requested. TRC staff heard and considered this request during their scheduled meetings and unanimously gave support to Mr. West's request as presented with the following conditions: (1) The variance on the property will remain in effect continuously with the junk yard/salvage yard use only; (2) The applicant must repair and/or replace the opaque fencing around the perimeter of the lot.

Mrs. Quarterman asked if this was a nonconforming property. Vice Chairman Strickland verified that this is a nonconforming use because it predates the ULDC.

Vice Chairman Strickland asked if anyone would like to speak on behalf of the request. Mike West, 2900 US Highway 41 South, spoke on behalf of the application. Mr. West stated the service had operated for approximately the last forty years. He stated that they were rezoning to make it more appropriate for the use. Mr. West said he found out there was a five hundred foot setback, but could not meet that because his property was not large enough. Mr. West stated they wanted to expand as well. Vice Chairman Strickland asked what he meant by expand. Mr. West stated they did not want to buy additional property, but potentially add more buildings and improve the existing property. Mrs. Quarterman stated she visited the property, and made note of the requirement for the fencing, but did not want the existing vegetation disturbed.

Vice Chairman Strickland asked if anyone else would like to speak on behalf of the application. No one spoke. Vice Chairman Strickland asked if anyone else would like to speak in opposition to the application. Ms. Barbara Southall, 3870 Ben Hill Road, stated she lived across the street from this property, and expressed concerns about the fencing. Mrs. Quarterman stated that one of the conditions was to fix the fence.