



You Are Why We Are Here

**FRANKLIN COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES  
August 5, 2019  
5:30 p.m.**

**BOC:** Commission Chairman Thomas Bridges  
District 1 Commissioner Robert Franklin  
District 2 Commissioner Dr. Jason Macomson  
District 3 Commissioner Ryan Swails  
District 4 Commissioner Eddie Wester

**Media:** Shane Scoggins, Franklin County Citizen

**Staff:** County Manager Beth Thomas  
County Clerk Elaine Evans  
County Attorney Bubba Samuels

Chairman Bridges called the August public hearing to order at 5:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone. He said there are two items for discussion and an opportunity to speak for or against each one will be given.

**Conditional use for poultry houses for Roland Wiebe**

Roland Wiebe came forward to speak for his conditional use request for two poultry houses. He stated he grew up on a dairy farm and wanted to get back into farming. Mr. Wiebe said the land on Pleasant Hill met his needs and also the setbacks and requirements from the County. He will be growing for Fieldale.

Charles Trammell spoke in opposition because the poultry farm will push property values down and the smell will be horrible. He said the citizens have to pay high taxes in Franklin County.

Pat Randall said the property being referred to butts up against her property. She agreed with Mr. Trammell that the houses will smell and property values will go down. She does not want to have chicken houses in her backyard.

Dr. Macomson questioned how the land is zoned where Mr. Wiebe has proposed to build the chicken houses. Mrs. Thomas said the zoning is AI (Agriculture Intensive) as well as all the surrounding area. There are pieces of property to the south of this location zoned AR (Agriculture Residential).

Joshua Wallace, Director of Operations of Shepherd's Hill Academy spoke in opposition to the request from Mr. Wiebe. He stated information was presented at the July Planning Commission meeting and the position of Shepherd's Hill Academy has



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*not been adequately presented or understood. The decision to be made tonight is for two chicken houses or the growth of Shepherd's Hill Academy.*

*Mr. Wallace said Shepherd's Hill Academy is a therapeutic boarding school transforming the lives of teens in crisis that began in 2001 and support is also given to the family members. Shepherd's Hill Academy is a 12 to 18-month long-term therapeutic program licensed with the State of Georgia.*

*Construction of Hwy 17 was done in 2013 and divided the property of Shepherd's Hill Academy. Mr. Wallace said Hwy 17 caused half of the property to not be able to be used for the school. Shepherd's Hill put a bid on the property for Mr. Wiebe's chicken houses in 2014 and they have been attempting to buy the property since then. This property is needed by Shepherd's Hill to repair the damage caused by Hwy 17. Mr. Wallace said Shepherd's Hill is not against chicken houses only opposes the two being built near their school.*

*Mr. Wallace said Shepherd's Hill is willing to work with Mr. Wiebe to find another location for his chicken houses. Franklin County has a unique opportunity to invest in the growth of Shepherd's Hill Academy by not approving the chicken houses for Mr. Wiebe. The benefits of Shepherd's Hill being located in Franklin County are approximately three million dollars in revenue, 72 employees and 30 to 40 visitors per month which is a subtle but constant source of revenue.*

*It is unknown to Mr. Wallace and the founders of Shepherd's Hill Academy how Mr. Wiebe was able to negotiate for the property. Mr. Wallace said Shepherd's Hill had asked to be notified if anyone was buying the property to place chicken houses on it. He said if they had been informed, they would have bought the property.*

*Mr. Wiebe said the property was looked at with the concern of the school behind it. The chicken houses can be moved toward the trees away from the school. With a berm the chicken houses should not be visible from the school.*

*Mark Costello said he is a real estate agent and has been working with the seller of the property for about a year. Mr. Embrey the Director of Shepherd's Hill was given several opportunities to purchase the property. Mr. Costello said Mr. Embrey got diligent about making an offer when Mr. Wiebe made the offer. The advice given by Mr. Costello to both Mr. Embrey and Mr. Wiebe was to make the owner an offer. Mr. Wiebe made an offer but Mr. Embrey did not. The owner accepted Mr. Wiebe's offer.*

### **Conditional use for poultry houses for Aubrey Lunsford**

*Aubrey Lunsford said he owns six pullet houses on Shackelford Road and would like to expand the operations. The property is zoned AI (Agriculture Intensive) and all adjoining property is zoned the same way. Mr. Lunsford stated he meets all the County setbacks. He asked the Commissioners to approve the permit.*



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*Dr. Macomson asked Mrs. Thomas if all setbacks have been met for Mr. Lunsford's application. Mrs. Thomas said the last site plan submitted shows the boundary lines of the proposed chicken houses meeting all the setbacks. The requirement is 200 feet from the boundary line unless there is a home then the boundary line is 100 feet. The exhaust end of Mr. Lunsford's chicken houses is 600 feet from the nearest residence. Dr. Macomson questioned if Mr. Lunsford has altered the plans from the originals. Mr. Lunsford said the direction of the houses has been changed, an offer of a retention pond on the end near the Weaver's, a berm between the Burgess property and his property, plant Leyland Cypress and move the houses 75 feet up the hill.*

*Carol Pope spoke in opposition representing herself and neighbors John Jones and Ava Bruce. She stated she lives on Shackleford Road and has been there for 21 years. Four chicken houses are next door to her with six more down the road from her. Within a mile to a mile and a half of her house there are 52 chicken houses. With the approval of these six there will be 58 chicken houses in the area with 16 of them on Shackleford Road. Mrs. Pope said Mrs. Bruce is trying to sell her house and property values will go down if the chicken houses are approved. She and her neighbors strongly object to these houses because of increased traffic, the environment, smell, flies and devaluation of houses.*

*Teresa Burgess gave a statement from Daniele Weaver, On June 3 many of us voiced our concerns about this matter and this Board agreed there were many issues and questions that needed to be addressed. This was tabled on June 3 and sent back to the Planning Commission so the issues could be addressed by Mr. Lunsford. On June 11 when this came before the Planning Commission, Mr. Lunsford had provided nothing that answered the questions or issues for which the Commissioners tabled the matter. On July 11 the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend denial of Mr. Lunsford's request and she (Mrs. Weaver) agrees with the Planning Commission's recommendation.*

*Mrs. Burgess then spoke for herself and her husband. They are in the process of building a home on Bray's Lake Road. Mrs. Burgess said the chicken houses have been turned from the exhaust fans but her home is now facing the entrance to the houses. The chicken houses are within 400 feet from her home. Mrs. Burgess requested Mr. Lunsford's request be turned down but if not for the chicken houses to be moved so they are not so detrimental to her and her husband. She also stated her property value will go down with the additional chicken houses.*

*Chairman Bridges closed the public hearing at 6:07 p.m.*



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Signed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2019

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*Chairman J. Thomas Bridges*

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*Robert L. Franklin, District 1 Commissioner*

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*Dr. Jason Macomson, District 2 Commissioner*

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*Ryan Swails, District 3 Commissioner*

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*Eddie Wester, District 4 Commissioner*

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*Elaine H. Evans, County Clerk*