



# CITY OF WALHALLA PLANNING COMMISSION

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Kelvin Bryant, Chair  
Robert Kelley

Rachel Pace

Alan Nicholson, Vice-Chair  
Gisela Cromer

**Monday, October 12, 2026**

Planning Commission Meeting

5:30 PM

206 N Church St

Walhalla, South Carolina 29691

## AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes
  - a. September 14, 2026
4. Old Business
  - a. Chapter 330 Revision - Update regarding signs
5. New Business
  - a. Comprehensive Plan update - housing
  - b. Scams and phishing with public information
  - c. Update of building codes – Ch. 123
6. Public Comments, Non-Agenda Items
7. Other Business
  - a. Training reminder - CE training at City of Clemson on 10/29
8. Adjournment

Date: October 12, 2026

To: Walhalla Planning Commission

From: Ed Halbig, Planning Director

Re: Updates to the Walhalla Zoning Ordinance

In the SCOTUS Reed v. Gilbert ruling (2015) the Court determined that a case for violation of the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment can be made if signs are treated differently based on the content of their message. Therefore, no special distinctions in the sign ordinance should be codified based solely on said message content, lest such action create an opportunity to mount a legal challenge to the City's zoning ordinance.

Given the Planning Commission's responsibility to safeguard the city from liability, the following changes are proposed by staff for their review.

#### Section 330-1.31 Definitions

**OUTDOOR ADVERTISING SIGN:** A permanent sign erected, maintained, or used in the outdoor environment for the purpose of the display of commercial or noncommercial messages, including political messages, not appurtenant to the use of, products sold on, or the sale or lease of the property on which it is displayed.

~~**POLITICAL SIGN:** A temporary sign intended to advance a political statement, cause, or candidate for office. A legally permitted outdoor advertising sign shall not be considered to be a political sign.~~

**TEMPORARY SIGN:** A sign intended to display either commercial or noncommercial messages, including political messages, of a transitory or temporary nature. Portable signs or any sign not permanently embedded in the ground, or not intended to be permanently affixed to a building or sign structure that is permanently embedded in the ground, are considered temporary signs.

Types of temporary signs.

**3. TEMPORARY PROMOTIONAL SIGN:** A sign intended to attract attention to a use or activity or political message for a limited number of events. Temporary promotional signs are not allowed in the public right-of-way or on City-owned property.

## Section 330-1.32 Exempt Signs

~~12. Political signs on private property. Political signs are not allowed in the public right-of-way or on City-owned property.~~

## Section 330-1.34 Permitted Signs

4. Temporary signs. Temporary signs are permitted to be erected no more than ~~30~~ 60 days prior to such sale or grand opening the event with which they are associated provided such exhibits are removed within seven day after the event; ~~and further provided that not more than one extension of 30 days may be granted upon request, and no exhibit shall be re-permitted within six months of the time it, or a similar display, is removed from the premises.~~ Temporary signs may be re-permitted after a period of three (3) months with the submission of a new sign permit application. Temporary signs in residential districts shall be limited to 6 square feet. In the Downtown Development Overlay District, a maximum of two temporary signs are permitted per property. Maximum sign area is 18 square feet per sign.

Date: October 12, 2026

To: Walhalla Planning Commission

From: Ed Halbig, Planning Director

Re: Comprehensive Plan requirements for Housing Element

I have been reviewing the existing Comprehensive plan draft against the requirements of the state law. It is largely compliant with a few issues that need addressing. The most urgent of these issues is the need to demonstrate a good faith effort on the part of the Planning Commission in seeking professional input into the issue of affordable housing from the development community. State law reads as follows:

*This [housing] element includes an analysis to ascertain nonessential housing regulatory requirements, as defined in this chapter, that add to the cost of developing affordable housing but are not necessary to protect the public health, safety, or welfare and an analysis of market-based incentives that may be made available to encourage development of affordable housing, which incentives may include density bonuses, design flexibility, and streamlined permitting processes. The planning commission must solicit input for this analysis from homebuilders, developers, contractors, and housing finance experts when developing this element.*

The Planning Commission may certainly use its discretion in determining how to “solicit input”. A few methods to consider:

- Public meeting(s), either general or targeted at the specific entities described in the law.
- A survey, again general or targeted, online or via mail
- An email push to those entities listed that have businesses registered with the city
- Any combination of these or other ideas.

The challenge will be familiarizing the respondents to regulatory requirements of the city that are not mandated by state requirements - such as building codes and minimum lot sizes for septic, or other regulatory requirements – such as OJRSA impact fees.

The Planning department will need time to amass the regulatory requirements of the city as well as the market-based incentives.

Guidance from the Planning Commission is appreciated with this effort.

Date: October 12, 2026

To: Walhalla Planning Commission

From: Ed Halbig, Planning Director

Re: Phishing with public records

The April 2026 issues of Planning Magazine ran an article on new phishing scams involving local government titled “Fraud Alert: How Scammers Are Now Impersonating City Governments”. We have all been made aware how accessible information has become, and access, transparency and convenience provide value to the public. The article states that planning departments need to be aware of malicious use of this information at the expense of our citizens.

The city recently received notice from an applicant that Walhalla’s public information was being used to deceptively solicit funds through a false invoice emailed for city services.

A.I. services can respond to complicated requests in specific, personal ways that can appear both human and bureaucratic. Consider this: a chatbot is directed to generate invoices based on current fee schedules for planning services rendered in cities with a population of 10,000 or less in the past three days, and to then send the invoices from the appropriate city official to the emails of the recipients of those services. All the relevant information is online and can be scraped to do just that, along with logos, form samples, and all the other information to make the request look legitimate.

The article states: “This new form of phishing — using public planning data to compose counterfeit emails requesting money — has gone nationwide. In many cases, the phishing emails come within hours or days of public meetings or website postings.”

The best indicators are usually the email address and the methods of payment requests. Email addresses can appear similar to the city’s email address but cannot be an exact match. And requests for unusual payment methods are suspect; anyone with concerns can always speak to a city representative.

We as a community need to be informed and look out for each other, and we as city representatives need to share information that can provide certainty to our customers.



## 2024 South Carolina Code Adoptions

On August 26, 2025, the South Carolina Building Codes Council adopted the latest editions of the mandatory codes and select appendices with modifications, as referenced in S.C. Code Ann. §6-9-50 (1976, as amended), to be enforced by all municipalities and counties in South Carolina.

The adopted mandatory codes are as follows:

- 2024 Edition of the International Building Code with modifications<sup>1</sup>**
- 2024 Edition of the International Residential Code with modifications<sup>2</sup>**
- 2024 Edition of the International Fire Code with modifications<sup>3</sup>**
- 2024 Edition of the International Plumbing Code with modifications<sup>4</sup>**
- 2024 Edition of the International Mechanical Code with modifications<sup>5</sup>**
- 2024 Edition of the International Fuel Gas Code with modifications<sup>6</sup>**
- 2023 Edition of the National Electrical Code with modifications**

The Council established the implementation date for local jurisdictions as **January 1, 2027**.

Print and PDF download versions of the 2024 South Carolina codes will be available for pre-order from the International Code Council's [website](#) prior to the January 1, 2027 implementation. The 2023 edition of the National Electrical Code is available for purchase from the National Fire Protection Association's [website](#).

The mandatory codes listed above are to be used in conjunction with the latest [code modifications](#) approved by the Council. Only the modifications approved and listed on the Council's website are valid for use in the State. Building code modifications that have not been approved by the Council are invalid and cannot be adopted, employed or enforced by municipalities and counties.

Adoption of the mandatory codes does not include the chapters, sections or provisions addressing administrative policies or procedures. Administrative policies and procedures are the sole responsibility of each local jurisdiction. If the governing body of a local jurisdiction desires to use the administrative provisions in one or more of the adopted codes, it must first adopt the chapters or sections by ordinance. In lieu of adopting the administrative provisions contained in the adopted codes, the governing body of a local jurisdiction may develop specific administrative policies and procedures for the operation of its Building Inspection Department by ordinance.

The latest edition of ICC/ANSI A117.1, Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities, is adopted by statute (S.C. Code Ann. § 10-5-210 *et seq.*), and is mandatory for use in all municipalities and counties within the State. The International Code Council published the 2026 edition of ICC/ANSI A117.1 standard in September 2026 and it is currently available for purchase on the International Code Council's [website](#).

The South Carolina Legislature has enacted the [Energy Standard Act](#) (S.C. Code Ann. § 6-10-10 *et seq.*), and pursuant to the Energy Standard Act, the 2009 edition of the International Energy Conservation Code has been statutorily adopted as the energy standard and is mandatory for use in all jurisdictions within the State.

<sup>1</sup> As modified, known as the 2024 South Carolina Building Code

<sup>2</sup> As modified, known as the 2024 South Carolina Residential Code

<sup>3</sup> As modified, known as the 2024 South Carolina Fire Code

<sup>4</sup> As modified, known as the 2024 South Carolina Plumbing Code

<sup>5</sup> As modified, known as the 2024 South Carolina Mechanical Code

<sup>6</sup> As modified, known as the 2024 South Carolina Fuel Gas Code