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VICE CHAIRMAN

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BOARD MEMBER

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ANDREW BURNETT
BOARD MEMBER

EDIE WILSON
BOARD MEMBER

TOM DOLAN
BOARD MEMBER

MARCIA G. CARTY, CPA, CGFO
CITY MANAGER

JANE WEST, ESQ.
CITY ATTORNEY

LORENZO AGHEMO, MRP
PLANNING DIRECTOR

ALEX ROMERO
PLANNING CLERK



**PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES
CITY OF PALATKA
December 2, 2025**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** The regular meeting of the City of Palatka Planning Board was called to order on December 2, 2025, by Chairman Ed Killebrew.

a. **Invocation**

The invocation was led by Chair Killebrew.

b. **Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Killebrew.

c. **Roll Call**

Present:

Edie Wilson

Chase Barnes

Earl Wallace

Andrew Burnett

Ed Killebrew

Tom Dolan

Absent: George DeLoach

Also Present: Lorenzo Aghemo, Planning Director; Jane West, City Attorney; Alex Romero, Planning Clerk; Renee' Brown, Planner I; Ryan Mickels, Planner I; Allegra Kitchens, Former Commissioner; Ms. Ramicah Johnson, Executive Director of Putnam Habitat for Humanity; Bernard M. Erhayel, Applicant; Dominic Whitley, Applicant and Brian Lester, Contractor.

d. **Appeal Procedures & ExParte Communication**

Chairman Killebrew read the appeal procedures into the record. Time was allotted for ex-parte disclosures.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. **Approve the November 4, 2025 Minutes**

Motion to approve November 4, 2025, Planning Board meeting minutes by Vice Chair Barnes, seconded by Ms. Wilson. The motion passed unanimously.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- a. **Public Comments** - (Speakers limited to three minutes - no action taken on items)

During Public Comment, Mr. Aghemo, Planning Director, advised the Board of a change to the agenda. The applicant for PB Case 25-23, requesting an amendment to the text of Sec. 94-162 (DB Downtown Business District) and/or Sec. 94-164 (Downtown Overlay), has requested to withdraw Item 4D.

Mr. Aghemo stated that this item should be removed from the agenda.

4. REGULAR BUSINESS

- a. **PB Case 25-27: Request for a variance to the R-1A single-family residential district minimum living area located at 14 Frank V Oliver Way (0.21 acres); parcel number: 12-10-26-9103-0000-0050.**

Mr. Ryan Mickels, Planner I, presented a request for a variance to the minimum living area requirement for a proposed single-family residence located at 14 Frank V. Oliver Way, Lot 5 of the Veterans Village of Palatka subdivision. The property is designated Residential Low on the Future Land Use Map and zoned R-1A Single-Family Residential.

Mr. Mickels provided a history of the subdivision, noting that the final plat was approved by the City Commission on November 8, 2018, prior to the adoption of the minimum living area ordinance. In the summer of 2022, the Planning Board and the City Commission discussed the creation of a minimum living area for residential units. Prior to that time, there was no minimum living area requirement in the City Zoning Ordinance. After public hearings were held, the City Commission adopted the minimum living area requirement, which for the R1A zoning district was 850 square feet.

Staff reviewed the variance request pursuant to the seven required criteria and found no unique physical conditions distinguishing the property from others in the zoning district. The applicant acted in good faith, the proposed use is permitted in the R-1A zoning district, and enforcement of the minimum living area requirement would not result in undue hardship or negative impact public health, safety, or welfare. Lots 1 and 2 were developed prior to adoption of the minimum living area ordinance. Lot 3 commenced construction prior to the August 2022 adoption and consists of a 900-square-foot dwelling. Lot 4 was developed after adoption and measures approximately 1,000 square feet, and the request for Lot 5 proposes a 512-square-foot single-family dwelling, which is 338 square feet below the minimum required.

Vice Chair Barnes asked Ms. Ramica Johnson, Executive Director of Putnam Habitat for Humanity up to the podium for further questioning. Mr Barnes asked what was preventing Ms. Johnson from meeting the minimum living area requirements at that moment. Ms. Johnson discussed the subdivision's original approvals, financial impacts associated with redesigning the home, and the intended use of the residence for a single veteran homeowner. Ms. Johnson also mentioned that at the City Commission meeting in 2018, Mayor Hill stated that the minimum living area requirements would not apply to the Veterans Village, but no minutes of these approvals could be found by staff.

Mr. Mickles stepped up to the podium to clarify that he did reply to Ms. Johnson with the minutes from

the City Commission meeting and that he did notify her that he reviewed the City Commission meeting in which the minimum square footage ordinance was discussed. It was his understanding that, at that time, the Plat was approved in November 2018, but the plat did not show any sizes of homes and there were no footprints for the homes that would be built on that plat.

Board discussion followed. Mr. Wallace inquired as to the number of individuals who would occupy the proposed 512-square-foot dwelling and sought confirmation that the minimum living area requirement is 850 square feet. Mr. Aghemo confirmed that the minimum living area requirement is 850 square feet. Mr. Dolan asked whether approval of the plat predated the square footage requirements. Ms. West stated that while the plat approval would predate the ordinance, a plat does not specify the square footage of structures. Mr. Aghemo added that the property is a legal lot of record and that the standards in effect at the time of platting could be argued to apply to the lot. Ms. West further stated that rights vested through the City Commission's 2018 approval exist and that imposing additional restrictive regulations could be construed as a taking of private property rights.

Mr. Mickles stated that the ordinance was included in the packet and that, in his interpretation, the subdivision was developed under the R-1A zoning regulations. He further stated that the subdivision meets the R-1A lot size requirements and addressed questions regarding whether an 850-square-foot dwelling could be constructed on the subject lot and that no mention or exclusion of Veterans Village was found in the City Commission minutes or recording.

Chair Killebrew asked Mr. Mickles if there was a recommendation. Mr. Aghemo clarified that staff does not make recommendations on variance requests.

Chair Killebrew opened the floor for public comment. Ms. Allegra Kitchens stated that the City Commission's concerns regarding tiny homes applied to units of 220 square feet or less and that the 850-square-foot minimum living area does not fall within that category. Ms. Kitchens noted that the subdivision predates the adoption of the minimum living area requirement and emphasized that variances are permitted under the Code. Ms. Kitchens provided background on the adoption of the 850-square-foot standard, noting that a larger minimum had been recommended but was reduced to ensure broader property rights. Ms. Kitchens urged the Board to approve the variance, citing that denial could be viewed as an unnecessary restriction on private property rights and noting that the request pertains to the final undeveloped lot within the subdivision.

Motion to Approve Zoning Variance by Vice chair Barnes. Seconded by Mr. Burnett. The Motion Passed unanimously.

b. Case PB 25-24 Annex, Amend Future Land Use Map and Rezone Parcel No.: 11-10-26-0000-0574-0012

Address: 902 South State Rd. 19, Approx. 1.09-Acres

Applicants: E Group Holdings & Property LLC

Renee' Brown, Planner, I presented a request to annex an approximately 1.09-acre parcel located at 902 South State Road 19 into the City of Palatka for the purpose of connecting to City water and sewer utilities. The request includes a Future Land Use Map amendment from Putnam County Commercial (CR) to City of Palatka Commercial (COM) and rezoning from Putnam County Commercial Retail (C-2) to

City of Palatka Intensive Commercial (C-2).

The property is a developed commercial plaza with several existing stores. The annexation would reduce a county enclave and meet the requirements of Florida Statutes Chapter 171, including contiguity, as the parcel borders City limits to the north and east. Staff confirmed that adequate water capacity is available to serve the property. The proposed land use and rezoning are consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and comply with the standards outlined in Chapter 94 of the City Code, as detailed in the staff report included in the meeting packet.

Staff recommends the approval of the request to annex the approximately 1.09 acre property into the city, we recommend approval to amend the future land use map from Putnam County Commercial, CR, to City of Palatka Commercial, COM. And lastly, we recommend approval to rezone the parcel from Putnam County Commercial Retail, C2, to City of Palatka Intensive Commercial, C2, be approved.

Chair Killebrew opened the floor for public comment. None was heard.

Motion to Approve Annex by Vice Chair Barnes. Seconded by Mr. Wallace. The Motion Passed unanimously.

Motion to Approve amendment to the Future Land Use Map by Vice Chair Barnes. Seconded by Ms. Wilson. The Motion Passed unanimously

Motion to Approve Rezone by Vice Chair Barnes. Seconded by Ms. Wilson. The Motion Passed unanimously

- c. **Case PB 25-25 Annex, Amend Future Land Use Map and Rezone Parcel No.: 37-09-26-0000-0230-0010**
Address: 106 Comfort Rd., Approx. 3.66-Acres
Applicants: Whitley Automotive Restoration LLC

Renee' Brown, Planner, I presented a request to annex an approximately 3.66-acre parcel into the City of Palatka for the purpose of connecting to City utilities. The request includes an amendment to the Future Land Use Map from Putnam County Industrial (IN) to City of Palatka Industrial (IN) and rezoning from Putnam County Industrial Heavy (IH) to City of Palatka Light Industrial (M1).

The parcel is located at 106 Comfort Road. The property has been cleared and currently contains a concrete driveway. The applicant intends to construct two metal buildings for industrial use, as described in the staff report. The proposed annexation meets the requirements of Florida Statutes Chapter 171 and satisfies the contiguity requirement, as it borders City limits to the east.

Staff confirmed that water capacity is available to serve the property. The parcel is located within a mixed industrial and commercial area. The proposed Future Land Use Map designation and rezoning are consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and meet the standards outlined in Chapter 94 of the City Code, as detailed in the staff report included in the agenda packet.

Staff recommends approval of the annexation, approval of the Future Land Use Map amendment from Putnam County Industrial (IN) to City of Palatka Industrial (IN), and approval of the rezoning from Putnam County Industrial Heavy (IH) to City of Palatka Light Industrial (M1).

The Floor was given to the applicant. Mr. Barnes inquired whether the rezoning from Putnam County

Industrial Heavy to Palatka Light Industrial would pose a burden on the applicant.

Mr. Aghemo confirmed that Palatka Light Industrial is the only industrial zoning district in the City of Palatka.

The Chair opened the floor for public comments.

Mr. Brian Lester, contractor, addressed the Board regarding utility connections and stated that fire hydrant placement will not be located under CSX.

Public Comment was closed.

Motion to Approve Annex by Vice Chair Barnes. Seconded by Ms. Wilson. The Motion Passed unanimously.

Motion to Approve Future Land Use Map Amendment by Vice Chair Barnes. Seconded by Ms. Wilson. Motion Passed unanimously.

Motion to Approve Rezone by Vice Chair Barnes. Seconded by Ms. Wilson. The motion Passed unanimously.

- d. **PB Case 25-23: Request to amend the text of Sec.94-162 DB Downtown Business District and/or Sec.94-164 Downtown Overlay Zoning.**

The applicant requested prior to the meeting that this item be withdrawn. Staff advised the Board, and the item was removed from the agenda without discussion or action.

Refer to item 3. Public Comment

- 5. STAFF COMMENTS
No Comments from Staff
- 6. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS
No Comments from Board.
- 7. ADJOURN
Meeting Adjourned at 4:40 PM