

Request for Board of Commissioners' Action

From: Faye Hughes, County Administrator **Date:** 9/15/2017

Subject: Request for Signs Staunton Community **Item Number:** VIII-C

Attached you will find a letter from Ken Rountree containing historical information on the Staunton Community located just north of Lenox. The letter was addressed to Rep. Houston. In the past in order to place name signs, markers, etc. on a State Route the request had to be approved through the Legislature. That seems to have changed.

According to an email from Tim Golden, DOT Representative and Rickie Swidell, District Engineer, District 4 DOT the signage can be taken care of with a letter of request to the District Engineer from the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Rountree has discussed this previously with Commissioner Purvis. A letter has been prepared for approval by the Board if you choose to honor the request.

Motion made by _____

Second made by _____

Any discussion: _____

Votes _____ **yes** _____ **no**

Motion carried/ failed



Rountree Appraisal Service

**P.O. Box 278
Lenox, GA 31637-0278**

**229-546-8892
krountree@planttel.net**

August 22, 2017

Rep. Penny Houston
507 Legislative Office Building
Atlanta, GA 30334

Representative Houston,

I am writing in regards to the request for signs marking the bounds of the historic community of Staunton, Georgia located just north of Lenox on US 41/ SR 7.

Staunton was a frontier community settled in the late 1800s in what was then northwestern Berrien County but later became the northern portion of Cook County. Originally settled by Sim Harrell; Mr Harrell operated a saw mill, turpentine still and brick yard on the site located approximately half way between the New River to the east and the Little River to the west with a logging tram running east and west to facilitate the transportation of timber to the saw mill site.

1889 brought the opening of the Georgia Southern and Florida Railway which originally connected Macon with Valdosta but in 1890 extended the route to Palatka, Florida and in 1902 added a connection from Valdosta to Jacksonville, Florida. As Mr. Harrell's existing tram rail had the right of way, the community of Staunton became a stop for the Georgia Southern and Florida Railway. The increased traffic from the rail brought growth to the small community and in 1893 Sim Harrell engaged Thomas A Aber, an engineer in Atlanta to create a plat of Staunton, Georgia laying out lots in 36 blocks for sale to people moving into the area. The community was centered along Atlanta Street which ran beside the Georgia Southern and Florida Railway and would become a portion of the "National Highway" which is now US Highway 41 / State Route 7. An addition to the plat was created in 1896 by the Ware Coffee Company which divided the lots on the east side of the railroad into individual home sites and added 10 blocks to the east side of Olive Street (now North Broad Street in Lenox.) By that time Staunton had churches, a school and a post office.

Relations between Mr. Harrell and the railroad were often contentious, and a dispute about the proposed location of a depot building lead the railroad to build the depot on land offered to them by the Kinard family on the next hill south of Staunton. Development shifted from Staunton to the location of the new depot and in 1901 the town of Lenox, Georgia was incorporated

Staunton still exists today as a residential community including Sim Harrell's original house dating back to the 1880s and the post office and other buildings dating back to the turn of the century.

I represent a group of Staunton residents who hope to preserve the history of this frontier community. As part of this preservation we hope (with your help) to acquire signs from GDOT at the northern and southern ends of the community along US 41 / SR 7. These points are located approximately 850' south and 1,300' north of Ed Lindsey Road / Staunton Cemetery Road (Co Rd 59). The request would be for signs typical of unincorporated communities in the area such as those at Eldorado approximately 5 miles north of Staunton. It would be even better if they could read "Historic Staunton" to denote the historical significance of the community.

I appreciate your assistance in this effort and am here for any questions or concerns that you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kenneth H. Rountree". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kenneth" being more prominent and the last name "Rountree" following in a similar style.

Kenneth H Rountree

Cook County Commissioners

229-896-2266
229-896-2274 Fax
5218

1200 S. Hutchinson Ave.
Adel, Georgia 31620-

September 18, 2017

Mr. Ritchie Swindell, District Engineer
Georgia Department of Transportation
District 4
710 W. 2nd St
Tifton, GA 31794

RE: Staunton Community Road Signs

Dear Mr. Swindell,

Cook County Received a letter from Ken Rountree representing residents of a community north of Lenox, called Staunton. As you are aware the Staunton residents hope to preserve the history of this frontier community. Their request is that signs from GDOT be placed at the northern and southern ends of the community along US 41 / SR 7. These points are located approximately 850' south and 1,300' north of Ed Lindsey Road / Staunton Cemetery Road (Co Rd 59). The request would be for signs typical of unincorporated communities in the area such as those at Eldorado approximately 5 miles north of Staunton.

Per your recommendation in an email dated August 24, 2017, the Cook County Board of Commissioners is requesting the Georgia Department of Transportation consider placement of the requested signs.

Should you need further information from Cook County please contact Faye Hughes, County Administrator at the above telephone number.

Thanking you in advance for your help in this matter,

Dwight Purvis, Chairman
Cook County Commissioners

Debra Robinson, Commissioner – District 1
Lindsey Parrish, Commissioner – District 2
Clerk
Jeff Lane, Commissioner – District 3
Audie Rowe, Commissioner – District 4
Dwight E. Purvis, Commissioner – District 5
Superintendent

Mrs. Faye Hughes, County Administrator
Mrs. Vicki S. Parrish, County

Daniel Connell, County Attorney
Jess Permenter, Building/Zoning Administrator
Daniel Barber, Road / Landfill

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