

**TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND
SOUTH CAROLINA
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, October 12, 2011**

A regular meeting of the Town of Sullivan's Island Planning Commission was held at 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 12, 2011 in Room 203, Church of Holy Cross Episcopal Church at 2520 Middle Street, all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been satisfied. Present were Commission members Vice-Chairman John Winchester, Aussie Geer, Gary Visser, Chauncey Clark and Elaine Fowler; Asst to Administrator Darrow and Building Official Robinson.

I. Call to Order. Vice-Chairman Winchester called the meeting to order, stated the press and public were duly notified pursuant to state law, and noted Chairman Currey and Commissioner Kilpatrick had excused absences. He also welcomed Councilman Kaynard, attending as a resident. Vice-Chairman Winchester thanked Church of Holy Cross for the use of its facility. He noted, for the public, this meeting was moved from the temporary Town Hall because Middle Street around Town Hall is blocked for the Fire Prevention event currently underway at the Fire Station.

II. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Ms. Geer made a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Ms. Fowler; MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

III. Approval of Minutes.

Commissioners observed a few scrivener errors in the September 14, 2011 draft minutes.

MOTION: Mr. Clark made a motion to approve September 14, 2011 Planning Commission minutes with corrections to a variety of scrivener errors; seconded by Mr. Visser. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

IV. Correspondence & General Public Comments

V. New Business

A. 2012 Meeting Calendar

Vice-Chairman Winchester asked Commissioners to review the proposed 2012 meeting calendar for final approval at the November meeting.

B. 2011 Planning & Zoning Training

Commissioners were provided Staff compiled list of training opportunities through 2011 and encouraged to complete annual training, if necessary.

C. Review of Zoning Ordinance Issues: Sections 12-12, 17-9 and 17-10

Review of Section 17 of Town Codes – Planning Commission

Discussion revolved around the following: Sections 17-9 and 17-10 require the Planning Commission to approve all lot subdivisions and/or lot line adjustments and, further, that all plats recorded with Charleston County Register of Mesne Conveyance include an

endorsement from the Town's Planning Commission. However, the Planning Commission is not empowered to make de minimis changes to a plat. Commissioners noted that such lack of authority becomes a conflict when Town statutes are unclear, such as Section 21-12 (Lot size, dimension, use location, calculating and measuring areas). Section 21-12 indicates lot sizes shall be ½ acre in size, although the Town has a few platted lots less than that size. Section 21-12(A)(2) then provides that no lots shall be combined or subdivided to reduce or make greater the size of a lot beyond the original lot size. Commissioners questioned where their authority ended in approving subdivision or lot line adjustments given the unclear verbiage in Section 21-12.

Commissioners discussed Section 21-12, asking the rationale for the specific language in Section 21-12(A)(2) about lot subdivision and combination. Building Official Robinson offered the following rationale: the Town did not want to encourage activity where one owner could purchase three (3) adjacent lots at 0.75 acre each and then subdivide the 2.25 acres of land into four (4) parcels of at least 0.5 acres each (i.e. Town was trying to retain current density by restricting the creation of lots that would add to net aggregate).

Councilman Kaynard then asked how the Town would define "original subdivision" as stated in Section 21-12(A)(2). He asked how the term "original subdivision" could be defined anymore, given the changes over time to the Island.

Commission members discussed Section 21-12, suggesting that the entire section be replaced with more clear language. Commissioners discussed general goals for the section:

- No additional lots (increased density).
- No subdivision in a manner that would create a new lot or eliminate any existing lot.
- No reduction of a lot under ½ acre. If a lot is already less than ½ acre, there would be no adjustment to the lot that would result in a further diminishment of the lot size.

Commissioners also discussed "flag" lots and minimum frontage requirements

Ms. Fowler offered to craft draft language regarding Section 21-12. She noted, as an aside, some housekeeping changes for Section 17 (Planning Commission). Specifically, Ms. Fowler noted that Section 17 calls for election of a Planning Commission Chair and Secretary (Secretary can be a Staff member, to take meeting minutes). She recommended amending Section 17-5 to reflect the election of a Vice-Chair.

Vice-Chairman Winchester directed that discussion of Sections 17 and 21 be placed on the November meeting agenda and thanked Ms. Fowler for agreeing to craft and disseminate some draft changes.

VII. Unfinished Business

A. Ongoing Town Projects – Status and Staff Report

- Accreted Land Management Plan – Council is expected to hold a meeting in the near future (October or November) to discuss how to finalize a management plan.
- Sullivan's Island Elementary School – Councilman Kaynard noted that the Town recently received a citizens' petition for a referendum on the

school and its size. He noted that local press covered this topic in tonight's news. Meanwhile, Council is scheduled to consider ratification of Ord. 2011-5, land lease from Town to Charleston County School District for Sullivan's Island Elementary School, on Tuesday, October 18, 2011.

- Town Hall & Police Department – Town consultant is currently working with Town Staff on the scope of civic needs for its future report.

VII. Next Meeting – 6:30PM, Wednesday, November 9, 2011

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45 pm (Mr. Clark motioned; Ms. Geer seconded; unanimously passed).

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Darrow, Asst. to Administrator

Approved at the Wednesday, November 9, 2011 Planning Commission Meeting