

**TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND
SOUTH CAROLINA
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, February 10, 2010**

A regular meeting of the Town of Sullivan's Island Planning Commission was held at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, February 10, 2010 in Town Council Chambers, 1610 Middle Street all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been satisfied. Present were Commission members Chairman Hal Currey, Vice-Chairman John Winchester, Nicky Bluestein, Anne Osborne Kilpatrick, Bobby Thompson and Elaine Fowler; Asst to Administrator Darrow and Building Official Robinson.

I. Call to Order. Chairman Currey called the meeting to order, noted Commission member Aussie Geer had a work conflict and her absence was excused, and stated the press and public were duly notified pursuant to state law.

II. Approval of Agenda.

MOTION: Ms. Fowler made a motion to approve the February 10, 2010 agenda; seconded by Mr. Winchester. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

III. Approval of Minutes.

MOTION: Ms. Fowler made a motion to approve the January 13, 2010 minutes as presented; seconded by Mr. Winchester; MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

IV. Correspondence & General Public Comments – None

V. New Business

A. Bicycle Friendly Community – concept

Chairman Currey reported the Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Councils of Government (BCD-COG) made the Town aware of an opportunity to pursue potential classification as a Bicycle Friendly Community. Chairman Currey noted the recently approved Town Comprehensive Plan identified as a goal, under the Transportation Element, Town pursuit of opportunities to improve bicycling on the Island. Chairman Currey reported he had the opportunity last month to attend a meeting that outlined a program by which municipalities could pursue designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community. Attendees included Mount Pleasant Town officials and representatives from the League of American Bicyclists and Bicycling Coalition. He noted that there are between 80-100 municipalities in the United States that carry the Bicycle Friendly Community designation, and that Greenville and Columbia were pursuing this designation. Chairman Currey noted that he met with Administrator Benke and Asst to Administrator Darrow late in January to relay the information he gained from this meeting, and was advised that Council would consider this opportunity at its February 1, 2010 Committees of Council meeting.

Council has directed that the questionnaire be completed for the Town to determine what its current status is, and what action and funds would be necessary to obtain a Bicycle Friendly Community designation. Thereafter the Commission discussed the next step in moving the application process forward and what role the Commission would play in it. Chairman Currey commented that the League of American Bicyclists and Palmetto Cycling Coalition

promote Bicycle Friendly Community designations. Chairman Currey noted that the first step in the process would be the completion of a questionnaire, something that would require staff time, most likely by Administrator Benke or Asst. to Administrator Darrow. He noted this questionnaire would provide the Town a review of its present status. The Commission felt that the Town needed a community volunteer to help promote the concept within the Island. This person could act as a community advisory committee chair to encourage initiatives in the Bicycle Friendly Community program, such as encouraging local businesses to install bicycle racks.

The Commission's consensus was that the Town should continue to pursue development of a bicycle community advisory committee. Chairman Currey said he would help facilitate looking for a chair within the community and help launch the group. Commissioner Bluestein indicated he would assist with this effort as well. The Commission, however, did not feel the Planning Commission should take on the role of organizing and running this advisory committee. Discussion ended with Chairman Currey noting he would endeavor to find a person to chair a bicycle community advisory committee. He and Mr. Bluestein will collaborate on options to get the community group established and will provide feedback to the Commission, Council and Town Staff.

B. Comprehensive Plan Needs & Goals – Implementation Review

Chairman Currey noted the Commission decided to review each of the Needs & Goals articulated for each Element in the recently approved Town Comprehensive Plan in concert with Town Council and Staff. The Commission noted that the purpose of this review was to identify ways the Planning Commission could track and potentially facilitate the implementation of different Needs & Goals, in concert with Council.

1. Economic Element Needs & Goals

Commission reviewed the Economic Needs & Goals (**Exhibit A**) agreeing that four of the five implementations outlined therein were being currently pursued by the Town. The Commission discussed the last implementation (E.2.C) which states, "Review the current zoning ordinances for consistency with desired development patterns and future goals for the Community Commercial District (Planning Commission, Short Term)."

Mr. Winchester asked about the status of the recent ordinance recommendation the Commission made in August 2009 to Council that would allow single family use within the Community Commercial District between the Station 20-22 blocks. He questioned whether there might be inconsistency in the zoning ordinance that would allow for new multi-family residential development in the CC District. Asst to Administrator Darrow noted that the Commission's recommendations were forwarded to Council in fall 2009, but Council did not choose to move the matter to ordinance status. Building Official Robinson recalled the status of the proposed ordinance differently. Chairman Currey asked that Staff research this matter and clarify at next month's meeting.

Ms. Fowler recommended the Commission, at a future formal review of the Comprehensive Plan, consider including a Needs & Goal that would encourage the economic health of the Island's residents and commercial district, along with proposed implementations for those goals. She submitted that, if the Town remains dedicated to a neighborhood commercial district, it would be good for the Town to identify ways the community could help support the businesses so the commercial district could remain economically viable.

2. Population Element Needs & Goals

The Commission reviewed the Population Needs & Goals (**Exhibit B**) noting that Council and the Town were already making strides in the implementation of the stated goals. The Commission noted that the potential Bicycle Friendly Community designation would be an example of encouraging volunteerism in the community (P.I.B implementation) along with meeting a Transportation Element Needs & Goal.

Chairman Currey instructed Staff to add the Needs & Goals for the following Comprehensive Plan Elements to the March 10, 2010 Agenda: Cultural Resources & Natural Resources.

C. Party on New Bridge – Concept

Mr. Bluestein noted he attended the recent Party at Stith Park the weekend after the bridge closed for span installation, and that the event was well executed. He suggested that the Town sponsor an additional party on the bridge once the new span has been installed. Building Official Robinson noted that Council had explored the possibility of this type of an event a few months ago and was told by the contractor, PCL, that it was not possible. He noted that PCL Construction has a very narrow, specific period of time to get the new span installed and the bridge open, with financial incentives to finish early and significant financial penalties if the installation ran late. Therefore, PCL told Council and the Town that it would immediately open the bridge to all traffic as soon as possible.

VI. Unfinished Business

A. Planning Commission Rules of Procedure: Potential Conflict of Interest Policy

Chairman Currey noted that, during last month's regular annual review of the Commission's Rules of Procedure, Commission members discussed the possibility of establishing a conflict of interest policy for its members. Staff was directed to research this matter and Ms. Fowler indicated she would provide some proposed language gleaned from organizations with which she worked (**Exhibit C**).

Asst. to Administrator Darrow reviewed her research findings (**Exhibit C**), noting SC Code Section 8-13-700 outlines the requirements and procedure for a Commission member who feels he/she needs to disclose a potential conflict of interest. She noted Town Council has a form a Council member would complete, for the minutes and public record, when the Council member determines he/she needs to recuse himself/herself from discussion and vote on a specific matter. Ms. Fowler provided draft language regarding a potential conflict of interest from her research (**Exhibit C**).

Commission members discussed the matter further. There was general consensus that the Commission would benefit from further clarification in its Rules of Procedures on the matter of a member's potential conflict of interest. Specifically, the Commission felt it would be helpful to outline circumstances when a Commission member, or the Commission as a whole, should and could determine it was inappropriate for a Commission member to participate on an agenda matter and be asked to recuse himself/herself. Ms. Fowler

indicated she would craft language for the Commission Rules of Procedure and bring it back to the Commission at the March meeting.

The Commission received reports on the following ongoing projects:

B. Accreted Land Management Plan

Following the Special Council Meeting on December 7, 2010 and further deliberation at the December 15, 2010 Council meeting, Council approved on December 15, 2010 a set of guidance documents for the Town consultant, Coastal Science & Engineering (CSE): (1) Proposed Principles for the Management of the Town's Accreted Land and (2) Directions to Consultant for Drafting the Sullivan's Island Accreted Land Management Plan. These two documents were provided to CSE in late December. The earliest the Town could expect any documents from the vendor is April 2010.

C. Master Community Commercial District Plan

A Special Council Meeting was held at 6:00PM on Monday, January 25, 2010 at Church of Holy Cross Episcopal, 2520 Middle Street. At this meeting Council and the public received the final Plan from the consultant team of Seamon, Whiteside & Associates/Urban Edge Studios. Council will deliberate the consultant's recommendations at the Committees of Council Meeting at 6:00PM on Monday, March 1, 2010 under Real Estate Committee. The meeting will be held at Town Hall.

VII. Next Meeting – 6:30PM, Wednesday, March 10, 2010

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m. (Ms. Fowler motioned; Mr. Thompson seconded; unanimously passed).

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Darrow, Asst. to Administrator

Approved at the Wednesday, March 10, 2010 Planning Commission Meeting

EXHIBIT A – PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING (February 10, 2010)

ECONOMIC

The Town of Sullivan’s Island has a small commercial district with shops, restaurants and offices. Most of the residents do not work on the Island. The economic health of the Island’s residents and commercial district is good. For example, the population’s average income is above the County average. The goals focus on ways to preserve the high quality of community life while enjoying a viable commercial district.

NEEDS AND GOALS:

- 1. Land use regulations and zoning ordinances should provide for a commercial district consistent with the scale and family atmosphere of the Island and provide for a constrained but sustainable economic base.**

(E.1.A.) Implementation: Limit new businesses to those fitting the scale and atmosphere of the Island that don’t unreasonably exacerbate existing problems or services. (Town Council; Ongoing)

(E.1.B.) Implementation: New businesses should reflect and enhance the Island’s quality of life, family atmosphere and visual landscape. (Town Council; Ongoing)

- 2. The development of vacant commercial property (including renovations and replacement) should have a positive impact on the Island overall.**

(E.2.A.) Implementation: Implement a Community Commercial District Master Plan that will include guidelines for the future uses, visual impact, and streetscape of the commercial district. (Town Council, Short Term)

(E.2.B.) Implementation: After the Town has reached a consensus on a commercial district visionary plan, draft ordinances or take other actions that implement that vision, such as capital improvements, permitted uses, parking, public safety, neighborhood compatibility, design guidelines and landscaping requirements. (Town Council; Planning Commission; Short Term)

(E.2.C.) Implementation: Review the zoning regulations for consistency with the desired development patterns and future goals for the district. (Planning Commission, Short Term)

EXHIBIT B – PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING (February 10, 2010)

POPULATION

The population of Sullivan’s Island has increased steadily since the 1950’s and is projected to continue to experience slow growth. No large tracts of undeveloped property or available adjacent lands for annexation exist. Because of this, the population element and goals focus less on the future population numbers and more on the future makeup of the population and the needs of these residents.

NEEDS AND GOALS:

1. Continue to promote a sense of community among the residents.

(P.1.A.) Implementation: Support both public and private community events that foster a sense of community (ie. Fourth of July celebrations, Christmas Tree lightings, children’s events, etc)

(Town Council; Town Administration; Ongoing)

(P.1.B.) Implementation: Encourage volunteerism among Island residents.

(Town Administration; Ongoing)

2. Continue to protect and foster the view that Sullivan’s Island is a family-oriented island.

(P.2.A.) Implementation: Keep population density low through maintaining the predominant half-acre lot sizes and other regulations. (Town Council, Ongoing)

(P.2.B.) Implementation: Maintain main zoning district as single family residential.

(Town Council, Ongoing)

(P.2.C.) Implementation: Continue to prohibit additional multi-family development in the residential districts (R1) on the Island. (Town Council, Ongoing)

(P.2.D.) Implementation: Continue to regulate or control vacation or short-term rentals to discourage the use of these properties for events attracting large groups. (Town Council; Ongoing)

(P.2.E.) Implementation: Continue to regulate the vacation or short-term rentals on the Island paying particular attention to restrictions already in place including items such as number of tenants, parking, permitted activities, licenses, etc.

(Town Council; Ongoing)

