

**TOWN OF SULLIVAN’S ISLAND  
SOUTH CAROLINA  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, April 10, 2013**

A regular meeting of the Town of Sullivan’s Island Planning Commission was held at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 10, 2013 in Town Hall at 2050-B Middle Street, all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been satisfied. Present were Commission members Chauncey Clark (Chair), Anne Osborne Kilpatrick (Vice-Chair); Rusty Bennett, Hal Currey, Carl Hubbard, Carlsen Huey and Gary Visser; Staff members present were Administrator Benke, Asst. to Administrator Darrow and Building Official/Acting Zoning Administrator Robinson.

**I. Call to Order.** Chair Clark called the meeting to order, stated the press and public were duly notified pursuant to state law and welcomed Council members Pat O’Neil, Mike Perkis and Jerry Kaynard to the meeting.

**II. Approval of Agenda**

**MOTION: Vice-Chair Kilpatrick made a motion to approve the April 10, 2013 agenda; seconded by Mr. Visser. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.**

**III. Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION: Mr. Carlsen made a motion to approve the March 13, 2013 meeting minutes; seconded by Mr. Currey. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.**

**IV. Correspondence & General Public Comments**

One letter from Mr. and Mrs. Gene West, owners of 1714 Middle Street, regarding proposed overlay district with multi-family designation for the Fort Moultrie Quartermaster and Support Facilities National Register Historic District (“Quartermaster District”) – distributed to Commissioners.

**V. New Business - None**

**VI. Unfinished Business**

**1. 2013 Work Projects**

Administrator Benke provided brief background and status report on the following items identified by Planning Commission as part of its 2013 Work Projects List:

**a. Island-wide Parking**

- 2007-2008 Town began considering the concept of paid/managed parking concept. In 2008/2009 the Town held a special public meeting at the Church of the Holy Cross to gather feedback.
- A consultant was retained to conduct a feasibility study. Paid parking would be a potentially lucrative enterprise for the Town, which could hire a third-party vendor to handle the whole operation for a proceeds split. It was estimated approximately \$160,000/year in parking revenue and approximately \$100,000 in fine fees could be generated for the Town from this operation.

- SCDOT, which owns all the roads, stipulated that if the Town were to charge to park along the roads, the rights-of-way would have to be improved.
- SCDOT interpreted improvements to include paving rights-of-way. This is an expensive endeavor and might imply the Town assumes some level of ownership for future road, right-of-way and/or stormwater outfall maintenance. At this point, the concept stalled.

In answer to Mr. Bennett's inquiry about statutory relief from SCDOT road improvement requirements, Administrator Benke advised that relief for the Town would need to derive from the political arena (General Assembly representatives) as statutory or regulatory relief does not appear to exist.

In answer to Mr. Visser's inquiry about Isle of Palms parking plans, Administrator Benke noted Isle of Palms continues to study Island wide parking along their grassy rights-of-way. He noted the City is currently exploring signage to encourage visitors to use the Town parking lots and kiosks along the front beach commercial district area.

**b. Gateway Beautification/Landscaping**

- Town does not have budgeted funds to improve Ben Sawyer Boulevard entrance.
- Current focus is for Town to work with a contractor who has volunteered resources and time to landscape the entrance area.
- Breach Inlet area was improved in the past two years with the Thomson Memorial Park.

**c. Underground Electrical Line Installation**

- Long-term discussion item on the Island (since 1950's to present).
- SCE&G installed underground wiring on both ends of the Island for the utility company's specific purposes (salt storms of the early 2000's): Stations 26 ½ - 30 and Station 12 to Hagerty Point.
- Town would have to pay to underground the balance of Island and SCE&G would not pro-rate or finance the expense.
- Residential and three-phase high voltage electrical transmissions provide complexity to the Ben Sawyer entrance area (approximately \$2.5 million to underground wire this area, if infrastructure did not have to be relocated).

**d. Mosquito Abatement**

- Charleston County has identified 55 types of mosquitoes on the Island of which 33 female varieties bite.
- County conducts regular adult and larvae abatement spraying.
- County focuses on community outreach and support in preventing mosquitoes and encourages residents to call and report all outbreaks (record keeping and increases frequency of spraying on Island).

**e. Bird Habitats – skipped**

## **f. Island Access – Bikes and Pedestrians**

- Battery to Beach (Folly to Isle of Palms County Parks via Charleston, Mt. Pleasant, Sullivan’s Island and Isle of Palms): Administrator sits on this committee contributing toward East Cooper route development (signage).
- Ben Sawyer approach pedestrian and bicycle access project: initiated approximately 5-6 years ago in concert with Mt. Pleasant. Project will include widening of causeway to 6 feet at a cost of approximately \$900,000. Approximately 80% of this project has been funded through grant allocations leveraged between Sullivan’s Island and Mt. Pleasant.
- SCDOT intends to resurface Hwy 703.

## **2. Potential Multi-family Overlay District**

Chair Clark provided background on concept:

- Utilize big buildings that are historic (some dilapidated/not being used) by allowing multi-family use under specific restrictions.
- Commission discussed conceptually in February and March. Council provided feedback to Commission at its March 19, 2013 meeting (**minutes excerpt attached as Exhibit B**).
- Commission will continue general discussion of this concept at this meeting.

### **Commission Comments**

Mr. Bennett expressed general support for multi-family use of buildings but, instead of focusing on the Quartermaster District only, he suggested grouping all Island-wide buildings and properties of like kind that qualify for consideration. He noted the nature and characteristics of the structures were the factors that drive consideration for multi-family use.

Ms. Kilpatrick concurred with Mr. Bennett noting that any changes would establish a precedent for public and private buildings and any action should consider establishing a level of guarantee that the spaces would be preserved.

Commission discussed process and next steps. They identified need for further Staff inventory of all Island lots/properties for potential inclusion in this discussion. Further, Commission felt that additional legal feedback would be necessary (general consensus). Item will remain on May agenda but there will be no public hearing at that meeting.

A couple of residents expressed interest in asking questions and making comments on this topic. The Commission agreed to allow brief comments and questions.

*Sidney Cook (1614 Thompson)*

- Clarified historic properties (specifically the old warehouse at 1704 Thompson Avenue) were protected from a preservation standpoint due to their historic nature. She submitted that a use change would not add more protection.

- Submitted that the issue was the increased marketability of these historic properties, specifically old Town Hall at 1610 Middle Street. However, she noted the historic properties already had a market value, perhaps higher than the value would be in neighboring municipalities, by virtue of being on Sullivan’s Island.
- Questioned value of materially modifying use of properties, increasing density and adversely impacting neighbors for no additional historic or demonstrated preservation protections.

*Linda West (1714 Middle Street)*

- Expounded on the letter she and her husband submitted to Commission (referenced under General Correspondence).
- Supports including her large historic structure (former PX/gym) in historic overlay district or use change (allow multi-family).

### **3. 2013 Sullivan’s Island Comprehensive Plan – Review Draft Plan**

Commission received draft 2013 Comprehensive Plan incorporating input/edits from the Commission’s five-year review, initiated in March 2012. Commission members will provide Asst. to Administrator Darrow with additional edits in the near future. Commission will hold public hearing at May meeting.

- 4. Long Term Boat/Leisure Vehicle Parking on Middle Street & Jasper -**  
Deferred to April meeting
- 5. Demolition by Neglect –** Deferred (New Zoning Administrator project)
- 6. Ongoing Town Projects –** Staff reported the following progress:
  - Zoning Administrator –** Council will consider nine finalists at April Council meeting.
  - New Town Hall/Police Station –** Council will conduct interviews of three finalists this Friday, April 12, 2013 (beginning at 3:00pm): (1) Creech & Associates, (2) McMillan Pazdan Smith and (3) Stubbs Muldrow Herin.
  - Sullivan’s Island Elementary School –** Project in-progress with foundation poured.

### **VII. Next Meeting – (6:00pm) Wednesday, May 8, 2013**

**Note meeting will start one-half hour early to accommodate public hearing.**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 pm (Ms. Kilpatrick motioned; Mr. Visser seconded; unanimously passed).

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Darrow  
Asst. to Administrator

Approved at the Wednesday, May 8, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting

## EXHIBIT A

**Excerpt – March 19, 2013 Regular Council Meeting Minutes (page 5 of 5)**

### **Topic: Overlay District – Multifamily Use**

Motion was made by Councilman O'Neil, seconded by Councilwoman Watson, to ask the Planning Commission to investigate and hold a Public Hearing on the possibility of establishing a new zoning category which would permit multi-family residential use of certain historic buildings within the Ft. Moultrie Quartermaster and Support Facilities National Register Historic District providing that the building be listed to contributing to the National Register District and that it contain at least 5,000 square feet of interior space; that any resulting residential units be no smaller than 2,000 square feet; that there be no more than 3 residential units within a single structure; and provided that the original historic purpose of the structure was not single family residential.

Motion was made by Councilman Kaynard, seconded by Councilman Perkis, to amend the motion to read "multiple single family dwelling units" instead of "multi-family residential" and "Overlay District of the Ft. Moultrie Quartermaster and Support Facilities National Register Historic District" instead of just "Ft. Moultrie Quartermaster and Support Facilities National Historic District/" carried unanimously.

Motion, as amended, carried unanimously.

Final motion read:

to ask the Planning Commission to investigate and hold a Public Hearing on the possibility of establishing a new zoning category which would permit multiple single family dwelling units of certain historic buildings within the Overlay District of the Ft. Moultrie Quartermaster and Support Facilities National Register Historic District, providing that the building be listed to contributing to the National Register District and that it contain at least 5,000 square feet of interior space; that any resulting residential units be no smaller than 2,000 square feet; that there be no more than 3 residential units within a single structure; and provided that the original historic purpose of the structure was not single family residential.