

**TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, March 13, 2019

A regular meeting was held at 6:00PM, this date, at Town Hall, 2056 Middle Street, all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act satisfied. Present: Commissioners Gary Visser (Chair), Sydney Cook (Vice-Chair), Charlie Cole, Hal Currey, Carl Hubbard and David Peterseim. Staff member: Joe Henderson, Director of Planning and Zoning, Randy Robinson, Chief Building Official and Lisa Darrow, Asst. to Administrator.

Call to Order. Chair Visser called the meeting to order, stated press and public were duly notified pursuant to state law and all Commissioners were present except Manda Poletti (excused absence). One audience member present (Mark Howard, Councilmember).

Chair Visser and Commissioners welcomed Mr. David Peterseim to his first meeting (filling seat vacated by Mr. Watterson, that term expiring September 2019).

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – approved as presented

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 9, 2019

MOTION: Mr. Cole moved to approve the January 9, 2019 minutes as presented; seconded by Mr. Currey. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

III. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Planning Commission Project List for 2019: Consideration of issues for further evaluation and study:

- **Board and Commission forum regarding Comprehensive Plan**
- **Potential guest speakers**
- **Committee to discuss Zoning Ordinance regulations**
 - **FEMA map changes**
 - **Other zoning standards**
- **Other goals and objectives**

Chair Visser noted Commission consideration of the above project list topics arose, in large part, from the public feedback received, and discussion during, the development of the draft 2018-2020 Comprehensive Plan.

Staff Report: (Director Henderson & Building Official Robinson)

Staff Report – see Exhibit A

Commission Discussion Included:

- A. Base Flood Elevation (BFE), pending new FEMA flood maps and how this impacts foundation height and maximum height for principal building construction.
Staff noted Commission had discussed this previously in January.
- B. Residential construction: massing and size of construction

Commissioner Currey expressed particular interest in strategies to reduce the impact of massing on lots and acknowledged many owners may wish to maximize allowable square footage for homes.

- C. Influence that the inclusion of designs for pools and other recreational accessory structures, under Town’s current Zoning Ordinance, may have on the design and placement of principal building construction on lots.
- D. Principal Building Square Footage and lot size calculation
Staff noted 2,400 sf is the maximum allowed without seeking an increase from Design Review Board (currently DRB may increase principal building square footage up to 25%)
- E. Principal Building Coverage calculations
Staff noted Design Review Board may currently allow for increases up to 20% of the maximum permitted Principal Building Coverage Area.
- F. Comprehensive Plan Strategy LU 1.4 – consider creation of an “institutional” or “governmental” zoning district

Vice-Chair Cook advocated for Town to craft Zoning Ordinance language that would remove subjectivity wherever possible as it relates to aforementioned topics.

Commission discussed future development of a task force to review land use policies to development to address aforementioned items.

Commission asked Staff to gather research data for future meeting on aforementioned items

2. Town of Sullivan’s Island Comprehensive Plan 2018-2028: Update on Comprehensive Plan rewrite and the review schedule of Town Council

Staff advised Council has the draft Plan currently under review with required ordinance approval process thereafter before Plan is finalized/ratified.

IV. PUBLIC INPUT – no written correspondence received

Mark Howard (1820 Central Avenue) commented on new construction and neighborhood compatibility, and, expressed support for DRB review of homes for same.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:03PM (Vice-Chair Cook moved; Mr. Hubbard seconded; unanimously passed).

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Darrow
Asst. to Administrator

Approved at the May 7, 2019 Planning Commission Meeting

EXHIBIT A

March 13, 2019 Planning Commission

Town of Sullivan's Island

Planning Commission

March 13, 2019



Housing Element

LAND USE POLICY 6: ADDRESS NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY DESIGN CONCERNS REGARDING SENSE OF PLACE ON THE ISLAND.		
LU6.1 Establish a task force that will revise land use regulations by review of the existing Zoning Ordinance to ensure that future construction is respectful of the Island's traditional mass, height, scale, proportionality to lot size, neighborhood compatibility, and historic resources.	Town Council; Planning Commission	Ongoing
LU6.2 Conduct an evaluation of residential design guidelines to ensure consistency with the Island's open and informal character as it relates to landscape design, fences, site design, and other architectural elements.	Town Council; Town Administration; Planning Commission	Ongoing

Principal Building Square Footage

(3) Equation: $[(\text{Lot Area} - 5000 \text{ sf}) / 100 \text{ sf}] \times (10) + 2400 = \text{Principal Building Square Footage}$.

Examples:

- (a) $\frac{1}{2}$ acre Lot 21,780sf = 4078 Principal Building Square Footage.
- (b) $\frac{1}{3}$ acre Lot 14,505sf = 3351 Principal Building Square Footage.
- (c) $\frac{1}{4}$ acre Lot 10890sf = 2989 Principal Building Square Footage.
- (d) Lot 5,000 sf = 2400 Principal Building Square Footage.

C. Design Review Board.

- (1) The Design Review Board may increase by no more than twenty-five percent (25%) the maximum permitted Principal Building Square Footage if this or other modifications achieve greater Neighborhood Compatibility as described in ARTICLE XII, except as provided in Section 21-20C.(2)(j) regarding historic properties with a second structure on the same lot. (5-15-07)
- (2) However, in no case shall any Principal Building Square Footage exceed 5,600 square feet or, when applicable, the principal square footage permitted in 21-27 B (4). (5-15-07) (12-17-13)

Principal Building Coverage

- (3) Examples. $\frac{1}{2}$ acre Lot 21,780 sf = 3267 sf Coverage (15%).
 - (a) $\frac{1}{3}$ acre Lot 14,505 sf = 2176 sf Coverage (15%).
 - (b) $\frac{1}{4}$ acre Lot 10,890 sf = 1634 sf Coverage (20%)
 - (c) Lot 5,000 sf = 1250 sf Coverage (25%).

C. Design Review Board.

- (1) The Design Review Board may increase by no more than twenty percent (20%) the maximum permitted Principal Building Coverage Area if this or other modifications achieve greater Neighborhood Compatibility as described in ARTICLE XII, except as provided in Section 21-20C.(2)(j) regarding historic properties with a second structure on the same lot. (5-15-07)
- (2) *In cases of interpretation of Enclosed Principal Building Coverage Area, the Design Review Board shall determine what portion of the Enclosed Principal Building Coverage Area shall be included or excluded in the calculations.*

Pool Regulations

Sec. 21-142. Recreation facilities.

A. Permitted accessory recreational uses.

- (1) Swimming pool and attendant facilities.
- (2) Basketball, tennis or other type of play court.
- (3) Decks and patios.

B. Restrictions.

- (1) All accessory recreational uses and structures shall be located a minimum of twenty (20) feet to the rear of the Principal Building's front façade.
- (2) All accessory recreational uses and structures shall meet the same Setbacks required of the Principal Building.
- (3) Pools elevated more than six inches above grade are not permitted unless developed as an integral part of a Principal Building.
- (4) Elevated decks shall only be permitted if constructed as an integral part of the Principal Building.
- (5) Mesh fencing around recreational courts shall be permitted to exceed the height standards of the fence regulations but shall be substantially transparent.

Land Use Element

LAND USE POLICY 1: PRESERVE THE SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE ISLAND		
LUI.4 Consider creation of an “institutional” or “governmental” zoning district to properly separate more intensive uses from residential properties by way of zoning standards.	Town Council; Town Administration; Planning Commission	Short-Term

<http://tosi-building.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=ad65e282a23d4f3f87f94a05b049ca17>

Comprehensive Plan Update: Interactive Maps

- <http://tosi-building.maps.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=ad65e282a23d4f3f87f94a05b049ca17>
- [Cultural Resources Map Tour](#)
- [Historic Districts and Historic Resources](#)
- [Zoning Map](#)

Potential Zoning Ordinance Changes related to new FEMA maps

Sec. 21-31. Foundation height.

A. Purpose.

Due to FEMA regulations and Hurricane Hugo, the foundations of new Principal Buildings are substantially elevated; in many cases, Principal Buildings are elevated higher than FEMA requirements to provide parking and better views. Decreasing foundation height and the height of the Principal Building (including, but not limited to eliminating under house parking) increases Neighborhood Compatibility.

B. Design standards.

- (1) The bottom elevation of the Principal Building's lowest horizontal structural member shall be no more than the greater of seven feet above grade or two (2) feet above the FEMA base flood elevation
- (2) The finished floor shall be no more than three (3) feet above the FEMA base flood elevation.

C. Design Review Board.

The Design Review Board may grant up to a one foot (1') modification in this Design Standard if the modification or other modifications achieve greater Neighborhood Compatibility as described in ARTICLE XII.

New Flood Insurance Rate maps (FIRMs) will likely be adopted in 2019 for Sullivan's Island. This will result in a lowering of Base Flood Elevations (BFE's) across the Island.

Lower BFE's will impact the zoning standards for buildings. Consider the following:

- Per §21-31, will **prohibit home owners from elevating their homes more than 3'** from the BFE 10' across most of the Island.
- Will **prohibit** homes from being elevated enough for **parking and access from under the home (i.e. under 6')**
- May **aesthetically create a built environment different from their neighbors**. Not elevated as high as previously allowed.

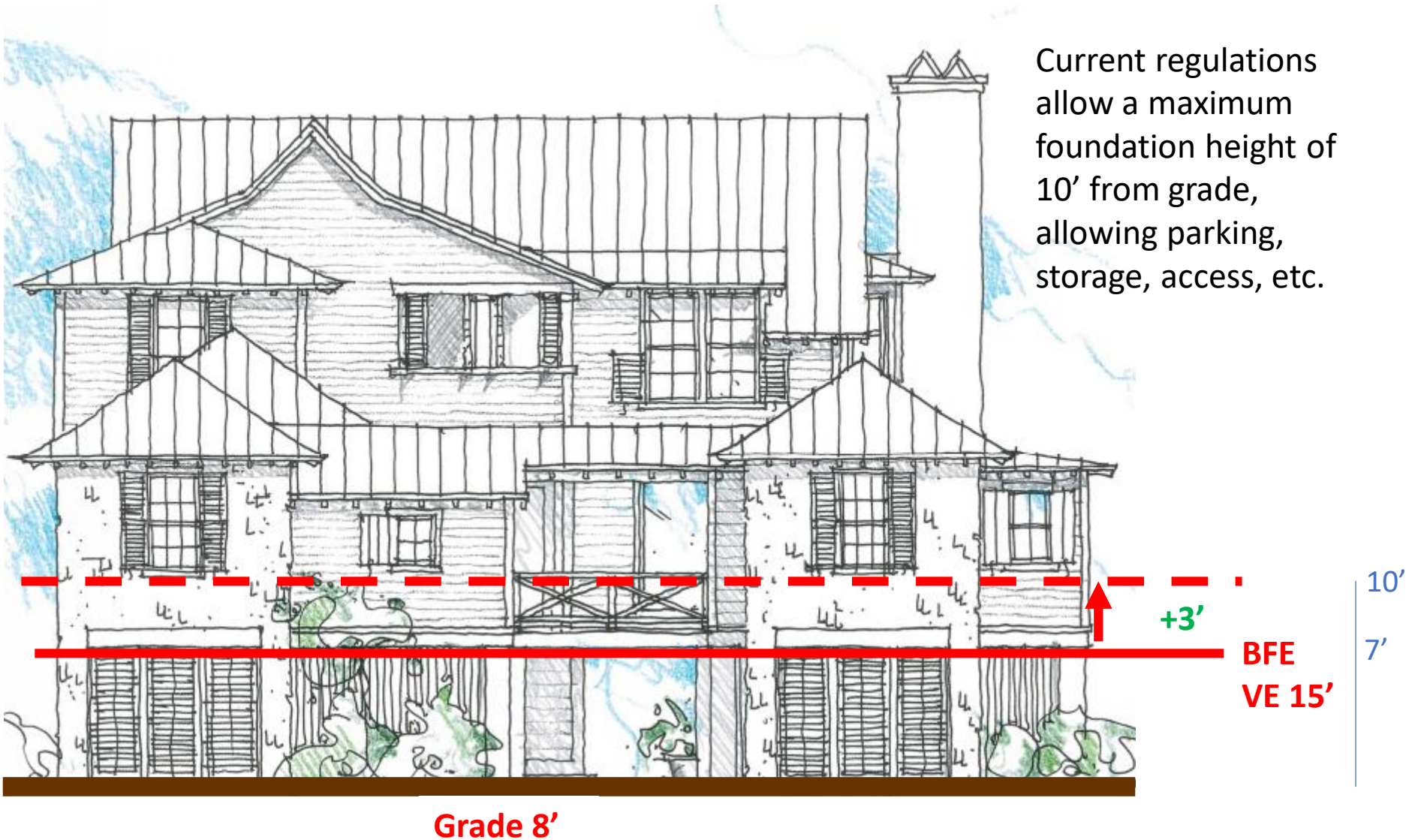
Example: Current Flood map of VE 15



**BFE
VE 15'**

Grade 8'

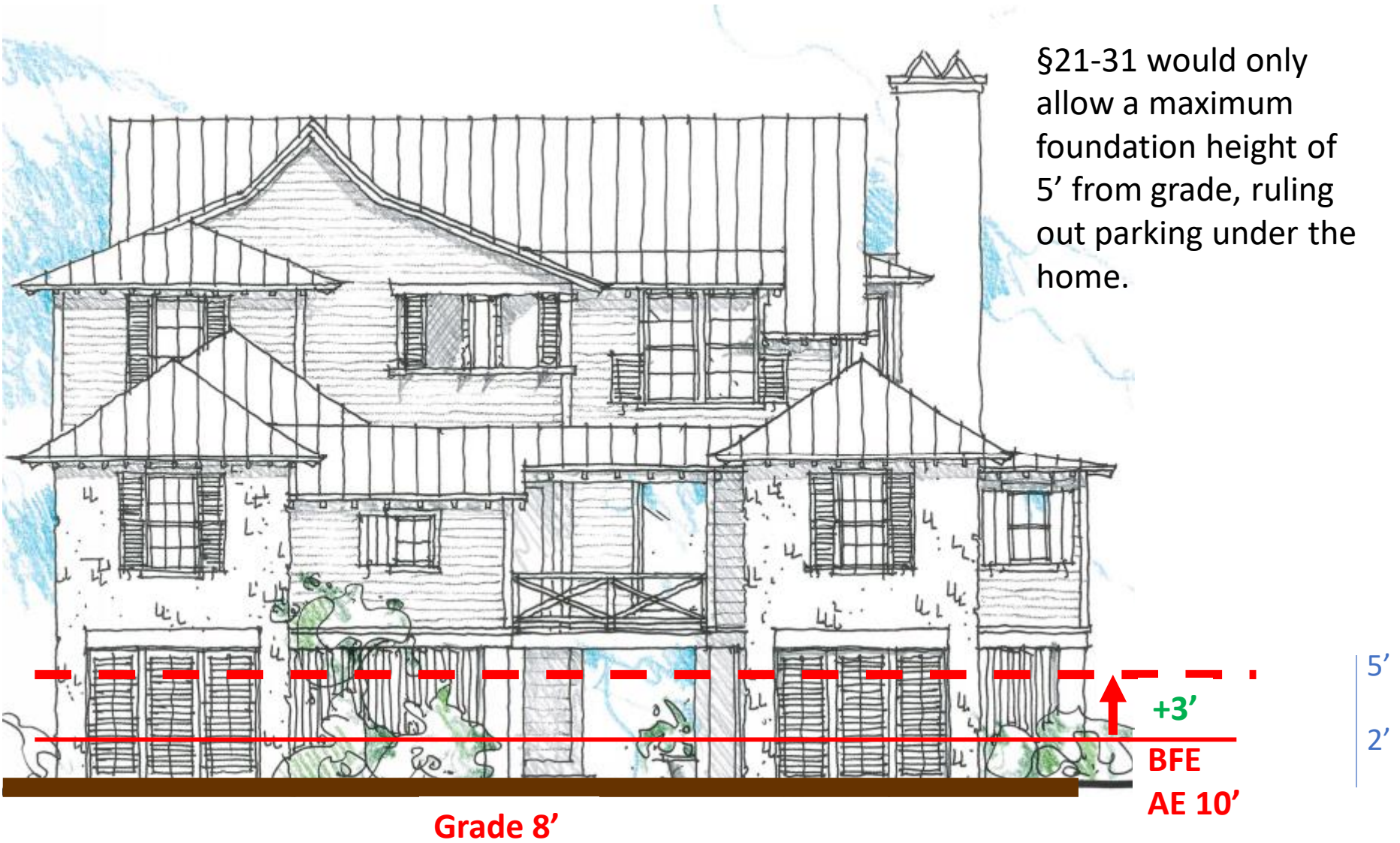
Current Flood map of VE 15



Proposed flood maps of AE 10



Proposed flood maps of AE 10



Is there a benefit to changing the 3' maximum limitation on elevating the floor to address the below issues?

- Per §21-31, will prohibit home owners from elevating their homes more than 3' from the BFE 10' across most of the Island.
- Will prohibit homes from being elevated enough for parking and access from under the home (i.e. under 6')
- May aesthetically create a built environment different from their neighbors. Not elevated as high as previously allowed.

Existing residential foundation height regulations:

Zoning Ordinance				
District	Section Number	Title	Page Number	Explanation
<i>RS-District</i>	21-20. C (c)	A.D.U. Special Exception	10	FFE height maximum of 2' over BFE for the new home construction
<i>RS-District</i>	21-31 B (2)	Foundation Height	21	FFE height maximum of 3' over BFE
<i>RS-District</i>	21-28	Third Story	20	Maximum of 400' sq. for the third story. Design standard for hidden construction.

Existing commercial foundation height regulations:

Zoning Ordinance				
District	Section Number	Title	Page Number	Explanation
<i>CC-District</i>	21-49 E	CCOD-1 Residential construction	28	1st Floor no more than 2' over BFE
<i>CC-District</i>	21-49 F	CCOD-2 Residential construction	30	1st Floor no more than 3' over BFE
<i>CC-District</i>	21-59	CCOD-2 commercial construction	38	1st Floor no more than 3' over BFE