



**Town of Sullivan's Island, South Carolina**  
**Planning Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, March 10, 2021**

A regular meeting was held at 6:00 p.m., on Wednesday, March 10, 2021, by way of the virtual Zoom platform. All requirements of the Freedom of Information Act were verified to have been satisfied.

**Present:** Commissioners Carl Hubbard, Manda Poletti, Charles Cole, David Peterseim, Laura Schroeder, and Gallia Coles. Town Council members Chauncey Clark and Kaye Smith were also present.

**Staff Members:** Joe Henderson, Director of Planning and Pamela Otto, Planning Commission Secretary

**Call to Order.** Chair Hubbard called the meeting to order, and it was stated the press and public were duly notified pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act Requirements. All Commissioners were present except for Edward Condon. There were two (2) members of the public present and one (1) member of the media present.

A. Approval of Minutes - February 10, 2021

**Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Hubbard, seconded by Ms. Schroeder, to approve the Planning Commission minutes dated February 10, 2021. This motion passed unanimously.

B. Public Input – no written correspondence received

C. Text Amendments

1. Driveways, Zoning Ordinance Section §21-15: Henderson presented the Commission's recommended text changes to Section §21-15, meant to change the number of allowable driveways for a property from one (1) to two (2) driveways in the RS- District. A brief discussion took place related to the conditions applied by the Planning Commission during the February 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. One modification was that if a second driveway is approved, it

should be located on the secondary frontage. The second proposed change was that the homeowner should acquire an SCDOT encroachment permit prior to seeking a permit with the Sullivan's Island Building Department. Non-residential uses like schools, churches, daycares, cemeteries, government, and commercial uses may continue to have no more than two (2) per lot.

**Discussion:** Ms. Poletti asked about the change to Section 21-15, A, (2), (c), which requires the homeowner to get the SCDOT permit before Sullivan's Island permitting, she wished to know if it was for the second driveway or all driveways. Henderson stated that if the text changes are made, it would be for all driveways. As the SCDOT owns the right of ways on the Island, the homeowner would need their review and approval prior to permitting.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Ms. Poletti to accept the draft of the text amendments and to hold a public hearing on the Driveway Zoning Ordinance §21-15, seconded by Ms. Schroeder. This motion passed unanimously.

2. Short-term Auto Parking Lot, Ordinance Section §21-50 C. (4): Establish short-term auto parking lots as conditional uses instead of allowing as special exceptions, with design review approvable at the Town staff level.

Henderson reported that currently a BZA granted special exception is required to establish a parking lot on a commercial property. This is a two-step process involving the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) and the Design Review Board (DRB).

Town Council initiated this text amendment which would make parking lots a conditional use and make the approval a staff level decision. Council also asked the Planning Commission to remove the language requiring a written agreement with specific businesses, allowing parking to be open to all visitors of the business district. Henderson reported that there would be no long-term parking allowed. The split zoned lots would only be allowed to have parking lots on the commercial portions.

The proposed changes would strike the portion of the ordinance that covers video sales and rentals, as well as apply a new definition for the "Short-term auto parking lot." As proposed, it is defined as designated parking for commercial patrons during the daytime and nighttime hours of operation, prohibiting overnight parking and placing the responsibility of monitoring the lot on the property owner. The storage of vehicles, boats, trailers or other recreational vehicles would not be allowed. The Short-term auto parking lots would be approved by the Zoning Administrator provided the specifications laid out in Article XV Sec. 21-143 D are met.

**Discussion:** There were two lots discussed, on each corner of the Station 21 to 22 block of Middle St. They each were able to have about twenty (20) to twenty-five (25) spaces. Mr. Hubbard asked if the change requested by the Land Use and Natural Resource (LUNR)

Committee will allow the lot owners to rent spaces to whomever they wish. Henderson said it would be at the discretion of the property owner to designate spaces for use. Mr. Hubbard asked who will be monitoring the lots. Henderson said the owner will monitor parking compliance in the lot, however, Town staff will be monitoring the owner's business operation. Some overnight parking might happen as the lots will serve restaurants and bars, and there is a flexibility for that, however long-term violations will not be allowed. Mr. Peterseim asked about the impact of noise on the property owners who live behind the lots. Henderson stated the noise ordinance would still be effective.

Ms. Schroeder asked about the possibility of cutting back on the perpendicular parking in front of the businesses, since parking is being added with these lots. She cited the dangers of drivers backing up out of those spots. Mr. Hubbard stated that he believed the perpendicular spaces were not up to SCDOT standards. Henderson said that was true but it would be very expensive to eliminate those spaces given curb and gutter and stormwater improvements would be needed along this portion of Middle Street. Ms. Schroeder asked if that parking could just be eliminated, opening that area for use by those businesses. Mr. Cole said he did not think the businesses would approve that move. Henderson stated that it was a SCDOT right of way and the improvements would have to be publicly funded. He also stated that there might be some zoning issues with the right of way becoming outdoor dining. However, if those spaces were removed, the parking would need to be accommodated elsewhere. Ms. Schroeder asked how many spaces would be eliminated by going from perpendicular to parallel parking. Henderson stated that there are about 35 spaces (25 actual spaces).

Mr. Peterseim said he agreed with Ms. Schroeder, about the safety issues with the perpendicular parking and that they need to be discussed in conjunction with the parking lots. He felt that it was the job of elected officials to solve this problem. Henderson stated that the Planning Commission could take a vote to approve the text amendment and following the public hearing, also send a memo to Town Council stating that they would like them to let them know that the Planning Commission wants them to work with the SCDOT to solve the perpendicular parking issue. Henderson stated this initiative must be done by Town Council and it is not within the purview of the Planning Commission to make improvements in the public right of way. Henderson confirmed there was a goal in the Comprehensive Plan that could be referenced in the memo. Following the public hearing, Henderson would craft a memo to Town Council stating the Commission's desire to address the perpendicular parking issue on Middle St.

Mr. Cole wished to know the impact on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standard parking. Henderson said there would be one van accessible spot per parking lot and there are currently two (2) along Middle Street between Station 22 and Station 22.5.

Ms. Schroeder asked if there were any plans to improve the parking area at Battery Thompson. Henderson stated that it was a Town property that had previously been used as training and storage for the Fire Department. Recently, the Town has fenced it off and

decided to use it as an unimproved grass lot for parking, with no plans for improving it. Ms. Schroeder then asked about the parking lot at Battery Gadsden. Henderson said it was another Town owned lot available for general use by the public. Ms. Schroeder then asked if those lots could be improved to offset removing the perpendicular parking on Middle St. Henderson said there had been some talk about it but nothing had been put into effect, that the Town was taking incremental steps leading up to more action by the Town to approach the Middle St. parking issue. Ms. Schroeder feels that it should be approached by the Town as an all-inclusive issue, not just parking lots but all parking issues. This view was supported by Ms. Coles.

Mr. Hubbard asked who the designee would be that was stated in the draft of the text amendment, that would approve parking lots. Henderson said that would be a building official if he was not available, as Zoning Administrator, to approve a parking lot.

**Motion:** A motion was made to approve the text amendments, as they are written, by Ms. Schroeder, seconded by Mr. Cole. This motion passed unanimously.

**Motion:** A motion was made for Henderson to draft a memo for the Planning Commission, following the text amendment public hearing, that would state the desire of the Planning Commission to have a more comprehensive plan for parking issues, seconded by Mr. Peterseim. This motion passed unanimously.

#### D. Adjourn

A motion was made to adjourn by Mr. Cole, seconded by Mr. Peterseim. This motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:52 p.m.



Carl Hubbard, Chair



Date

Respectfully submitted,  
Pamela Otto,  
Planning Commission Secretary