



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

Wednesday, November 9, 2022

A regular meeting was held at 4:00pm, on Wednesday, November 9, 2022, in Town Hall at 2056 Middle Street. All requirements of the Freedom of Information Act were verified to have been satisfied.

Present: Commissioners Carl Hubbard (Chair), Manda Poletti (Vice Chair), David Peterseim, Mark Howard, Gallia Coles, Charles Cole, and Laura Schroeder.

Staff Members: Charles Drayton, Director of Planning and Zoning, Joe Henderson, Deputy Administrator, Max Wurthmann, Building Official, and Pamela Otto, Planning Commission staff member.

A. **Call to Order.** Chair Hubbard called the meeting to order at 4:00pm, and it was stated the press and public were duly notified pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act requirements.

Public: There were two (2) members of the public present.

Media: There were no members of the media present.

B. **Approval of Minutes** – October 12, 2022

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Schroeder to approve the October 12, 2022 meeting minutes, seconded by Ms. Poletti; this motion passed unanimously.

C. **Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments.**

Mr. Drayton gave a brief overview of the reasons why and how the following items were being presented to the Commission for discussion.

- a. Consideration of Changes to Section 21-20 C. (2) – ADU Incentives
- b. Consideration of Changes to Section 21-43 B. – Historic Building Additions
- c. Consideration of Changes to Section 21-44 – Elevation of Historic Homes

Mr. Drayton explained Section 21-20 C. (2) of the ordinance allows a second dwelling unit to be constructed on a lot when there is a small historic cottage located on the property. The cottage

must be under 1200 square feet, may not be a vacation rental, and one of the two dwellings must be owner-occupied if one is a long-term rental. Design Review Board (DRB) approval is required for the height, scale, mass, and placement of the new construction appropriately with respect to the historic construction on the property. He presented some examples that can currently be seen on the Island. The goal of the ordinance is to provide an incentive for these historic cottages be maintained rather than demolished in favor of large new houses. The language was presented, as well as the process. The changes would include raising the square footage allowed for properties with such historic structures, which Mr. Drayton reviewed.

There was further discussion about the language, the purpose of the changes, and whether or not it would benefit new homeowners. Susan Middaugh, resident and former member of the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA), commented when this was originally introduced, the intent was to protect the small cottages and encourage property owners to preserve them while still allowing new, bigger homes to be built. However, by allowing owners to attach the new home to the historic home, the new home can essentially be any size, dwarfing the cottage. She feels there is essentially a penalty for leaving the cottage unattached and wants that changed. Mr. Drayton showed some examples of attached additions and there was further discussion about the proposed changes.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Peterseim, seconded by Ms. Poletti, to allow the DRB to permit principal building square footage increases up to 25% for the historic structure Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) special exception, passed unanimously, 6-0 (Mr. Cole had to leave the meeting early and left at 4:57pm).

There was discussion between Mr. Drayton and the Board concerning the current 50% exemption for historical attachments, as stated in Section 21-43 B. of the Zoning Ordinance, and the possibility of removing the language. There was also discussion regarding the massing of homes that could happen if you increase the principal building square footage without increasing the principal building square footage area.

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Poletti, seconded by Ms. Schroeder, to allow a variance for principal building square footage area increase of up to 20% for homes using the ADU incentive, with a second home on the same lot, passed unanimously, 6-0.

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Poletti, seconded by Ms. Schroeder, to do away with the 50% exemption allowed to attached additions that are added to a historic cottage, passed unanimously, 6-0.

Mr. Drayton went over the current ordinance language concerning the elevation of historic homes, from Section 21-44 of the Zoning Ordinance. Due to the potential for having the floor system below the base flood elevation, the building department recommends changing the

language to say “the height of elevated historic structures finished floor may exceed no more than three feet above finished grade.” This would allow floor structure to be 18 inches and still be above the base flood elevation, for which Mr. Drayton provided pictures. He feels this change would allow historic structure to remain lower to the ground, rather than having them ten feet off the ground (for example). Mr. Peterseim suggested having a discussion regarding the resiliency and protection of historical houses that remain lower to the ground. Mr. Drayton mentioned the base flood elevation (BFE) was significantly higher when the original ordinance was written and is another reason the language should be changed. Mr. Wurthmann also contributed to the discussion regarding historical homes and base flood elevation. It was decided there would be further discussion before making a final decision.

The next Planning Commission meeting will be Wednesday, December 14 at 4:00 p.m. The elevation of historic homes will be discussed, as well as allowances for accessory structures, and a review of the ordinance language changes.

Adjourn. There being no new business, nor further discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:36pm.

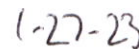
Motion: A motion was made to adjourn by Ms. Poletti, seconded by Mr. Howard; this motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Otto, Planning Commission Staff



Carl Hubbard, Chair



Date