



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

Wednesday, December 14, 2022

A regular meeting was held at 4:00pm, on Wednesday, December 14, 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; Bridget Welch, Town Clerk; 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 no members of the public present.

Media: There were no members of the media present.

B. **Civility Pledge Oath for the Planning Commission.** Chair Hubbard wished to point out that this has not been an issue for the Planning Commission during his tenure as a Commission member. He then asked Drayton to explain the Civility Pledge. Drayton stated that the initiative came from the South Carolina Municipal Association with the purpose of a more civil discourse at public meetings. The Commission recited the Pledge together and all members signed a copy.

C. **Approval of Minutes** – November 9, 2022

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Poletti to approve the November 9, 2022 meeting minutes, seconded by Chair Hubbard; this motion passed unanimously.

D. **Public Input and Correspondence.** There was no public input or correspondence.

E. **Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments.** Drayton reminded the Commission that these text amendments were brought up as a result of the Historic Preservation and Design Study Group (HPDSG) that met in the first half of 2022. Drayton then went through the previous items discussed by the Planning Commission and the draft language for the Ordinance changes. No action was taken on those items yet.

1. Consideration of Changes to Section 21-44 – Elevation of Historic Homes

Drayton stated that the current Ordinance stipulates the finished floor elevation (FFE) cannot exceed one foot (1ft) over Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) base flood elevation (BFE). It also states that the Design Review Board (DRB) may make allowances for greater neighborhood compatibility. Drayton also stated that if Section 21-44 is amended, then Section 21-31, which deals with non-historic properties, should also reflect the same changes.

There was some discussion of FEMA flood maps and how often they change. Drayton said that the Town has no say over the BFE set by FEMA and by changing the wording of the Ordinance to a specified number of feet over finished grade, it takes FEMA out of the discussion. He stipulated that there would be no chance to build below FEMA regulations as it is.

Drayton presented some examples of the problem with the current ordinance. Through discussions he had with Building Official Wurthmann, it was decided that three feet (3ft) above finished grade would allow structures the space to keep mechanical equipment out of the flood zone while providing a good aesthetic.

There was some discussion about how keeping the homes lower will increase the number of garages. Drayton mentioned that in the case of an attached addition, there is the possibility to build the addition higher, providing parking underneath the structure. The transition zone between the lower historic home and the higher attached addition was discussed, as well as the size limitation of that space. It was decided that there would be no need to require a transition space between the historic structure and the attached addition as it would be onerous for a homeowner and infringe on livable space. The discussion then moved on to a garage and how it would not be allowed or necessary if there is space to park under the structure

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Peterseim to recommend that to minimize the height of elevating historic structures, the finished floor elevation (FFE) shall exceed no more than 3ft above finished grade, except in cases where the structure is required to be elevated higher in order to meet the design flood elevation (DFE), and to limit the DRB's discretionary authority to allow up to an additional two (2) feet of foundation height from the finished grade to the FFE, seconded by Ms. Poletti; this motion passed unanimously.

There was then some discussion about the distance between the historic structure and the new structure when using the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) option.

Ms. Coles left the meeting at 5:06pm.

The Commission expressed an interest in the lot sizes of the historic structures that would be covered by these ordinances. Henderson stated that in order to take advantage of the special exception, the lot would likely need to be closer to a half an acre because on the smaller lots a second dwelling unit would typically be infeasible.

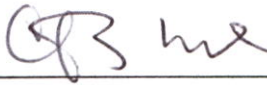
The next Planning Commission meeting will be Wednesday, January 11, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. The elevation of historic homes will be discussed, as well as allowances for accessory structures, and a review of the ordinance language changes.

Adjourn. There being no new business, nor further discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:13pm.


Motion: A motion was made to adjourn by Chair Hubbard, seconded by Ms. Schroeder; this motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Otto, Planning Commission Staff



Carl Hubbard, Chair



Date