



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

Wednesday, January 11, 2023

A regular meeting was held at 4:00pm, on Wednesday, January 11, 2023, 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), Mark Howard, Gallia Coles, and Charles Cole.

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

A. **Call to Order.** Chair Hubbard called the meeting to order at 4:01pm, and it was stated the press and public were duly notified pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act requirements.

Public: There was one (1) member of the public present.

Media: There were no members of the media present.

B. **Approval of Minutes** – December 14, 2022

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Poletti to approve the December 14, 2022 meeting minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Cole; this motion passed unanimously.

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

D. **Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments**

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

Drayton summarized the process that led up to the discussion of these ordinances and the role of the Historic Preservation and Design Study Group (HPDSG). He stated that at the prior meeting, the Commission decided to allow historic homes to be elevated up to three feet (3ft) over finished grade and to give the Design Review Board (DRB) up to two feet (2ft) of discretionary increase at the recommendation of

the Town Building Official Max Wurthmann. The aim of these changes is to alleviate the impact of the new base flood elevations, that put some structures at a dangerously low level.

This led to a discussion of historic homes taking advantage of the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) exception and what elevation is appropriate for the second (2nd) dwelling.

Ms. Poletti felt that the wording of the proposed amendment to Ordinance Section 21-27 C. was confusing and should reflect that the 2nd structure is the one being discussed. Drayton said he would review and refine the language.

Drayton presented the current language involving secondary structures on lots with historic structures. He mentioned that if the Town is going to allow historic structures to be raised to 3ft over finished grade, then the same should be allowed for new builds. It was discussed at the last meeting that the home owner who is willing to preserve the historic cottage, should be able to build their home high enough to park under if they wish. Mr. Peterseim had asked at the last meeting how many properties could potentially be effected by this, Drayton said his study produced a list of twenty-one (21) properties but only about ten (10) where it was feasible.

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Poletti to allow the 2nd structure, when using the ADU special exception, to build using the new construction guidelines, allowing an elevation of eight feet (8ft), seconded by Ms. Coles; this motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Discussion: There was some discussion about whether this keeps in mind the preference to reduce the massing of homes. It was stated that this will incentivize the property owner to take advantage of the ADU exception, preserving the historic cottage, rather than to just do an attached addition.

2. Consideration of Changes to Section 21-138 – Allowances for Accessory Structures

Drayton summarized the list of permitted accessory structures listed in Section 21-137 A. He said these accessory structures that have a roof, have certain site requirements for them to be twenty feet (20ft) from the principal façade of the building, ten feet (10ft) from the lot line and thirty feet (30ft) from the street pavement. The current Ordinance allows up to seven hundred fifty square feet (750sf) for an accessory structure, however the DRB can give a discretionary increase of twenty-five percent (25%), bringing that total to nine hundred square feet (900sf). The maximum footprint of that structure is six hundred twenty-five square feet (625sf), with the DRB being able to increase it to 750sf. The height of these structures is limited to eighteen feet (18ft) with a certain roof pitch, and can be increased by twenty percent (20%) with DRB approval. Drayton said the HPDSG decided to recommend that the size increases for accessory structures be removed, to

keep them to 750sf and the footprint of 625sf. However, they recommended to continue to allow a DRB approved 20% increase in height. Chair Hubbard asked how the Study Group came to that number. Drayton said it is the one currently in the Ordinance. There was some discussion about the use of the space when increased to 900sf and the increased bulk of the structure, with Drayton showing examples of 2 different accessory structures. Ms. Poletti expressed that 900sf was too big for a garage. Mr. Howard agreed, stating it was tantamount to a livable space. Henderson stated that over the years only 3 accessory structures have maximized their square footage to the 900sf.

Motion: A motion was made by Chair Hubbard to accept the Study Group recommendations, referencing accessory structures, to remove the 20% DRB discretionary increase on square footage, to remove the 20% DRB discretionary increase on the footprint, and to retain the 20% DRB discretionary increase in accessory structure height, seconded by Ms. Poletti; this motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Discussion: There was some discussion over the reason to keep the DRB increase on the height of the accessory structure. Henderson stated the purpose was to allow the flex room for design and greater storage. Drayton agreed saying it could also be a design preference. Mr. Howard's main concern was that the space not become a livable space. Drayton mentioned that swimming pools would be discussed at the next meeting.

E. **Adjourn.** There being no new business, nor further discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 4:42pm.

Motion: A motion was made to adjourn by Chair Hubbard, seconded by Ms. Coles; this motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Otto, Planning Commission Staff



Carl Hubbard, Chair



Date