



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

Wednesday, September 13, 2023

A regular meeting was held at 4:00 p.m., on Wednesday, September 13, 2023, in Town Hall at 2056 Middle Street. All requirements of the Freedom of Information Act were verified to have been satisfied.

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

Staff Members: Charles Drayton, Director of Planning and Zoning, and Pamela Otto, Planning Commission staff member.

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

Public: There were six (6) members of the public present, including Historic Preservation and Design Study Group (HPDSG) members Elizabeth Tezza, John Winchester, Aussie Geer, Beverly Bohan, Rita Langley and Eddie Fava.

Media: There were no members of the media present.

B. Approval of Minutes – August 9, 2023

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Schroeder to approve the August 9, 2023 meeting minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Howard; this motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

C. Public input and correspondence.

There was no correspondence for this meeting.

D. Public Hearing for Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments

1) Principal Building Square Footage, Zoning Ordinance Subsection §21-27 C.

(1): Consideration to reduce the discretionary increases in Principal Building Square Footage for new construction.

Public Hearing

Drayton stated that this was a public hearing for a proposed ordinance amendment to change the discretionary increase allowed by the Design Review Board (DRB). Currently the DRB can grant an increase of twenty-five percent (25%) to Principal Building Square Footage (PBSF) in new construction. The Planning Commission had discussed the increase of 25% and come to the decision to lower it to fifteen percent (15%), excluding those properties that have a historic cottage and use the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) special exception. When involving an ADU, the DRB may grant a discretionary increase of 25%, whereas previously they could not grant an increase in this situation. The second special exception is in the case of an attached addition to a historic property, then the DRB may grant an increase of twenty percent (20%).

Chair Poletti then opened the Public Hearing to comment. There was no public comment. Chair Poletti closed public comment for the public hearing at 4:04pm.

Discussion

There were no questions for Drayton from the members of the Planning Commission. There was no discussion by the members of the Planning Commission.

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Schroeder to approve amending Zoning Ordinance Subsection §21-27 C. (1) to reduce the discretionary increase allowed by the Design Review Board for Principal Building Square Footage in new construction from 25% to 15%, seconded by Mr. Peterseim; this motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

E. Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments

- 1) **Consideration of Changes to Sections §21-22 C. & D., and §21-29** – Regarding secondary setbacks for principal buildings.

Drayton stated that it was his hope to have a public hearing in the future about these changes. The changes would combine §21-22 C. & D., and §21-29 into one Ordinance. Currently §21-22 pertains to front, side and rear setbacks, with D. referring to second story façade setbacks and say that the second story wall must be set back two feet (2ft) from the first story wall. The proposed changes would make the second story setback follow an average that would be greater than the first story setback. For example, there could be a two (2) story wall but then somewhere else along the second story setback, the wall would have to go back further than the 2 feet to average out at 2 feet. The change of §21-29 is to the principal building side façade, which allows for a thirty-foot (30ft) wall, but any wall larger than 30ft would need a four-foot (4ft) articulation. The change to this section would be to change the overall length to thirty-eight feet (38ft), allowing for two side-by-side rooms with a shared bathroom. It would also change the articulations from a 4ft articulation to a minimum

of sixteen inches (16in), which is the length of one cinder block, with a longer articulation. The ratio would not be less than a two to one (2:1) length to width ratio. Currently the Ordinance allows one hundred percent (100%) relief at the discretion of the DRB. Drayton feels this applies too much pressure to the DRB and that the changes would take off some of the pressure.

Drayton answered some questions from the Commission. It was asked if this was a staff-initiated change and what the purpose was for the change. Drayton said that it was a staff-initiated change that arose from the constant need of architects to ask for relief in the second story setbacks, which led to the increase of other asks of the DRB. Since they were having to go to the DRB anyway, most homeowners would then ask for other increases while there, driving up massing of homes. It was asked if this would change front or rear setbacks, Drayton said it would not. Drayton also stated that the proposal would change the ability of the DRB to grant relief for these setbacks would be changed from 100% to 25%.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Peterseim to adopt the proposed changes to Ordinance Subsections §21-22 C. & D. and §21-29 and to forward the draft changes to a public hearing to be held at a future Planning Commission meeting, seconded by Ms. Coles; this motion passed, 6-1, with Mr. Howard opposed.

Discussion

Mr. Howard had a problem with changing a setback and the effect it would have on the street view. The Commission then discussed the setbacks and Drayton said the setback hard limit of ten feet (10ft) would not change.

F. Items for Consideration

- 1) **2023 Sullivan's Island Comprehensive Plan 5-year Review:** Kick-off of the 2023 Comprehensive Plan review – project objectives, project schedule, public participation plan.

Drayton stated the current Comprehensive Plan was drafted in 2017 and approved in 2018, for ten years. He said that the State of South Carolina requires it to be reviewed after five (5) years and updated every 10 years. The purpose of the review is to update the data with new census and survey data, as well as the housing information.

Drayton also said that the Plan has a list of goals to be met. The review is also to assess those goals to see if they are being met or if they still apply, or if new goals need to be added.

Drayton stated there are 10 chapters that will be updated.

1. Population
2. Housing
3. Community facilities
4. Cultural resources
5. Economic
6. Transportation
7. Land use
8. Natural resources
9. Resiliency and sea level rise
10. Priority investments

Drayton proposed a rough schedule for the review project, covering meetings from October 2023 to March 2024. He mentioned there should be public open houses on these meeting dates. Drayton asked if he could get a few members of the Planning Commission to join a steering committee with him and a representative of the Council of Governments, who have agreed to help with the open house process.

It was asked how the historic survey would affect the Comprehensive Plan. Drayton said that when New South submitted some deliverables, they might drive some changes. It was also asked if the Town could post the Plan on the website and take comments from residents. Drayton said it might be possible to do that. The volunteers for the steering committee were Sydney Cook, Manda Poletti and Laura Schroeder. Drayton said he would reach out to the steering committee members about a meeting time.

Chair Poletti took the opportunity to welcome Ms. Cook back to the Planning Commission.

G. Adjourn. There being no new business, nor further discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 4:40pm.

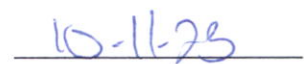
Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Schroeder to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Peterseim; this motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Otto, Planning Commission Staff



Manda Poletti, Chair



Date