



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

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

A Planning Commission Public Hearing was held at 4:00 pm, on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, in Town Hall at 2056 Middle Street. All requirements of the Freedom of Information Act were verified to have been satisfied.

Present: Charles Cole, Gallia Coles, Mark Howard, Garth Lynch, and Laura Schroeder (Vice Chair)

Staff Members: Charles Drayton, Rebecca Fanning, and Pam Otto

A. Call to Order: Vice-Chair Schroeder called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

B. Confirmation of Freedom of Information Act Requirements

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 (0) members of the media present.

C. Approval of the Minutes from November 12, 2025

Motion: Motion was made to approve the November 12, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes by Mark Howard, seconded by Garth Lynch, passed unanimously.

D. Commission discussion and approval of Vice-Chair

Gallia Coles nominated Garth Lynch for Vice-Chair and there were no other nominations.

Motion: Motion was made to approve Garth Lynch as Vice-Chair of the Planning Commission by Gallia Coles, seconded by Mark Howard, passed unanimously.

E. Public Input and Correspondence

F. Text Amendments

- 1) **Discussion of Erosion Control Structures in RC Area Districts, Zoning Ordinance §21-20 & 21-69:** Consideration for updating the Town's regulations for the creation and maintenance of erosion control measures at the interface between the RS, Single-Family Residential District, and the RC-1 and RC-2, Recreation and Conservation area districts.

Charles Drayton thanked Ms. Schroeder for her time on the Commission and congratulated Mr. Lynch on his new position. He then reviewed the timeline of the Commission's discussion of the ordinances pertaining to erosion control structures, which began in April 2024. At that time, it was decided to wait until the Sea Level Rise and Resilience Plan was completed to make any changes. He then reviewed the language of the current ordinance and pointed out that the Office of Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) that is referenced is now the Bureau of Coastal Management (BCM), which is under the Department of Environmental Services (DES), formally known as the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC).

Mr. Drayton then discussed the suggestions in the Sea Level Rise and Resilience Plan pertaining to erosion control structures. One consideration is to establish a vegetated buffer requirement along the critical area, on the RC side of the Island. There are a couple different options for non-hardened erosion control measures, helping property owners protect their property from stormwater and sea level rise. He discussed one option, a vegetated buffer, in more detail and took questions from the Commission. The Town has created one such buffer, called a vegetated soil lift, at the Cove Inlet Bridge and is something homeowners could create on their property.

He also discussed the current DES regulations any structures would be subject to, as well as the importance of placing conditions for any ordinance changes, as many of the homes along the back side of the Island are currently built in what would be considered the critical area setback now. Staff recommendations for proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, §21-69 are:

1. Maintain prohibition of erosion control structures in the RC districts – state permits for ECSs on public property as exception with Town BMPs.
2. Add language to require additional measures when repairing existing damaged erosion control structures.
3. Update language to reference DES rather than OCRM, link to their guidance where referenced.
4. Consider a requirement for marsh maintenance similar to beachfront maintenance to ensure critical marsh area is not lost.

Staff recommendations for proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, §21-20 are:

1. Remove prohibition of erosion control structures in the RS district.
2. Add language to allow erosion control structures (ECS) (or consider refining to allow only as a "Landscape walls") in the RS District as a conditional use.
 - ECS considerations for conditions:
 - a. Must be located with their base grade no lower than 6 feet
 - b. No more than 18 inches of reveal

- c. Must be a part of a certified stormwater management plan

Mr. Drayton said the Commission can start discussing changes and recommendations to Council more in depth in February, when the new members have been chosen and sworn in. Vice-chair Schroeder requested staff include images and examples for the next meeting.

G. Adjourn. There being no new business, nor further discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.

Motion: Motion was made to adjourn at 4:57 p.m. by Gallia Coles, seconded by Mark Howard, passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Otto, Planning Commission Staff



Manda Poletti, Chair

1.14.2026
Date