

PLANNING COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 11, 2014

The Planning Commission met in the Council Chambers of the Town of James Island, 1238-B Camp Road, James Island, SC on Thursday, September 11, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. Members present: Chairman David Bevon, who presided, Ed Lohr, Bill Lyon, Lyndy Palmer, and Ed Steers. A quorum was present to conduct business.

Also present: Kristen Crane, Senior Planner, Ashley Kellahan, Town Administrator, Mark Johnson, Public Works Coordinator, Councilman Leonard Blank, James Hackett, Charleston County Planning Support Supervisor, Eric Adams, PE, Charleston County Transportation Development, Nick Pergakes, Senior Planner, BCD Council of Governments, and Frances Simmons, Secretary to the Planning Commission and Town Clerk.

Call to Order: Chairman Bevon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Prayer and Pledge: Chairman Bevon led the prayer and followed with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act: Chairman Bevon announced that this meeting was noticed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

Approval of August 14, 2014 Minutes: Chairman Bevon moved to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2014 meeting; Commissioner Lyon seconded. Minutes passed unanimously.

Chairman Bevon amended the agenda to make two motions. The first motion was to nominate and elect a Vice Chairman. The agenda was amended without objection. Chairman Bevon moved to accept nominations; Commissioner Lohr seconded.

Nominations: Commissioner Lohr nominated Commissioner Palmer. Mrs. Palmer expressed her appreciation and declined as she was just appointed to the Planning Commission. Commissioner Lyon moved to nominate Commissioner Lohr, Chairman Bevon seconded. There were no other nominations. The motion passed unanimously for Commissioner Ed Lohr to serve as the Vice Chairman.

Chairman Bevon made a motion to amend the agenda to move agenda item IX ahead of item VIII to allow County staff to present the Transportation Element before the proposed amendment to Chapter 9. Commissioner Steers seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Public Comments: None

Staff Comments: None

Discussion and Presentation of Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element: Mr. Hackett provided an overview of the Transportation Element and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Mr. Hackett noted that a change was recommended under 3.7.2: Background and Inventory of Existing Conditions, at the end of the first paragraph under discussion of Roads. It was recommended that the last sentence read as follows: **the Town will continue to advocate for the paving of roads within its corporate limits based on resident requests or government agency requests.** Mr. Hackett explained that there are people that live on non-standard roads but they do not want their roads paved. There are also requests from other government entities; (i.e., fire department, EMS, or Postal Service) for service on

roads that need to be maintained. Commissioner Steers asked if this change would remove Jeffrey Drive and Lemontree from list to be paved. Mr. Hackett answered that that it would not because both roads are already inline to be paved. The Planning Commission had no objection to adding this change.

Traffic Counts, 3.7.1: Mr. Hackett made reference to figure 3.7.1 on the traffic chart, He said two of the busiest roads on James Island; Folly and Harborview Roads, showed the greatest decrease in traffic between 2003 and 2013; while the largest increase were in the areas closest to Maybank and Johns Island. Mr. Hackett said he was surprised about the figures and that the Council of Governments (COG) had the same reaction but they did not have data other than what was contained in the chart.

Folly Road Improvements: Mr. Hackett briefly discussed the projects that are underway and those that have been completed. Folly Road Corridor Overlay District (FRCOD) was completed last year. The FRCOD addresses the appearance of some buildings, screening, and buffers of parcels located behind the immediate parcels on Folly Road. The FRCOD was developed by the Town, County, Folly Beach, and the City of Charleston. Complete Streets Corridor Study: Eric Adams, Charleston County, gave an update on the Complete Streets Corridor Study currently underway. This Study is administered by the BCD COG (Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments) and with matching funds. Riverland Drive Corridor Study: Nick Pergakes, BCD COG gave an update on the Riverland Drive Corridor Study. A draft of the study will be presented to the Planning Commission at a later meeting (November or December). The participants (City, County and Town) will be asked to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to adopt the goals and objectives they agreed on. Public Transportation: Battery to Beach: Mr. Hackett will meet with Public Works Coordinator, Mark Johnson, to include this information in the Transportation Element. CARTA: Mr. Hackett said input was received from Jeff Burns (CARTA) for bus/transit service on James Island. This information will be included:

CARTA Express Service 1 Riders
2011 249,555
2012 231,998
2013 213,466

CARTA James Island Route 31
2011 87,280
2012 95,061
2013 80,801

3.7.3: Transportation Element Needs: the second bullet point was changed to read: **Mitigating the impacts of a changing population on the existing transportation system.**

3.7.5: Transportation Element Strategies and Time Frames:

T11 will read: **Transit shelters should be considered depending on the size of new development as determined by the Town and in consultation with public sector transportation planning agencies.**

Commissioner Palmer had questions about the traffic counts. She asked if the main concern was about traffic coming off of Oak Island, as opposed to Folly Road going onto Oak Island. She also asked where the traffic stations were. Mr. Hackett said he believed it was the Folly/Oak Island intersection. Mr. Hackett noted that further research was needed and will provide follow-up.

Mrs. Simmons will forward Mr. Hackett's email address to the Planning Commission for recommendations, questions, or other changes to the Transportation Element.

Discussion of Proposed Amendment to Chapter 9 (§9.4.1.B.2) of the Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance: Senior Planner, Kristen Crane, presented the staff's recommendation to amend Chapter 9, §9.4.1.B.2 of the Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance.

The recommendation is to add letter "g" to Exemptions that would read: **all invasive tree species as referred by Clemson Extension and the South Carolina Exotic Pest Plant Council shall be exempt from all provisions of this article.**

Mrs. Crane referred to the list of Terrestrial Exotic Invasive Plant Species that is produced by the SC Exotic Pest Plant Council. She said adopting this list of pest trees would help to preserve our native tree species. This list is updated every four to five years. Mrs. Crane explained that commercial tree buffers require protection. Adopting the list would discourage trees that should not be planted; and property owners would not be penalized for taking down these pest trees.

Commissioner Steers asked what is our tree size; to which. Mrs. Crane answered that commercial buffers is 8" and 18" is the grand tree size on a residence - pest trees would be exempted. Commissioner Lohr asked if exemption "g" negates the wording in paragraph §9.4.1 D3 that excludes Pine, Sweet Gum, and Chinese Tallow trees. Mrs. Crane explained that those trees were exempted because grand trees are the only ones a homeowner has to abide by. She said that exemption "g" will apply to the entire Chapter. The grand tree provision applies to a homeowner and commercial businesses. Commissioner Lohr asked if Chinese Tallow should be stricken from the grand tree definition. Mrs. Crane said "yes", that it could be done administratively. Chairman Bevon asked for a motion in favor of the staff's recommendation to add Exemption "g" to §9.4.1B 2. Commissioner Lyon moved, seconded by Chairman Bevon. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

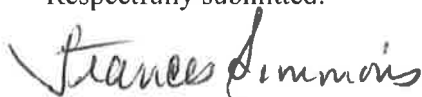
Chair's Comments: Chairman Bevon welcomed new Planning Commission members Lyndy Palmer and Ed Steers.

Commissioners' Comments: None

Next Meeting Date: The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be held on Thursday, October 9, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

Adjourn: There being no further business to come before the body, the meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Frances Simmons
Secretary to the Planning Commission and Town Clerk