

The Planning Commission met in the Council Chambers of the Town of James Island, 1238-B Camp Road, James Island, SC on Thursday, November 12, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. Commissioners present: Lyndy Palmer, Vice Chair, Bill Lyon, Warren Sloane, and Chairman David Bevon, who presided. Absent: Ed Steers (gave notice).

Also present: Kristen Crane, Planning Director, Leonard Blank, Town Council, Ashley Kellahan, Town Administrator, Mark Johnson, Public Works Coordinator, and Frances Simmons, Town Clerk and Secretary to the Planning Commission.

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 it 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 October 8, 2015 Meeting Minutes: Chairman Bevon moved to approve the October 8, 2015 meeting minutes; Commissioner Lyon seconded.

Commissioner Lyon said he did not remember that Commissioner Sloane abstained. Commissioner Sloan said he did not vote on either direction; that he talked with the Chair, and in the future his vote will be made clear. Chairman Bevon said under the Bylaws every member must vote. He will have an amendment to the Bylaws placed on the next agenda to allow for abstentions, to vote yes, or no, or to recuse from vote. After discussion, the minutes passed unanimously.

Public Comments: Councilman Milliken thanked the Planning Commission for their service to the Town. He referenced under New Business, the Proposed Text Amendment for Developer's Fee for Hiring Arborists; and suggested in the future, that change(s) refer to the section of the Plan (ZLDR) where the change is recommended. He said the Plan is on-line and the idea is to make it user-friendly so that the public know what is going on.

Staff Comments: None

Rethink Folly Road Memorandum of Understanding: Chairman Bevon announced that a presentation will be conducted by Joshua Martin, Turnberry Consulting, concerning the Memorandum of Understanding, which is a result of the Rethink Folly Road Corridor Study. After the presentation, the Planning Commission may ask questions, discuss, review and vote on a recommendation that will be forwarded to Town Council for review at its December 17th meeting. He said following the public hearing, Town Council may adopt a Resolution for the Memorandum of Understanding.

Mr. Martin gave an overview of Rethink Folly Road: A Complete Streets Study. He said the study was done in conjunction with the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCD COG); City of Charleston, Town of James Island, City of Folly Beach, Charleston County, the Charleston Area Regional Transit Authority (CARTA) and the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT). The purpose of the study is to identify opportunities and explore the potential to transform the Folly Road corridor into a more sustainable, multimodal corridor, which could serve as a precedent for the Charleston region. The Plan addresses improving safety and operational efficiency of all modes of travel, including storm evacuation, facilitation of multi-modal transportation conversions along the corridor (walking, biking, and transit), the coordination and cooperation of the various governmental bodies regarding zoning, land development and design standards, and preparation of standards for new development along the

corridor that provides clear guidance to state and local agencies, community stakeholders, the general public and the private sector.

Mr. Martin reviewed how the improvements depicted in the plan could be realized; the vision for new buildings; preservation of the Folly Road Corridor; and the implementation and coordination of the Memorandum of Understanding between the entities involved in the Complete Streets Study. After the presentation, Mr. Martin answered questions from members of the audience and those on the Planning Commission. A full copy of the presentation is attached.

Chairman Bevon moved to recommend to Town Council that they adopt a Resolution for the Memorandum of Understanding; Commissioner Palmer, seconded. She likes the plan and hope all of the municipalities will come together, move forward and realize this is the way it should go. Commissioner Lyon agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

- a. Discussion of Proposed Text Amendment Regarding Developer's Fee for Hiring Arborists. Chairman Bevon announced that Commissioner Palmer will lead the discussion regarding a developer's fee for hiring arborists and a proposed text amendment to the Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR). No votes will be taken at this meeting.

Commissioner Palmer asked the Planning Commission to think about adopting a fee for developers of 5% of their total budget to put it towards hiring an arborist to evaluate trees when there is new development; also to evaluate trees that need to be taken down or those that are dead. She said charging the developer a fee could serve two purposes. It may help to reduce the funds from Town Council; and help towards better control of our trees for our trees. Commissioner Lyon asked if the 5% would go towards planting new trees. Commissioner Palmer answered yes, that it could also purchase girdles to go around the trees; and watering cans in areas where there are no hoses to water the trees. Commissioner Lyon asked if the City of Beaufort had a provision like this in their plan. Commissioner Palmer said she did not remember if it was Beaufort; but they are getting pretty progressive. Commissioner Sloane asked 5% of what; to which Commissioner Palmer said it is 5% of the total budget for development. He asked if this included the cost to build the house, roads, and sewer. She responded that it would be the entire budget that the developer puts forth. Commissioner Sloane asked if that would be above and beyond landscaping. Commissioner Lyon said that would be a part of it. Commissioner Sloane asked where the text would be in our plan, and if the Town is required to pay this now. There were brief comments about where the text could be placed in the ZLDR and Mrs. Crane said the Town requires a tree survey to be done by an arborist. Chairman Bevon asked Mrs. Crane to research if there are other municipalities that have this provision in their ordinance and forward it to the Planning Commission. He noted if they do, it may not be 5%, it could be higher. Mrs. Crane said she would follow-up. Commissioner Lyon shared that he and Commissioner Palmer recently attended the SC Trees Conference and learned that the City of Summerville has a separate committee that reviews an arborist recommendation. He noted if there is an unscrupulous arborist that rates trees in a worse condition than they actually are, he could see how having a committee to do this could be beneficial. Commissioner Palmer said she would recommend that we hire a certified arborist; not someone who is a tree expert. Commissioner Sloane said he would be interested in knowing what the budget is for the Preserve at Dills Bluff (across the street); and how the 5% would equate in that scenario.

Chair's Comments: Chairman Bevon announced that Carol Jacobsen passed away last week. He said the reason why most of us are here tonight is because we are people who care deeply for the Town. Carol was a person that loved James Island, and many people love James Island through her actions as a dedicated servant for this island. He said what may end of being the crown jewel of preservation on James Island is

McLeod Plantation, as Carol was synonymous with the Friends of McLeod and we should all be indebted to her.

Commissioners' Comments: None

Next Meeting Date: The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be held on Thursday, December 10, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

Adjourn: There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Frances Simmons
Town Clerk and Secretary to the Planning Commission