

## PLANNING COMMISSION

MARCH 12, 2015

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

Also present: Councilman Leonard Blank, Kristen Crane, Senior Town Planner, James Hackett, Charleston County Planning Support Supervisor, Mark Johnson, Public Works Coordinator, 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 February 12, 2015 Minutes: Chairman Bevon moved for approval of the February 12, 2015 meeting minutes; Commissioner Steers seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comments: None

Staff Comments: None

Discussion and presentation of Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 3:3.1 Land Use Element: Chairman Bevon introduced the agenda item for presentation and discussion by James Hackett.

Mr. Hackett described the Land use Element as a culmination of the nine (9) elements the Planning Commission has worked on over the past year. He said a big part of the draw to the Town of James Island is its natural environment and scenic vistas; such as Riverland Drive, Harbor View Road, and the natural and cultural scenery throughout the island. A part of the Land Use Element addresses how to properly manage those resources as the Town grows into the future. He said the Town is mainly situated in a residential/commercial use, with approximately 85% zoned RSL, (neighborhood-suburban); along with commercial clusters on Camp and Dills Bluff, Harbor View Road, and along Folly Road.

Mr. Hackett said moving forward to protect and manage the suburban character of the Town will not only require decisions about its zoning; but also about the traffic patterns, recreation, and other factors. He commented that the Town, City, and County has been able to work together on some issues regarding land use. He mentioned the redevelopment of Walgreen's on Camp Road, and a bus stop will be erected there to provide transportation throughout the island.

Mr. Hackett referred to the Current Zoning Map, the Existing Land Use Map, and Future Land Use Map and reviewed each. He noted that the Existing Land Use Map is different from the Town's Current Zoning map because of existing nonconforming uses. The areas shown in pink are recreation areas, churches, and the SC DNR/Hollings Marine Lab (which is a government enclave/employment center/public service building), and it is zoned R-4. Mr. Hackett commented if this is what the Town wants moving forward, and the parcels in this category might lend itself to something other than RSL moving forward into the future. He said typically churches are located in RSL zonings, but its structure, parking lot, and layout are not adaptive to an RSL type of development. Parks are also located in this area; and another will be added on Fort Johnson Road. Mr. Hackett said these uses are not likely to change soon, but since the future is unknown, the Planning Commission should consider a separate zoning category for those types of parcels.

Mr. Hackett gave an overview of the Land Use Element Needs; Land Use Element Goal, and the Land Use Element Strategies and Time Frames. He reiterated the discussion regarding LU 6: that the Planning Commission identify parcels currently in use as a different type than what the current zoning district allows (existing non-conforming) and examine rezoning or developing a new district to allow existing use.

Questions from the Planning Commission:

Commissioner Sloane asked about two parcels (duplexes) on Sterling (coded in orange, on the 2011 Existing Land Use Map). He asked if those parcels will become single family, or remain as they are. Mr. Hackett said duplexes; as they are now, are existing non-conforming uses if they are zoned RSL. He said as long as they retain that use they can continue to be used that way. Commissioner Sloane asked what would happen if a storm or a fire occurs causing damage the property. Mr. Hackett said the owner has a period of time to apply to rebuild in order to retain that use.

Commissioner Steers asked if the all of the parcels coded in orange were duplexes; to which Mr. Hackett said they are multi-family, and the Planning Commission could consider more than one zoning (classification) for multi-family to help control density.

Commissioner Sloane asked about the expansion of the Harbor View Circle Sewer Plant and what happens to our zoning if the plant is 5ft in the City and 5ft in the Town. Mr. Hackett said the zoning would remain as it is; but a different classification could be done so that other things could be done there. Mr. Hackett commented that the Land Use Element sets the stage for protecting and managing what the Town currently has and the 5 year update will be more informative because there will be specific census data. He said the Land Use Plan will give the Town a solid footing on where they are now. He said after the Plan is completed the Planning Commission consider the parcels that does not fit into RSL or Commercial zonings. Councilman Blank asked why the tip of the DNR (MUSC Educational Center) is zoned as commercial on the Existing Land Use Map. Mr. Hackett said it is one specific parcel; but he will ask John Carullo at Charleston County to address it.

Commissioner Sloane asked about the RSL zonings (yellow on the 2012 Zoning Map). Councilman Blank explained that when the Town was formed, the City's parcels were coded white; and the Town in yellow. He also answered Commissioner Sloane's question about storm damage to non-conforming structures; that 50% damage to commercial, industrial, or mobile homes cannot be replaced; this does not apply to residential structures.

Chairman Bevon asked the next step in the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Hackett explained that Land Use is the final element. He will incorporate the changes to the nine elements that the Planning Commission has recommended over the past year. He will also do the pagination; and will include the recognition for former Commissioner Ed Lohr. The draft Comprehensive Plan will be presented at the April Planning Commission meeting for review and additional changes before it goes to Town Council for approval.

Chairman's Comments: None

Commissioners' Comments: None

Next Meeting Date: April 9, 2015

Adjourn: There being no further business to come before the body, the meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Frances Simmons  
Secretary to the Planning Commission and Town Clerk