

The Planning Commission of the Town of James Island met on Thursday, September 12, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. in person at the James Island Town Hall, 1122 Dills Bluff Road, James Island, SC 29412.

Commissioners present: Deborah Bidwell, Chair, Kelly Hall, and Ed Steers. Absent: Commissioners Broderick and Quinn both gave notice. A quorum was present to conduct business. Also, Kristen Crane, Planning Director, Michael Hemmer, Executive Assistant to the Mayor, and Frances Simmons, Town Clerk and Secretary to the Planning Commission.

Call to Order: Chairwoman Bidwell called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and called for a moment of silence.

Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act: Chairwoman Bidwell announced that this meeting was duly noticed in compliance with the SC Freedom of Information Act. This meeting was also live-streamed on the Town's website with notification provided to the public.

Introductions: Chairwoman Bidwell introduced the members of the Planning Commission, staff, Mayor Lyon, and Ashley Kellahan, District Manager, with the James Island Public Service District.

Approval of May 9, 2024 Minutes: The minutes of the May 9, 2024 Planning Commission were approved upon a motion by Commissioner Hall, seconded by Commissioner Steers and passed unanimously.

Public Comments: No members of the public offered comments.

Staff Comments: None.

Zoning Map Amendment:

Case #ZRSL-4-24-014: A request to rezone property located at 849 Harbor View Road from the General Office (OG) Zoning District to the Low-Density Suburban Residential (RSL) Zoning District to complete a lot line abandonment for the future reconstruction of the James Island Public Service District's Fire Station 2 (TMS#454-09-00-019). *The Planning Commission will vote on a recommendation to Town Council.*

Kristen Crane, Planning Director, gave the history and overview of the request. She reviewed the following criteria for approval according to Section §153.043 of the Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR):

**1. The proposed amendment is consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan* and the stated purposes of this Ordinance;**

Staff's response: The proposed zoning map amendment is consistent with the intent of the Comprehensive Plan, specifically the Priority Investment Element Strategies, which states, "*Continue to coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions and agencies to balance adequate public facilities/services and protection of the Town's suburban residential character as well as its natural, cultural, and historic resources*". Additionally, the Purpose and Intent of the Zoning Ordinance states the chapters are intended to "*protect the health, safety, and general welfare of existing and future residents by facilitating the adequate provision or availability of transportation, police and fire protection*" as well as *securing from fire, flood and other dangers*", amongst other purposes and intents;

**2. The proposed amendment will allow development that is compatible with existing uses and zoning of nearby property;**

Staff's response: Nearby properties have a range of existing uses (religious assembly, single-family residential, utility pumping station, and public facilities), and zoning (office residential, moderate and low-density suburban residential, and conservation). If approved, the subject property will retain its residential use capability and will be combined with the adjacent property that is currently zoned RSL in order to reconstruct the existing Fire Station. Therefore, the proposed amendment may be compatible with existing uses and zoning of nearby properties;

- 3. The Town and other service providers will be able to provide adequate water and sewer supply, storm water facilities, waste disposal and other public facilities and services to the subject property, while maintaining adequate levels of service to existing development;**

Staff's response: The subject property has previously been serviced by public facilities and the Town and other service providers will be able to continue these public facilities and services while maintaining adequate levels of service to existing development;

- 4. The applicant provides documentation that the proposed amendment will not result in significant adverse impacts on other property in the vicinity of the subject tract or on the environment, including air, water, noise, storm water management, traffic congestion, wildlife and natural resources; and**

Staff's response: The applicant's letter of intent states that "*the JIPSD is planning on replacing the existing Fire Station with a newer, larger fire station to better accommodate the growing population of James Island.*". Since both parcels involved in the lot line abandonment are under the same ownership with the same use being proposed as is currently there, there should be no significant adverse impacts on property in the vicinity of the subject tract or the environment. The subject parcel has been previously fully developed.

- 5. The subject property is suitable for proposed zoning classification considering such things as parcel size, parcel configuration, road access and the presence of resources and amenities.**

Staff's response: The subject property is a legal conforming lot in its current zoning designation of OG. The subject property also meets the minimum standards for a Low-Density Suburban Residential (RSL) zoning designation including parcel size and parcel configuration. The parcel has direct access from both Mikell Drive and Harbor View Road.

Ms. Crane concluded by stating that one (1) letter of support was received from the Harbor View Presbyterian Church.

Questions from the Planning Commission: None.

Applicant Presentation:

Troy Bennage, 2411 Savannah Highway, Engineer at G. Robert George and Associates spoke on behalf of the applicant, James Island PSD and availed himself to answer questions. He commented that the request, if approved, would allow the firefighters to have access to the station in a safer manner.

In Support:

Ashley Kellahan, District Manager, James Island PSD, and Fire Chief Shawn Engelman, spoke in support of the Planning Commission's approval of the request.

Opposition: None

Discussion:

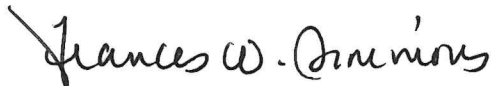
Commissioner Steers asked what is the capacity of the current fire station. Fire Chief Engelman stated that the station has been in existence since 1964 and is also used as living quarters for the firemen. It is under square footage, required by OSHA standards. Commissioner Steers added that the rezoning would be an asset to the fire station and the community.

After discussion, Chairwoman Bidwell called for a motion for discussion and approval of the request. Commissioner Steers moved, seconded by Commissioner Hall and passed unanimously. The Town Council will hold a Public Hearing at its meeting on Thursday, September 19, and a second reading at the October 17, 2024 Town Council meeting.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be held on Thursday, October 10 at 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the body, the meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Frances Simmons  
Town Clerk and Secretary to the Planning Commission