

The Planning Commission of the Town of James Island met on Thursday, October 10, 2024 at 5:12 p.m. in person at the James Island Town Hall, 1122 Dills Bluff Road, James Island, SC 29412.

Commissioners present: Patrick Broderick, Zennie Quinn, and Chair, Deborah Bidwell, who presided. Absent: Commissioners Kelly Hall (gave notice) and Ed Steers. 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 5:12 p.m.

Prayer and Pledge: Chairwoman Bidwell asked for a moment of silence to reflect upon our purpose for tonight's meeting. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

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

Introductions: Chairwoman Bidwell introduced the members of the Planning Commission, staff and Mayor Lyon.

Approval of September 12, 2024 Minutes: The minutes of the September 12, 2024 Planning Commission were approved upon a motion by Commissioner Broderick, seconded by Commissioner Quinn. Passed unanimously.

Public Comments: No member of the public offered comments.

Zoning Map Amendment: Kristen Crane, Planning Director presented Case #ZOR:8-24-015: A request to rezone property located at 1734 Camp Road from the Low Density Suburban Residential (RSL) Zoning District to the Residential Office (OR) Zoning District for a Personal Improvement Service Use (Pottery Studio) having TMS #425-02-00-152).

**History and Overview:**

1734 Camp Road is located about 500 ft to the west of the Camp Road and Folly Road intersection. The property currently has one single-family home located on it and is currently going through permitted renovations. The parcel included in the current Zoning Map Amendment Request is 0.37 acres in size and is in the RSL Zoning District. The parcel is considered a legal conforming lot.

The applicant and owner, Mr. William Albrecht III is seeking to rezone the parcel from the RSL Zoning District to the OR Zoning District to open a pottery studio, which is considered a Personal Improvement Use that is allowed with an OR zoning designation, according to Use Table 153.110.

**Adjacent Zoning:**

Surrounding properties on the north, east, and west side are in the RSL Zoning District in the Town of James Island and have residential uses. Property to the south is zoned Community Commercial (CC) in the Town with commercial retail uses and Short-Term Rental uses.

**Approval Criteria:**

According to Section §153.043 of the *Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR)*, applications for Zoning Map Amendment (Re-zoning) may be approved only if Town Council determines that the following criteria are met:

1. **The proposed amendment is consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan* and the stated purposes of this Ordinance;**  
 Staff's response: In the Comprehensive Plan, the Land Use Element Goal states, "*The Town of James Island will encourage the orderly and environmentally sound development of the land with special consideration to maintaining the suburban character and natural ecosystems of the area.*" by "*implementing sustainable and flexible development guidelines and integrate development with growth to maintain the suburban character of the Town*". The applicant's letter of intent states that he intends to "*fill a need for the local artists of James Island to have a collaborative space to create art that is Local, unique, and passion based*". Because the owner intends on using the existing home for the pottery studio while maintaining the residential use, the proposed amendment may be consistent with the intent and purpose of the Residential Office Zoning District and the Comprehensive Plan.
  
2. **The proposed amendment will allow development that is compatible with existing uses and zoning of nearby property;**  
 Staff's response: Nearby properties range from RSL zoning and uses to CC zoning and uses, with the immediate adjacent properties being mixed between these two zoning classifications as well. If approved, the subject property will retain its residential use capability. Uses that are allowed in the OR Zoning District are compatible with existing uses in the vicinity, therefore, the proposed amendment may allow development that is compatible with existing uses and zoning of nearby property.
  
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 is currently being 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 "*it is my sincerest intent to keep this low impact for my neighboring community as I fully plan to self-contain parking and noise and implement fair member rules to reduce noise at odd hours and eliminate the possibility for parking issues to be sure my neighbor's quality of life is not negatively affected at all and only intend to positively impact my community and neighbors.*" Since the property has been fully developed as a single-family home and the owner/applicant intends on residing in the home full-time as well as operating the studio with minimal site changes, the proposed use should not result in significant adverse impacts.
  
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 RSL. The subject property also meets the minimum standards for the Residential Office zoning designation including parcel size and parcel configuration. The parcel has direct access from Camp Road.

Ms. Crane added that a full Site Plan Review would need to be done. Town Council will hold a Public Hearing at its Thursday, October 17 2024, meeting and a second/final reading will be held at the November 21, 2024 meeting.

Commissioner Broderick asked Ms. Crane who would do a detailed Site Plan and she replied that it would be done by an engineer because it would be a Change of Use.

The applicant, William Albrecht, responded to questions posed by Commissioner Broderick regarding the Site Plan.

Commissioner Quinn received clarification that no neon signs would be used to encourage business. The property will maintain the character of a home. Commissioner Broderick asked if the property is sold, could it be used as residential, and Ms. Crane answered ‘yes. There was discussion regarding traffic. The applicant noted that traffic would be low because the business is 80% member based between 8-5 p.m. with 2-4 people, and classes would be held one night a week. No food and beverage would be served. Chairwoman Bidwell noted that her questions regarding permeability, flood issues and the footprint of the property were addressed.

Support/Opposition: No member of the public spoke in support or in opposition to the request. Ms. Crane added that 17 letters in support were received via email.

Commissioner Quinn moved for approval of Case #ZOR-8-24-015, seconded by Councilman Broderick. Passed unanimously. Chairwoman Bidwell reiterated that a Public Hearing would be conducted by Town Council on October 17, 2024 and the second/final reading held at the November 14, 2024 meeting.

Proposed Amendments to the Town of James Island Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR) including:

- a. Measurements, Computations and Exceptions (153.066 B3): Removing to require Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) approval for setback reductions on lots with buildable areas less than 40 feet;
- b. Reduction of OCRM Critical Line Setbacks (153.337 A 1b): Removing to require Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) approval for critical line building setback reductions.
- c. Reduction of OCRM Buffers and Setbacks on parcels created prior to April 21, 1999 (153.337 A 1c): Removing to require Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) approval for critical line buffer/setback reductions on unbuildable lots created prior to April 21, 1999.

Ms. Crane reviewed the proposed changes that would be heard by the Board of Zoning Appeals if approved. She provided an explanation of the proposed language to be stricken and its replacement to the BZA.

**153.337 WETLANDS, WATERWAYS, AND OCRM CRITICAL LINE**  
(A) *Wetland buffers and setbacks*  
(1) *Intent.*  
~~(b) Reduction of OCRM critical line setbacks. The Zoning Administrator shall be authorized to reduce OCRM critical line setbacks to a distance not less than the buffer depth, when deemed necessary by the Director to accommodate reasonable development of the parcel and when it is determined by the Director that the setback reduction will not have a significant adverse impact on public health or safety.~~  
~~(c) Reduction of buffers and setbacks on parcels created prior to April 21,~~

~~1999. When the application of buffer/setback requirements contained within this chapter render a parcel that existed prior to April 21, 1999, unbuildable, the Zoning Administrator shall be authorized to reduce front, side, and rear yard buffers/setbacks as necessary to make a parcel buildable. The Zoning Administrator cannot reduce any front and/or rear yard buffer in an amount which would result in the placement of a structure closer to either the front or rear property line than any structure on an adjacent property. Any further reduction in any required buffer shall be made by appeal to the Board \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ Zoning \_\_\_\_\_ Appeals.~~

**§ 153.066 MEASUREMENTS, COMPUTATIONS AND EXCEPTIONS; DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS DEFINED.**

(B) *Setbacks.*  
(3) ~~*Setback reductions.* Where the front, interior, side, and rear setbacks of the underlying zoning district reduces the buildable width of a lot to less than 40 feet, the Zoning Administrator shall be authorized to reduce the required setbacks as much as necessary. However, no setback reduction granted by the Planning/Zoning Department shall be for more than 15 feet per side.~~

The Commissioners spoke in favor of the proposed changes and approval to be heard by the Board of Zoning Appeals. After discussion, Commissioner Broderick moved to approve the language changes, seconded by Commissioner Quinn. Passed unanimously.

Town Council will hear these amendments at its October 17, 2024 Town Council meeting and a Public Hearing will be held at the November 14, 2024 Town Council meeting.

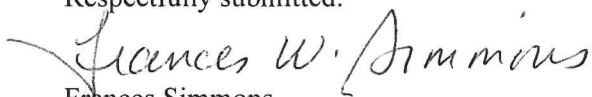
Chair's Comments: None

Commissioners Comments: None

Next Scheduled Meeting: November 14, 2024 @ 5:00 p.m.

Adjourn: There being no further business to come before the body, the meeting adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Frances Simmons  
Town Clerk and Secretary to the Planning Commission