



TOWN OF PAWLEYS ISLAND PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Town Hall – Conference Room | 323 Myrtle Ave | Pawleys Island SC 29585
2/23/2024 – 4:00 PM

PRESENT: Mark Hawn, Robert Moser, John LaMaster, John Hildreth, Buddy Keller, Ed Fox, Fran Green

STAFF PRESENT: Dan Newquist, Thomas Singer (CCU Intern)

ADDITIONAL PRESENT:

1) CALL TO ORDER

a) John Hildreth called the meet to order at 4:00 PM

2) PUBLIC COMMENTS

a) No Comments were made.

3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) Mark Hawn made a motion to approve the minutes of the 1-5-2024 Planning Commission Meeting minutes, John LaMaster seconded the motion. All approved and voted in favor.

4) UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENT – POTENTIAL ACTION ITEM

a) Section 3-4.12 Fences

i) Mr. Newquist started by discussing the two fence requests that were approved by the ZBA over the past year. Both were metal fences which are not allowed under the current ordinance unless they are perimeter fences that surround a swimming pool.

ii)

Mr. Newquist then went onto review the current fence ordinance with the Planning Commission, including the restrictions on location, aesthetics, height, and maintenance. Mr. Newquist said that in advance of the meeting he reviewed fencing ordinances from nearby beach towns. Specifically for fence maintenance, both Surfside Beach and Edisto Beach had strong provisions that may be worth considering.

Mr. Hawn, after talking to some local citizens, said that the people want clarity on the fence ordinance. Also, Hawn's consensus is that people do not like metal fences, they not only do not like the way they look, but they are also concerned about these fences in the long-term regarding maintenance. Additionally, Mr. Hawn discussed the ruling about fences around pools, as he has observed one property on the island which took this rule to the extreme and surrounded their whole house with the metal fence. Mr. LaMaster, while unsure about metal fences, said that he would be more confident in metal fences if there were rules and regulations pertaining to properly maintaining the fence.

Finally, Fran Green discussed some height regulations for the fences, her thoughts were that the fence ordinance should allow for a height of 4 feet in the front yard, 6 feet on the side of each house, and an 8-foot height restriction if the house is adjacent to a walkway.

5) DOCK/BULKHEAD STRUCTURE REGULATIONS/PERMITTING DISCUSSION

- a) Mr. Hawn started by talking about the importance of flood management on the island, and eventually this led to a discussion on bulkheads which have been discouraged by the consultant who drafted the Town's Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan. Currently, OCRM does have some guidelines for bulkheads, but Mr. Hawn believes that the town must expand on these guidelines to make sure that the island is as prepared as possible. From there, the commission looked at the bulkhead guidelines from Folly Beach which go more in depth than the OCRM guidelines. The Folly Beach guidelines are closer to the type of guidelines the town is looking to adopt.

Robert Moser spoke about bulkheads and that they are only truly effective if everyone on the creek side of the island were to install one, because if not, then the water would still be able to find a way in. John LaMaster said that something must be done soon before this situation gets too out of hand, but Mr. Hawn said that we need to take our time through this process to make sure it is properly done. He continued by saying that he would like to have a deeper discussion about this situation in the future, and Mr. Newquist agreed, saying that he welcomed that discussion.

6) GEORGETOWN COUNTY CAPITAL PROJECT SALES TAX- DISCUSSION

- a) Mr. Hawn was asked to start the discussion about possible projects with the capital project sales tax initiative. He said he would talk about the process around the project, but due to him also serving on the county board for this project, he believed that it would be best for him to recuse himself from the discussion about anything relating to specifically to Pawleys Island. Mr. Hawn started the discussion of the process by saying that Georgetown County is one of three counties in South Carolina that does not have a capital project sales tax. The county has not had one in about 10 years. This tax would be a 1% tax increase on all items excluding things like food, and pharmaceutical items. It is often known as a visitor's tax, because it allows you to capture additional revenues associated with the tourism economy. It is projected that this tax could generate between 7 and 10 million dollars a year.

Mr. Hawn said that he, and the rest of the board from the county, is currently going around the county and speaking to its many residents to discuss the sales tax. He and the rest of the board is also encouraging the citizens to nominate projects that this tax could help fund. Unlike previous years, people who want projects nominated must work with a local group who will sponsor the proposal. Sponsor groups include municipalities, like The Town of Pawleys Island, but can also be other government departments, the Georgetown County Water and Sewer District. From there, the County will look at each project and determine which ones are the most important and will create a priority list.

This priority list will be presented to County Council around May 1st and will be voted on in the November election if the sales tax goes to ballot. Georgetown County citizens will be able to individually vote yes or no to the full list of project proposals on the ballot. If this sales tax is passed, and some of the projects are started, there will also be a contingency list for what to do with the extra money if any of the projects come in under budget. The goal of the county is to be as fully transparent as possible throughout the entire process of the capital sales tax.

Mr. Hawn continued his discussion by talking about the regulations around each project proposal, saying how some of the rules were very gray and weren't too clear. His best recommendation for this situation is just to submit each project and see which ones are determined to be eligible by the County Attorney. Mr. Hawn's general rule of thumb is that the less transportable it is, the more likely the project is to meet the necessary criteria. He believes that the county is trying to be very conservative with what projects are approved, so that nothing gets challenged down the road. The reasoning for this is that the more challenges and questions that each project has, the less likely it is to be voted on.

Mr. Newquist then discussed the 5 project proposals that he would like to submit. These projects would be, a repair to the north jetty, a generator for the town hall, enhancing the recycling and waste management on the island, a sewer pump station fortification project, and finally a drainage and flood mitigation initiative. The Town sees this capital project sales tax as one of many opportunities to make drastic, and necessary improvements to our island. The Commission also agreed that any of the project proposals submitted must be in line with the goals of the town's Comprehensive plan.

7) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES 2024- DISCUSSION

- a) Mr. Newquist started this discussion by talking about the goals of the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan. While only a year into this plan, he wants to make sure that the town is on task to meet all the outlined goals. He said that this goal is important to the town since the Comprehensive Plan is only good if the town makes use of it. Mr. Newquist said that because of this, it is important to make this a recurring meeting topic for each planning commission meeting.

Mr. LaMaster recommends prioritizing certain goals that are more important than others. Expanding on this, Mr. Hawn suggests that the town color code each goal in Green/Red/Yellow for if they are met, being worked on, or not met. He also says that the goals should be divided up by each commission and each board to make sure that everyone plays a part in reaching the goals of the comprehensive plan.

Finally, Mr. Newquist ended this portion by speaking about some goals that need to be made a priority immediately. Specifically, the goal pertaining to local beach management. Meeting this goal is a DHEC requirement and has funding eligibility implications. Mr. Newquist continued by saying that it is important to update this plan because a lot has happened on the beach since the last plan was adopted so it is outdated by this point.

8) NEXT MEETING DATE

- a) It was decided by the planning commission that the next meeting would be on April 19th at 4:00 PM.

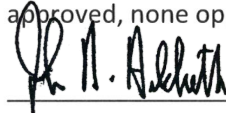
9) COMMENTS FROM PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

- a) There was a small discussion about the upcoming Zoning Board of Appeals meeting on Tuesday March 5th, about the two agenda items. The variance request pertains to Liberty Lodge and how there are currently two structures on that property. The property owners' current plan is to restore Liberty Lodge and to demolish Port Arthur. Mr. Newquist said that he would prefer written comments for this meeting for anyone unable to attend.

Robert had some comments regarding the North Jetty Report. He would like it available to the committee as soon as the town receives it. Mr. Moser also spoke about the current Tanner Properties development on the east side of the creek near the Hammock Shops. This development has been approved by Georgetown County. The final issue Mr. Moser spoke about was the drainage issue affecting the 217 Bistro property. The current documented solution is to increase the pipe dimensions going under Highway 17, and into the Pawleys Island creek. That area is currently under the control and jurisdiction of both Georgetown County, and the State of South Carolina.


10) ADJOURN

- a) John LaMaster made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Fran Green seconded the motion, all approved, none opposed, the meeting adjourned.



APPROVED

04/19/2024
DATE



ATTEST

4/19/2024
DATE