



TOWN OF PAWLEYS ISLAND PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Town Hall – Conference Room | 323 Myrtle Ave | Pawleys Island SC 29585
7/31/2025 – 4:00 PM

PRESENT: John LaMaster, John Hildreth, Ed Fox, Paul Groce, Mark Hawn, Fran Green, Buddy Keller

ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Dan Newquist, Corey Higdon

ADDITIONAL PRESENT:

1) CALL TO ORDER

- a) Chairman John Hildreth called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM

2) PUBLIC COMMENTS

- a) No public comments were presented.

3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a) Mr. Hildreth requested a motion to approve or amend the 6-5-2025 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Mr. LaMaster made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Keller seconded the motion. No further discussion. All voted in favor.

4) Historic Preservation Updates

Mr. Newquist provided an update to the Planning Commission on the status of the Town's application for a \$20,000 grant from the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. He explained that the Town was unfortunately denied the grant. However, he and several members of the Planning Commission insisted that the Town still move forward with historic preservation opportunities without the grant. Mr. Newquist suggested that hiring a professional consultant would be helpful in the Town's efforts to increase historical preservation opportunities. Mrs. Green asked if Mr. Newquist had discussed with the State Historic Preservation Office about options for whom the Town could hire, to which Mr. Newquist confirmed that he had discussed this and had also received examples from Sullivans Island, Conway, and Georgetown.

Mr. Groce noted that the Town could reduce the total cost of conducting an inventory of historic properties on the island by excluding properties that would not be considered for the Historic Register before the consultant began their inventory. Mr. Groce also asked if the Town had budgeted the \$20,000 that would have been the Town's contribution to the grant, to which Mr. Newquist confirmed that it is in the budget. Mr. Hildreth suggested that the Planning Commission make a motion to recommend interviewing a consultant to Council, to which all members agree.

Mr. Hildreth requested a motion to recommend to Council the funding of up to \$20,000 to interview a historic preservation consultant to provide guidance on a historic preservation ordinance and the inventory of historic properties on the island. Mrs. Green made a motion to recommend the funds. Mr. LaMaster seconded the motion. No further discussion. All voted in favor

5) Flood Mitigation/Drainage Master Plan Update

Mr. Groce provided an update on the progress of the Town's Drainage Master Plan, stating that he recently attended a presentation by Seamon Whiteside, the consultants conducting the Town's flood mitigation study. He explained that Seamon Whiteside is strategizing options the Town has for elevating the creek dock walkways along the section of Myrtle Avenue where the proposed elevated berm is planned to be implemented. He noted that Seamon Whiteside hopes to obtain voluntary cooperation from the property owners to elevate the walkways in this section, thereby preventing any progress on the elevated berm from being halted. Mr. Groce also highlighted other possible flood mitigation strategies recommended by Seamon Whiteside, such as elevated roadways and backflow preventers. Mr. Hildreth questioned if the Town has spoken to other communities about similar projects to the elevated berm on Myrtle Avenue, to which Mr. Groce confirmed that he and the Town have looked into examples in other communities. He noted that the main difference from the proposed berm on Myrtle Avenue and other examples is the need to elevate the creek dock walkways.

Mr. Newquist added that identifying possible solutions and moving forward with flood mitigation strategies is a top priority for the Town in the coming months. He added that the Town has submitted a proposal to Congressman Russell Fry's office to receive federal funding for flood mitigation projects in the Town of Pawleys Island. This proposal was one of Congressman Fry's 15 choices to be considered for federal funding, with up to \$1,000,000 potentially allocated to the Town for these projects. Mr. Newquist also reminded the Planning Commission of funding coming from the Georgetown County Capital Projects Sales Tax (CPST), which is slated to be available for use for flood mitigation projects in 2027. He explained that the funds from the CPST can be used for the match component for other funding opportunities, such as the proposal to Congressman Fry's office. Lastly, Mr. Groce elaborated how there are different solutions for different areas of the island, such as an elevated berm being feasible for sections of Myrtle Avenue, while likely not being the best option for areas on the North End where properties' back yards line the creek.

6) Other Topics/Comments from Planning Commission Members

Mr. Hildreth presented a comment regarding the height of new homes on the island, stating that he is concerned they are becoming too tall. He questioned the reasoning behind the Town's ordinance that requires houses to be elevated 3-feet above the base flood elevation (BFE) in the flood zone. To this, Mrs. Green stated that the ordinance was initially put into place to lower insurance rates across the island. Mr. Hawn clarified that the base flood elevation height is a FEMA regulation, so the only way to decrease the overall height of new homes would be to decrease or remove the 3-foot over BFE regulation. **No action was taken.**

7) NEXT MEETING DATE

The planning commission decided that the next meeting would be held on September 2nd.

8) ADJOURN



APPROVED



ATTEST

9-2-25
DATE

9-2-25
DATE

