

MINUTES OF THE ISLE OF PALMS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
June 13, 2018

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission met in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard on June 13, 2018 at 4:30 p.m. Members attending included Ron Denton, Vince DiGangi, Richard Ferencz, Bill Mills, Phillip Pounds and Lisa Safford; the Director of Planning Douglas Kerr was present as well. Lewis Gregory was absent. Mr. Ferencz acknowledged that the press had been notified of the meeting, and the agenda for the meeting was posted in City Hall and the Building Department to comply with the Freedom of Information Act.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Ann Van Harlington, 100 block of Carolina Boulevard, reported that SCDOT has been working in her area cleaning out the drain boxes and the ditches, they have indicated that they would be doing more work next week, and a supervisor would be coming out to inspect the backflow valve. She voiced doubts about whether the existing valve can be used to resolve the issues of tidal water backflowing into the ditch. She added that there are two such valves, and she was not sure that the SCDOT was investigating the correct valve associated with her neighborhood's drainage system.

The Commission thanked Ms. Van Harlington for the update.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The next item on the agenda was the approval of the May 9, 2018 minutes. Mr. Mills made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted and Mr. DiGangi seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF STORMWATER REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS DRAFT

Mr. Kerr stated that, since their last regular meeting, he has prepared a draft request for proposals for the design, permitting, surveying and construction oversight for a comprehensive redesign of the drainage outfalls at 30th Avenue, 3605 Waterway Boulevard and 41st Avenue.

Mr. Kerr commented that, before the group got too far into the details of the draft, he wanted guidance on two over-arching questions; first is a request for proposals (RFP) the route to proceed instead of a request for qualifications (RFQ?); secondly, what should the stated design standard be: 10-year flood, 100-year flood, Hurricane Joaquin or Hurricane Irma?

The group discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the RFP and RFQ processes, and Mr. Kerr stated that he brought the question up because, in reviewing the documents with Charleston County, they indicated that they used the RFQ process instead of the RFP process. After discussion, the group generally agreed that they preferred the RFP process as they felt it would probably result in a more focused response and ultimately result in drainage relief coming quicker.

On the second issue of what the design standard should be, Mr. Kerr explained that in discussing the development of the request with David Stevens, Mr. Stevens expressed concern about how different firms would proceed. He thought that some firms would gravitate towards the simplest design because of the initial cost savings and the likelihood the City would proceed with the cheapest option. Mr. Stevens indicated that, in his design work for Phases I and II, the unwritten goal was to avoid any structural damage due to flooding during a major storm event like Hurricanes Irma and Joaquin, he said the project met this goal. Mr. Stevens indicated that meeting this goal would be even more challenging in the areas of this future project because the ground is lower and there are a lot of homes that are not elevated.

Mr. Kerr explained that, in discussing the different options and borrowing from Mr. Stevens' guidance on Phase I and II, the stated goal should be that the design would be to a level that would have kept flood waters associated with Hurricane Irma from damaging houses within the associated drainage basins. In subsequent conversations with the Charleston County and Isle of Palms' staff, he wondered if Hurricane Joaquin should be the standard, as it resulted in more home damage and the flooding was caused by rainfall, where most of the flooding associated with Irma was caused by an unusual surge and not rainfall.

After some discussions of the two storms, the group agreed that they wanted the objective to be based on the flooding associated with Joaquin, not Irma.

Mr. DiGangi thought the proposal should reference that the respondents should be "professional engineering firms" instead of "qualified civil engineers" and that instead of "consultant" the word "firm" should be used. The group agreed and Mr. Kerr indicated that he would make these changes.

Mr. Ferencz believed the scope of work should include identifying key performance indicators of the design and a time line of how the design and construction work should proceed. The group agreed with this, and Mr. Kerr indicated that he would include this.

Mr. DiGangi noted that there was a repetition in the list of disciplines the firm should possess, and he thought the list should include a hydrologist. The group agreed with this, and Mr. Kerr indicated that he would include this.

Mr. Ferencz thought the firm should be tasked with pursuing grant funding if it is available. Mr. Kerr stated that predicting the availability of grants was difficult and that typically this work was awarded as a change order. The proposal could include identifying grants and foreshadowing that the firm could be expected to enter into an agreement to pursue funding. The group agreed with this and Mr. Kerr indicated that he would include this.

Mr. Ferencz did not want the group to go in a direction or dedicate a lot of work to something that would not have City Council's support. He felt that the RFP should be reviewed and discussed by City Council prior to going out. Mr. Kerr stated that the project has been included in the upcoming budget indicating a show of support, but he agreed that it would be useful to keep them involved throughout the project. Director Kerr said that he would discuss how to best approach City Council with the City Hall staff and report back.

The group agreed with this strategy and agreed to review a more complete bid package at their next meeting.

DISCUSS LOT COVERAGE RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Kerr recalled that, at the last meeting, the Planning Commission agreed to review the impervious surface recommendations. A redline draft was in the packet, and the changes are as follows:

- the limit of how much fill can be brought in will be limited to one foot above the road instead of existing grade;
- the requirement to be 50% vegetated has been deleted and
- the language that was included for clarity when the septic ordinances were being considered has been eliminated.

The group reviewed the changes and Mr. Ferencz stated he thought the wording that defines "structures" as an "impervious material" was improper English. Mr. Kerr suggested that the word "material" be changed to "surface" throughout and the group agreed.

The group agreed that they were ready to move the recommendation forward to City Council. Mr. Kerr stated that a point has been made of having the Commission looking

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at all changes prior to going to Council and asked if they wanted to review it a final time before sending forward a recommendation. The group agreed to do this via email.

Mr. Denton made a motion to recommend that City Council adopt the proposed amendments, and Mr. Pounds seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Mr. Ferencz asked about the status of the Memo of Understanding (MOU) with the Water and Sewer Commission. Mr. Kerr answered that, as far as he knew, no work had been done on the main MOU, but that a smaller MOU had been entered into to allow for the hiring of Thomas and Hutton to update the plans to sewer the island and the City would participate in this project.

Mr. Mills asked if this would be one of Ms. Tucker's tasks in her role as City Administrator Emerita. Mr. Kerr answered yes.

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Ferencz, Chairman