

**MINUTES OF THE ISLE OF PALMS  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
August 15, 2018**

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission met in the City Hall conference room, 1207 Palm Boulevard on August 15, 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**

Mr. Daniel Habbock, 9 Wills Way, reported that his neighborhood floods during rain events, and that he and his family do their best to try to keep the drainage system clear, but the water does not seem to enter into the system.

Ms. Safford, explained that she was Mr. Habbock's neighbor, and she could attest to the fact that the water did not enter into the system.

Mr. Kerr stated that he was confused to hear that a piped system was in their backyards, as he had always believed that the area in the backyards that was a swale. He explained that he could ask Charleston County to investigate the system in an effort to determine what was keeping the water from entering into the system, and he would report back to the Commission at their next meeting.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The next item on the agenda was the approval of the July 11, 2018 minutes, and Mr. Denton made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted, and Mr. Pounds seconded the motion. The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**DISCUSSION OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING REGARDING FUTURE SEWER EXPANSION**

The discussion of the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and the Isle of Palms Water and Sewer Commission (IOPWSC) regarding the future expansion of the public sewer system to all parts of the island was next on the Agenda.

City Administrator Emerita Tucker explained that she had been making good and steady process on this assignment, and she had been meeting regularly with the IOPWSC staff as well as the engineer working on the project. She explained that the group was

focusing on an old study done by an engineer, G. Robert George, and they were trying to obtain additional data from that study.

She added that the IOPWSC had applied for a Rural Infrastructure Grant to expand sewer into the areas around 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue and they were unsuccessful in their first attempt, but they were hopeful that they could take the feedback from the first attempt, improve the request, and be successful in a subsequent request for the same project. She explained that the IOPWSC was working toward having at least 75% of the owners adjacent to the proposed project committed to tying into the system.

Ms. Tucker added that the IOPWSC had been successful in being awarded a FEMA grant for the expansion of the treatment facility at Forest Trails that would allow the IOPWSC to abandon the Wild Dunes facility and consolidated into one facility.

She added that the IOPWSC had hired a rate consultant to investigate charging impact fees, and the consultant has made recommendations. Mr. Kerr explained that in the joint workshop between City Council and the IOPWSC, it was his impression that the sewer staff believed that the rate consultant would be able to analyze how to raise funds to expand the system and provide recommendations. Ms. Tucker stated that this would be a separate project from the work that has been done, and she believed that the master plan update work that was underway would need to be completed before this study was done.

Ms. Tucker reported that the Commission members have received a draft of the MOU but the current draft was missing elements, i.e. inclusions of an arbitration clause, a need for periodic meetings and progress updates, and a transition in the draft out of background information and into actual goals and strategies.

Mr. Ferencz agreed that, in its current form, the MOU primarily provides background information, and, for the document to be useful, it should include specific tasks that the group will work together on to achieve the goals. He thought the document should include language about the groups being more transparent with each other and sharing information with one another.

Mr. Mills asked if this MOU would be a final product or would it need continued work into the future to be successful. He asked what would happen with the MOU once Ms. Tucker retired. Ms. Tucker answered that the process of expanding sewer would go on for many years, and she thought that the City Hall staff, once they were back up to full employment, would continue work on the project. She indicated that if she were requested to continue to work on the project after her retirement, she would be available.

Mr. DiGangi explained that he thought it would be useful if the structure that exists between the City and the IOPWSC was explained in the MOU. He indicated that he was still unclear on whether the IOPWSC could initiate major water and sewer projects without the City and vice-versa or if one group took any direction from the other on the issues. Mr. Tucker answered that she could add some details, but, in short, the two operate independently, with the exception that the IOPWSC cannot be issued a bond without prior approval by the City.

Ms. Tucker indicated that she had good input to update the MOU, and she would plan on meeting with the IOPWSC staff on the matter to get their input. At that time she would like to have a new draft for the next Planning Commission meeting.

The Planning Commission agreed that they would meet again at their September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

#### **DISCUSSION OF STORMWATER REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Mr. Kerr explained that earlier in the day, the City held a mandatory meeting with all companies interested in submitting proposals for this work, and the turnout was good. He noted there were a lot of questions about the fact that the City had indicated that the future improvements should be designed to a level that would have kept structures within the associated drainage basins from being damaged by Hurricane Joaquin. He said that the engineers expressed concerns that this would imply that the design should be to a point to deal with a 1,000-year storm, which was a very high objective and would result in a costly project.

The Commission discussed how to plan to develop a recommendation for City Council. It was generally agreed that the Commission would review the proposals at the regular September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, and then try to cull the respondents down to the top two or three at a special September 28<sup>th</sup> meeting at 10 a.m. They would interview the top respondents at their October 10<sup>th</sup> meeting at 4:30 p.m., with the goal of having a recommendation ready for the appropriate committee of City Council prior to the November committee meetings; that would allow for the award of a contract at the Council meeting on November 27<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Mills asked which committee of City Council should review the Planning Commission's recommendation. Mr. Kerr indicated that he would ask the City Hall staff to provide feedback on this question for the next meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS- DISCUSSION OF PERVIOUS CONCRETE**

Mr. Ferencz asked to have this topic put on the agenda at the request of several Council members. He has learned that pervious concrete is superior in performance to pervious pavers because the entire surface is pervious, and it requires less maintenance, but he has been told that the cost is approximately twice that of regular concrete.

Mr. Kerr stated that the City already acknowledges pervious concrete as a viable option to receive pervious credit in terms of lot coverage and he asked if it was the Chair's intention to require it in all hardscape applications. Mr. Ferencz answered it should be considered in all hardscaping applications.

Mr. Denton felt that, if this was required without reducing the allowable lot coverage on a lot, it could lead to an unintended consequence of larger houses covering more of the lot than they already do. He said that typically, in the design of a house, the house is scaled to a point where some area is left for other impervious surfaces. If the other surfaces are all pervious, and the limit is still 40%, owners will see this as an opportunity to cover more lot with house.

Mr. Kerr reminded the Commission that they had just finalized a recommendation to City Council on the issue of lot coverage, including new guidance on what qualifies as pervious as well as requiring a drainage plan on all new houses and projects larger than 650 square feet.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Richard Ferencz, Chairman