

PLANNING COMMISSION
January 14, 2026

The public may view the public meeting at:
www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms

Public Comment: Citizens may provide public comment here:
<https://www.iop.net/public-comment-form>

AGENDA

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission will hold its regular meeting on Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard.

- A. Call to order and acknowledgment that the press and the public were duly notified in accordance with state law.
- B. Introduction of new member Bill Laughlin
- C. Nomination and election of Chair and Vice Chair
- D. Approval of minutes December 10, 2025
- E. New business lighting ordinance amendments
- F. Old business review of Recommendations Matrix
- G. Miscellaneous business
- H. Adjourn



**Planning Commission Meeting
4:00pm, Wednesday, December 10, 2025
1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC and
broadcasted live on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms>**

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Present: Sandy Stone, David Cohen, Tim Ahmuty, Ron Denton, Jeffrey Rubin,
Rich Steinert

Absent: Sue Nagelski

Staff present: Administrator Kerr

2. Approval of minutes

MOTION: Mr. Stone made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2025 meeting. Mr. Cohen seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. New Business -- none

4. Old Business

A. Discussion of proposed lighting ordinance

Administrator Kerr said the Environmental Advisory Committee would like to continue working on this ordinance and then send it back to the Planning Commission. He said their plan is to create a separate document of best practices alongside a pared down ordinance. The more technical suggestions will likely be part of best practices. He noted that much of what is addressed in the ordinance and any best practices will be dealt with via new construction.

Commissioners discussed concerns related to dock lighting – specifically the need for responsible and safe lighting. Administrator Kerr will pass on those concerns to the Environmental Advisory Committee.

B. Review of Recommendations Matrix

Commissioners reviewed the current status of the recommendations assigned to the Planning Commission.

Recommendation 269 will be turned green, no action is necessary.

In discussing Recommendation 151, Administrator Kerr said the Planning Commission can consider changes to the City's tree ordinance in the new year. Mr. Denton would like to see stricter tree protection zones. Mr. Cohen suggested changes to the replacement tree and mitigation requirements as well as becoming stricter on protecting replacement trees. Administrator Kerr said he is unsure how such a change could be enforced and monitored. The tree ordinance will be reviewed in January.

The Commission will also look further into the two recommendations from the Seal Level Rise Plan next year.

Commissioners discussed the recommendations related to creating an online commemorative exhibit around the history of the island. It was suggested that a page on the City's website could be created and invite residents to add historical photographs and documents. This recommendation will be changed to green and marked as ongoing.

5. Miscellaneous

Administrator Kerr thanked Mr. Cohen for his service to the Planning Commission and wished him well as he serves on City Council.

The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be Wednesday, January 14, 2026 at 4:00pm.

6. Adjournment

Mr. Cohen made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Steinert seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:11pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk

Sec. 5-4-17. Sea turtle protection; outdoor lighting regulations.

- (a) *Definitions.* The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this section, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this subsection, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:
- (1) *Artificial light* means any source of light emanating from a manmade device, including, but not limited to, incandescent, mercury vapor, metal halide, or sodium lamps, flashlights, spotlights, streetlights, vehicular lights, construction or security lights.
 - (2) *Floodlight* means reflector-type light fixture which is attached directly to a building and which is unshielded.
 - (3) *Low profile luminary* means a light fixture set on a base which raises the source of the light no higher than forty-eight inches (48") off the ground, and designed in such a way that light is directed downward from a hooded light source.
 - (4) *Development* means any existing structure for which a building permit has been duly issued and any new construction or remodeling of existing structures when such remodeling includes alteration of exterior lighting.
 - (5) *Person* means any individual, firm, association, joint venture, partnership, estate, trust, syndicate, fiduciary, corporation, group or unit, or Federal, State, County or municipal government.
 - (6) *Pole lighting* means a light fixture set on a base or pole which raises the source of the light higher than forty-eight inches (48") off the ground.
- (b) *Development.* No artificial light shall illuminate any area of the beach other than in compliance with this section. Building and electrical plans for construction of single-family or multifamily dwellings, commercial or other structures, including electrical plans associated with parking lots, dune walkovers or other outdoor lighting for real property if lighting associated with such construction or development can be seen from the beach, shall be in compliance with the following:
- (1) Floodlights shall be prohibited. Wall-mounted light fixtures shall be fitted with hoods so that no light illuminates the beach.
 - (2) Pole lighting shall be shielded in such a way that the point sources of light will not be visible from the beach. Outdoor lighting shall be held to the minimum necessary for security and convenience.
 - (3) Low-profile luminaries shall be used in parking lots and such lighting shall be positioned so that no light illuminates the beach.
 - (4) Dune crosswalks shall utilize low-profile shielded luminaries which shall be turned off from sunset to sunrise during the period of May 1 to October 31 of each year.
 - (5) Temporary security lights at construction sites shall not be mounted more than fifteen feet (15') above the ground. Illumination from the lights shall not spread beyond the boundary of the property being developed and in no case shall those lights illuminate the beach.
- (c) *Use of lighting.* It is the policy of the City for both new and existing development to minimize artificial light illuminating any area of the beach. To adhere to this policy, lighting of structures which can be seen from the beach shall be in compliance with the following:
- (1) Lights illuminating buildings or associate grounds for decorative or recreational purposes shall be shielded or screened such that they are not visible from the beach, or turned off from sunset to sunrise during the period of May 1 to October 31 of each year.
 - (2) Lights illuminating dune crosswalks of any area oceanward of the primary dune line shall be turned off from sunset to sunrise during the period of May 1 to October 31 of each year.

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- (3) Security lights shall be permitted throughout the night so long as low-profile luminaries are used and screened in such a way that those lights do not illuminate the beach.
 - (d) *Publicly owned lighting.* Streetlights and lighting at parks and other publicly owned beach areas shall be subject to the following:
 - (1) Streetlights shall be located so that most of their illumination will be directed away from the beach. These lights shall be equipped with shades or shields that will prevent backlighting and render them not visible from the beach.
 - (2) Lights at parks or other public beach access points shall be shielded or shaded or shall not be utilized during the period of May 1 to October 31 of each year.
 - (e) *Enforcement and penalty.* Violation of any provision is hereby declared to be a misdemeanor, punishable and enforceable pursuant to the provisions of section 1-3-66.
- (Code 1994, § 5-4-17)

Section xx-xx-xx. New and Existing Residential Development.

- (a) Outdoor lighting on residential structures must be shielded so that light is directed downward and does not shine directly onto any natural including the Intracoastal Waterway, marsh, or other natural areas. Nothing in this section would prevent lighting on a dock for safety purposes.
- (b) Outdoor lighting on residential structures shall not shine directly into the yard or windows of adjacent residential uses.

Recommendations	Source	Category/Focus Area	Assigned Committee	Timeline of Implementation	Type of Recommendation	Budgetary Cost	Initiative2	Rec #	Status
Consider adding more crosswalks and sidewalks island wide based off data from walkability study with emphasis on 27th, 28th, 29th streets surrounding the recreation center. Possible funding may come from the infrastructure funds.	Community Enrichment Plan	Public Safety	Planning Commission	Long	Exploratory	\$\$\$	Infrastructure Improvements	31	Underway with COG walkability study
Create a clear path off the connector to bike to Front Beach/County park incorporating the existing path from 14th to Breach inlet.	Community Enrichment Plan	Public Safety	Planning Commission	Long	Actionable	\$\$\$	Cycling Enhancements	36	Underway with COG walkability study
Determine feasibility for a bike route off the main roadways and sidewalks through neighborhoods or other lower traffic areas. i.e. Waterway Boulevard on the east bound side.	Community Enrichment Plan	Public Safety	Planning Commission	Long	Exploratory	\$\$\$	Cycling Enhancements	38	Underway with COG walkability study
Focus on the acquisition of properties to increase our public space: Contact The Beach Company to identify small pocket parcels they own. Monitor real estate listings of properties located between the current Recreation Center property and Waterway Boulevard; evaluate purchases that could enlarge the recreation footprint.	Community Enrichment Plan	Quality of Life	Planning Commission	Long	Aspirational	\$\$\$	Infrastructure Improvements	57	Planning Commission supports if and when land becomes feasible
Explore recommendations for zoning, retrofitting, setbacks for new construction.	Community Enrichment Plan	Environmental Stewardship and Management	Planning Commission	Long	Exploratory		Zoning Ordinances	100	DONE
Evaluate and modify the city's tree ordinances to elevate conservation of native tree species such as palmetto, live oak, pine and wax myrtle.	Community Enrichment Plan	Environmental Stewardship and Management	Planning Commission	Short	Exploratory		Environmental Sustainability	151	Needs Action - Code Change - Different Language - have more information for planning meeting in September
Update zoning ordinances for redevelopment.	Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan	Stormwater Management	Planning Commission	Medium	Actionable		Zoning Ordinances	191	DONE
Begin Development of Redevelopment Design Tool.	Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan	Stormwater Management	Planning Commission	Medium	Actionable		Zoning Ordinances	192	
Launch a pilot program for private Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater management.	Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan	Stormwater Management	Planning Commission	Medium	Actionable		Stormwater Management	197	considering incetives for LID
Update and enforce zoning ordinances	Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan	Stormwater Management	Planning Commission	Medium	Actionable		Zoning Ordinances	201	DONE - Planning Commision modified storm water regulations in 2024
Purchase flood-prone property to preserve and or demonstrate conservation practices.	Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan	Stormwater Management	Planning Commission	Long	Actionable	\$\$\$	Stormwater Management	213	Planning Commission supports if and when land becomes feasible - also supports grant request to make existing more flood resistant

Support commercial development only within the parameters set by the existing zoning regulations and consistent with the City’s established character as a residential community	Comprehensive Plan	Quality of Life	Planning Commission	Short	Aspirational		Zoning Ordinances	216	Ongoing
Encourage business development commensurate with the needs of the local community	Comprehensive Plan	Quality of Life	Planning Commission	Short	Aspirational		Forecasting	220	Ongoing
Pursue improving the CRS rating when feasible	Comprehensive Plan	Stormwater Management	Planning Commission	Medium	Actionable		Stormwater Management	227	Ongoing
Explore the possibility of establishing a commemorative exhibit online and/or in one of the City’s buildings including the collection of historic photographs and documents compiled	Comprehensive Plan	Quality of Life	Planning Commission	Long	Exploratory	\$\$\$	Recreational Offerings	240	to be done - scan in photos, exhibits - ongoing - remove from comp plan
Investigate the possibility of permanently marking sites of historical significance on the island and ensuring their preservation	Comprehensive Plan	Quality of Life	Planning Commission	Long	Exploratory		Recreational Offerings	241	check into this - DK
Consider ways of restricting the construction of structures at the ends of docks working in conjunction with the OCRM and the U.S. Corps of Engineers	Comprehensive Plan	Environmental Stewardship and Management	Planning Commission	Short	Exploratory		Marsh Preservation	251	Staff to discuss with OCRM juridictaion - DK to do work on his end
Continue to track construction trends including: the number of houses demolished each year and the number of square feet, bedrooms and bathrooms of new houses	Comprehensive Plan	General Administration	Planning Commission	Short	Actionable		Zoning Ordinances	263	Done with existing software
Continually assess ordinances which limit the size and width of houses and the amount of impervious surface on the island	Comprehensive Plan	Quality of Life	Planning Commission	Medium	Exploratory		Zoning Ordinances	264	DONE
Amend the zoning ordinance to limit the density of development allowed on property not serviced by a public wastewater system	Comprehensive Plan	Quality of Life	Planning Commission	Medium	Actionable		Zoning Ordinances	265	DONE
Monitor the amount of impervious surface on residential lots. The City defines impervious material as any material through which water cannot penetrate, including buildings, roads, and parking lots	Comprehensive Plan	Quality of Life	Planning Commission	Medium	Actionable		Zoning Ordinances	267	DONE - Planning Commission modified storm water regulations in 2024
Make appropriate amendments to the zoning ordinance which reflect the goals and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan	Comprehensive Plan	Quality of Life	Planning Commission	Short	Exploratory		Zoning Ordinances	268	
Develop plans and policies which use public improvements to prevent or mitigate adverse impacts of commercial development upon residential properties	Comprehensive Plan	Quality of Life	Planning Commission	Long	Actionable		Zoning Ordinances	269	look at this - DK

\$ (< \$50,000)
\$\$ (\$50,000 - \$100,000)
\$\$\$ (> \$100,000)

Short (< 1 year)
Medium (1 - 5 years)
Long (> 5 years)

- Aspirational: long-term vision with no clear policy or action recommended
- Exploratory: policy or action to explore and consider further
- Actionable: clear policy or budgetary action that can be taken immediately
- Maintenance: upkeep of existing practices, policies, or activities