

MINUTES OF THE ISLE OF PALMS  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
October 12, 2011

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission met in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard on October 12, 2011 at 4:30 p.m. Members attending included Bev Ballow, David Cohen, Ron Denton, Pete Doherty, Diane Oltorik, Noel Scott and Don Smith; the Director of Planning Douglas Kerr was present, as well. 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.

Chairman David Cohen called the meeting to order.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The next item on the agenda was the review of the minutes of the September 14, 2011 meeting. Ms. Oltorik made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Scott seconded the motion.

Mr. Denton explained that the first paragraph on page 3, regarding Ms. Oltorik's comments were not accurate and he stated that he had no issue with the comments being deleted. Mr. Smith made a motion to delete the paragraph in question. The motion seconded and approved by unanimous vote. Mr. Cohen called for a vote on the original motion and the vote was unanimous in favor of approving the amended minutes.

#### DISCUSSION OF PARKING MANAGEMENT

Mr. Cohen started by stating that comments are circulating among citizens about the direction of the Planning Commission. He clarified that everything that has happened so far was just discussion and the group had not formulated a recommendation.

Mr. Kerr explained that he had included a copy of the request for qualifications that was submitted to City Council for the purposes of hiring a consultant to assist with parking. He explained that he felt that this document did a good job of summarizing the issues and laying out an expectation of what a final work product could be which will be helpful to the Planning Commission as they work through the process.

He explained that also in the packet were the comments from City Council members at their Ways and Means meeting, which included good comments on their expectations of how the Planning Commission might address the issues of parking. He stated that Council members had expressed an interest in seeing several different scenarios, as opposed to just one recommendation, which he thought would be useful. He added that interest Council had expressed an interest in a series of meetings focused on individual areas, as opposed to larger public hearing meetings.

The group discussed the idea of having a series less formal meetings focusing on different areas.

Mr. Denton presented the Commission with a method of quantifying the concerns related to parking. He handed out a matrix and explained that this could be used as a tool to evaluate what the Planning Commission's objectives are in addressing parking and assign priorities to the objectives. The exercise would include identifying the objectives and then each Commissioner putting a numeric priority of each objective and then tallying the individual priorities to come up with a number that represents the overall priorities of the Commission. An additional step would be to then compare each identified solution and grade how well that solution addresses the identified priorities. The final product of this exercise would be a grade for each solution, which would be useful in making recommendations to City Council.

Mr. Denton also presented a series of maps that showed the various parking scenarios on the island. The first series of maps showed the number of spaces included in the current Beach Management Plan for the City. The next series of maps showed the absolute minimum number of spaces that would comply with OCRM's minimum standards for a Beach Management Plan. The final series of maps showed areas where parking is consistently problematic, in his opinion.

The group expressed their appreciation for all of the work Mr. Denton had done and agreed that the maps would be extremely useful going forward. The group discussed the matrix and how that might be used in the future to help prioritize. Mr. Kerr explained that he had distributed a short list of objectives and identified alternatives and the tools described by Mr. Denton could be used to expand that list.

Mr. Kerr explained that since the last Planning Commission meeting, the managers of the City staff had met and held a similar exercise to the one conducted by the Planning Commission of identifying all alternatives and then narrowing down the list to all of the alternatives that are worthy of future consideration. He explained that two lists, the Planning Commission's alternatives and the staff's alternatives, had a lot of similarities, but that there were also some ideas that the Commission had not yet explored.

He went through the list of all ideas that the staff had strong agreement as viable alternatives and he noted that a new idea was to use some type of electronic, real-time notifications to give beach visitors information about the likelihood of easily finding space. He stated that this could be done with an electronic road sign or the internet (like Twitter or similar services). It could be similar to the highway signs that relay messages like: "from this point to a parking area expect a one hour delay".

He also noted that the staff agreed that additional study would be useful. He added that the staff believed that keeping things similar to how they currently, with only minor modifications should be considered, which was contrary to the Commission's position.

The group agreed that they had been presented with a lot of information and that at a future meeting the group would discuss points individually and decide whether or not to add new concepts to the existing list of concepts being considered.

Mr. Scott expressed an interest in moving this process forward with input from the public. The group generally discussed how to move forward. Mr. Smith expressed his opinion that he liked the idea of a series of smaller, less formal meetings to focus on the three different areas identified by the Planning Commission. Mr. Scott expressed concerns about trying to divide the issue into different areas, because all of the parking issues are interrelated. After some discussion on the issue, the group agreed that it would be beneficial to have a series of smaller meetings at locations outside of the typical meeting sites.

Administrator Tucker explained that she thought that it would be more useful to have focus group meetings as opposed to traditional public forum meetings. She explained that the staff hears comments from residents who are not interested in talking at public meetings, either because of time constraints or intimidation; and she feels that the Commission would hear more from these residents at a focus group meeting. She added that this approach would hopefully minimize the feeling that residents have that ideas are being sprung on them, because they would have been more involved in the process. The group generally agreed with the concept, but expressed concerns about how to identify who should be a member of the group.

After discussing various meeting options, the group agreed to hold a series of three drop-in events at various venues around the community to solicit input from the residents. Each meeting would be focused on a particular area of the City and would hopefully have residents from that area, but all meetings would be open to anyone who would like to attend. The dates that were tentatively identified were November 9<sup>th</sup>, November 30<sup>th</sup> and December 14<sup>th</sup>. The time for each meeting was set for 5:30p.m. to 8:00p.m.. Mr. Kerr explained that he would develop a handout for the meetings and displays for the rooms to spur conversation.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, David Cohen, Chairman.