

MINUTES OF THE ISLE OF PALMS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
February 28, 2007

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission met in the Building Department on February 28, 2007, at 4:00PM. Members attending included Barbara Bergwerf, Pat Campbell, Ron Denton, Michael Loftus and Andrew Roskill; also the Director of Planning, Douglas Kerr was present. David Stevens and Bob Hooper were absent. 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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The first item on the agenda was the review of the minutes of the January 10th 2007 meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as written and the vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

REVIEW OF TREE ORDINANCE

Mr. Loftus explained that before the Planning Commission got into the remainder of the agenda, he wanted to explain that the City Council had asked that the Planning Commission discuss and make a recommendation on the issue of implementing a cap on the number of short term rentals in the SR1 and SR2 zoning districts. He explained that because there was not adequate notice, it would not be discussed at this meeting, but it would be on the agenda for the next month.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss the tree ordinance. Mr. Roskill explained that the subcommittee dealing with trees met and generally agreed that the tree ordinance was in fairly good shape. He explained that one area of the ordinance that could be approved is Section 5-4-68 Tree Protection During Development. He stated that the subcommittee recommended adopted language that stipulated that if construction occurs within the "drip line" of a Historic Tree that a certified arborist review the development and present a "preservation plan" to the Zoning Administrator for approval and follow up inspection.

The next area the subcommittee thought could be improved was Section 5-4-66 Standards for Tree Planting and Replacement; however, he explained that after a review with the staff, it was determined that these changes may not be necessary.

He explained that the third area that could be improved was the penalty section for the unlawful removal of a tree (Section 5-4-67). He explained that the subcommittee recommended that the fine be increased from 500 dollars to

5000 dollars per tree, with a fine being issued for each tree. He explained that Mr. Kerr thought that there might be a legal problem with increasing the fine and that this would be clarified before the next meeting.

Ms. Bergwerf explained that she felt that the replacement subsection should be revised to stipulate that when a tree is illegally removed, a replacement tree must be replanted in the same area as the tree that was removed, which would take away the incentive to remove a tree to increase a building envelope. The Commission agreed with this point.

The Commission generally agreed that they needed clarification on what the tree preservation plan might include, and Mr. Roskill volunteer to contact some arborists to discuss this and make suggestions and Mr. Kerr explained that he would clarify with the City's legal staff if the fines could be increased.

DISCUSSION OF DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Mr. Loftus explained that the subcommittee had met several times to discuss options, but they had not made any concrete suggestions yet. Mr. Denton explained that the group was looking a various options including requiring a minimum roof pitch on new structures, doing away with roof top decks and pools, and the possibility of new residential districts. Mr. Kerr explained that a lot of analysis had been done on the SR3 district. He explained that data indicates several things including: that the new district would be the largest district; that there is still a relatively low number of rentals in the district, that the housing stock is generally lower value and smaller, and that the lots are relatively larger than other areas. He explained these points indicated to him that there is a high potential for future redevelopment. He added that he felt that this data did indicate that the area had different characteristics than the other zoning districts and that a different set of zoning criteria could be beneficial to the area.

The group discussed various issues and directed the subcommittee to continue to look at the issues and include the ideas of possibility setting a limit on the number of stories above the parking level, limiting the number of bed rooms, amending the amount of impervious coverage allowed and looking into including portions of Carolina Boulevard into the SR3 district.

DISCUSSION OF RECREATIONAL ZONING DISTRICT

Mr. Loftus explained that he wanted to distribute a copy of the ordinance adopted by the Town of Mount Pleasant to keep recreational areas. He stated that he

would like to consider placing the Recreation Center, the marina and the golf courses into a district that would have similar restrictions. He explained that the zoning change would not take away any owners ability to develop their land, but it would trigger a public rezoning and review of any developments in these areas. The Commission generally discussed this idea and agreed to hold any further discussions until they were able to receive legal advice on the matter.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Mr. Loftus explained that Mr. Hooper had asked that the work that had been started on amending the commercial district be brought up and put back on the agenda for discussion. The group generally agreed that because of the number of issues the Planning Commission was dealing with that the discussion of this issue should be postponed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no more business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00pm.
Respectfully submitted, Michael Loftus, Chairman.