

MINUTES OF THE ISLE OF PALMS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
July 8, 2009

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission met in the Building Department conference room, 1301 Palm Boulevard on July 8, 2009, at 4:30PM. Members attending included Pat Campbell, David Cohen, Ron Denton, Lisa Safford, Sandy Stone, David Stevens and Dick Watson; also the Director of Planning, Douglas Kerr was present. 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 Ron Denton called the meeting to order and welcomed the newest member of the Commission, Mr. David Cohen.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The next item on the agenda was the review of the minutes of the June 8th, 2009 meeting. Mr. Kerr noted a typo in the page header of the second page. Mr. Campbell made a motion to approve the minutes as written and Mr. Stone seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

DISCUSSION WITH CHIEF BUCKHANNON

Mr. Kerr explained that there had been discussions of a high number of livability issues since the Planning Commission's last meeting and the when the Planning Commission made their recommendation at the last meeting, they were not aware of these high numbers. He explained that he wanted the Chief to meet with the Commission and explained what the most recent data showed and have the Commission decide whether they wanted to amend the recommendation made last month.

Mr. Kerr stated that Line 91L- Livability on the report titled "Offense Type Comparison" had been discussed and he asked Chief Buckhannon to explain what this data showed. The Chief addressed the Commission and explained that the vast majority of the offenses in this line are trash cans being left in the right-of-way. He explained that his department did not handle this issue in prior years, therefore there were no records kept and this is the cause of the large percentage increase.

Mr. Watson explained that it appeared to him that through the fifth month of the year, there was a 30% decrease in noise violations and he asked if this was correct. Chief Buckhannon answered yes. Mr. Watson stated that it appeared that the monthly reports detailed the noise violations by owner versus rentals and that from totaling up the months he has determine that there were only 38 noise complaints generated by short term rentals in the first five months of the year.

The Chief warned that caution should be used when looking at the trends that these statistics show. He explained that one bad week will throw the statistics off entirely. So even though the statistics may appear to show a trend, it may really only be a short term change in activity. He added that the numbers are best used when looking at long term trends over years of activity.

Mr. Stone explained that he felt that the recent decrease in noise complaints was because of better communication of the requirements to the visitors and he added that he felt that there was a lot that could be done to continue improving on this.

Mr. Denton asked if the Chief had any ideas of what could be done to stop the large underage parties. The Chief answered that this was a national trend and that it would probably continue to increase. Mr. Denton said that he wondered if the rental companies could improve screening who they are renting to and the Chief answered that usually the arrangements are made by one of the parents.

Mr. Campbell asked if residents could ride along with a patrol officer. Chief Buckhannon answered, yes; he would encourage all members to ride with an officer. The Commission thanked the Chief for coming to the meeting.

Mr. Denton asked for comments about the recommendation made by the Commission at the last meeting. Mr. Stone explained that he felt that there should be an effort made by the City to reach out to the property owners and managers to keep them better informed of the regulations and the problems as they arise. The Commission generally discussed ways to better relay information to the visitors, specifically via e-mail if the City had collected many addresses. The Commission also discussed the rental application process and the forms involved and ways they could be improved.

Mr. Watson explained that he felt that the statistics provided and the Chief's explanation actually confirms what the Commission had determined earlier. He made a motion to reaffirm the recommendation made by the Planning Commission at the last meeting and Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. After general discussion the Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

DISCUSSION OF PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr. Denton explained that the Commission had been discussing ways of improving traffic flow and parking for a long time and he wanted to reopen the issue. Mr. Stevens provided a large aerial photograph of Palm Boulevard in the areas between 21st Avenue and 41st Avenue. The Commission generally

discussed the challenge of limiting parking in any particular area, without causing a negative impact in other areas. The Commission discussed the explosion in growth anticipated in the northern part of Mount Pleasant and that the Isle of Palms would be the closest beach for those residents, so the problems will be getting worse rather than better, if left unattended. The Commission generally discussed the idea of generating revenue by charging people to park and then putting the revenue in an account dedicated to future parking improvement projects. The Commission generally discussed requiring a parking pass sticker and the idea of organizing the parking by installing wheel stops in designated areas in an organized fashion.

Mr. Campbell explained that he felt that it was important to know what the existing conditions are in the area of Palm Boulevard to get an idea of how it could be organized. Mr. Stevens answered that he could blow up a typical block and overlay a scheme showing organized parking.

The Commission generally discussed ways of rearranging the roadway configuration to include new lanes and bike lanes. The Commission discussed the possibility of improving public transportation for day trippers.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Mr. Denton explained that he would be at the next City Council meeting to discuss the Commission's review of the Comprehensive Plan.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no more business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15PM.

Respectfully submitted, Ron Denton, Chairman.