

MINUTES OF THE ISLE OF PALMS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
May 9, 2012

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission met in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard on May 9, 2012 at 4:30 p.m. Members attending included Bev Ballow, David Cohen, Ron Denton, Pete Doherty, Patrick Harrington and Don Smith; the Director of Planning Douglas Kerr was present as well. Noel Scott was 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.

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 April 18, 2012 meeting. Mr. Doherty made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Denton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

DISCUSSION OF COMMERCIAL DISTRICT ZONING

Mr. Cohen explained that at the last meeting, the Commission discussed the commercial zoning district and asked Mr. Denton to report back on issues that he could identify that may be problematic to future developments.

Mr. Denton explained that because of his work with the owner of the Red and White grocery store, he was aware of the fact that it would be difficult for such a small store to be able to stock enough items to be able to attract buyers and stay profitable. He explained that the existing Red and White store was approximately 14,000 square feet and other grocery stores in the area were between 40,000 and 50,000 square feet. He explained that the lot size could only accommodate a certain number of parking spaces and the zoning code limits the size of a store based on the number of parking spaces. He stated that the existing parking lot is very rarely full; however it represents the minimum size allowed by the zoning code for the existing retail spaces, which he feels the Commission may want to consider recommending be amended.

Mr. Harrington explained that it appeared from reading in the paper that the owner of the Red and White property had plans for a new grocery store tenant. Mr. Doherty stated that he felt that it would be unwise to recommend changes to the code without having a landowner express a desire for the changes. He explained that it may be that they can live within the limits of the code without a change. The Planning Commission generally agreed to wait to see what develops before recommending changes to the parking criteria.

Mr. Cohen brought up the fact that at the previous meeting some items had been discussed that should be cleaned up in the commercial section of the zoning ordinance. The Commission agreed at the next meeting they would consider these issues.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Mr. Kerr updated the Commission on the parking discussions that were happening at the various City Council committee meetings. He explained that a consultant had been hired to review the signage leading visitors to the public parking lots to hopefully improve the traffic flow during peak beach times. He also explained that considerable legal research had been done on various aspect of controlling parking and legal issues had been identified that may limit the City in how parking is controlled. He explained that some of this legal research had just been made available and it was client privileged information for City Council and he would inquire about sharing it with the Planning Commission. Mr. Harrington explained that he thought it would appropriate for the Planning Commission to be made aware of the legal issues and he made a motion to have the City Attorney come and discuss the issues with the Planning Commission in an executive session as soon as convenient. Mr. Doherty seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. Mr. Kerr stated that he would make these arrangements.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, David Cohen, Chairman.