

MINUTES OF THE ISLE OF PALMS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
February 13, 2013

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission met in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard on February 13, 2013 at 4:30 p.m. Members attending included Bev Ballow, Richard Ferencz, Ron Denton, Patrick Harrington, Penny Lewis, 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 Noel Scott called the meeting to order.

EXECUTIVE SESSION- ANNUAL LEGAL BRIEFING

Mr. Scott explained that the first item on the agenda was to go into executive session for the annual legal briefing from the City Attorney. A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to go into executive session.

The Commission came out of executive session and Mr. Scott explained that the group received legal advice, but there were no other discussions or votes taken.

DISCUSSION OF TREE ORDINANCE

Mr. Kerr explained that there were two issues that have been brought up recently for review pertaining to the City's tree ordinance. The first issue is that the City's code protects invasive species, which are potentially harmful to their surroundings and, secondly, the City's code does not address the situation of a healthy tree's roots causing damage to a home.

He explained that he had contacted the surrounding jurisdictions and determined that most do not protect invasive species and most have a process for allowing an owner to remove a healthy tree that has roots causing damage to a home.

Ms. Ballow explained that if invasive species are left unchecked they can overrun an area and cause harm. She explained that Dewees Island has areas where Tallow trees are creating dense forests and choking out other more desirable species.

Mr. Denton explained that he thought the focus of trees damaging houses should be broadened beyond just the root system. He stated that he has had clients whose houses are being damaged by trunks and major limbs where pruning is not a viable option.

The group generally agreed that they would like to pursue recommending an ordinance amendment that would exclude invasive species from the tree ordinance and that would address situations where roots, trunks and limbs are causing damage to a residence

and pruning is not a viable alternative. Mr. Kerr explained that he would have an ordinance draft available at the next meeting for the Commission's consideration.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Kerr explained that the State law requires each jurisdiction to review their comprehensive plan every five years and update their plan every ten years and the City is on schedule to need to update their plan prior to August 2014. He explained that some notable things have happened since the last review, which was August 2009, including a new census, a different economy, a lot of deliberation over beach visitor parking and beach nourishment needs. He explained that he would propose the group go through one or more elements of the plan at each meeting and suggest changes and then review amendments to the elements at the following meeting.

The group generally agreed to going through the plan element-by-element beginning at the next meeting by reviewing page 1-16 and being prepared to offer suggestions at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted, Noel Scott, Chairman.