

MINUTES OF THE ISLE OF PALMS  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
October 12, 2016

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission met in the City Hall conference room, 1207 Palm Boulevard on October 12, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. Members attending included Richard Ferencz, Lewis Gregory, Noel Scott, Vince DiGangi and Lisa Safford, as well as the Director of Planning Douglas Kerr. Ron Denton and Bill Mills 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.

Chair Ferencz called the meeting to order.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** - None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The next item on the agenda was the approval of the September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016 minutes. Mr. DiGangi pointed out that the minutes state that the Isle of Palms Water and Sewer Commission inspected each grinder system twice a week and he felt that it may be that they inspect them twice a month. Mr. Kerr stated that he would verify the correct schedule and correct the minutes (the Water Commission has since clarified that they inspect each system once a week). Mr. Scott made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and Mr. DiGangi seconded the motion. The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Ferencz stated that the next item on the agenda is the approval of the September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 minutes. Mr. Scott moved to approve the minutes; Mr. Ferencz seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**DISCUSSION OF SEPTIC SYSTEMS ON THE ISLAND**

Mr. Kerr reported that, since the last meeting, OCRM had provided historical water quality data back to the dates when GEL conducted their nonpoint source study. He was hopeful that this data would show if there was a difference in water quality from the time of the study and now. He stated that it would be logical to assume that, if the water quality was unchanged, then the various sources contributing to the water quality issues were also the same. He indicated that he would report on this issue once the data was sorted through.

Mr. Ferencz stated that the Planning Commission could continue on the data collection on this issue for a long time if no target dates were established for completing the project; therefore, he recommended that the Commission establish a time line at the next meeting. At that meeting, the time line would be mapped out for completing their review on the issue and formulating recommendations. Mr. Kerr said he would prepare

an outline including the key information the Commission has gathered and highlighting information that was still needed to reach conclusions. The group agreed.

## **DISCUSSION OF NEW FLOOD MAPS**

Mr. Kerr explained that FEMA has released preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) for review and the maps generally show a dramatic reduction in the elevations that would be required for new construction; typically, when people look at the maps, they question the wisdom in such a dramatic reduction. City Council has tasked the Planning Commission with analyzing the maps and coming up with recommendations, if appropriate. He explained that the City participates in the Community Rating System (CRS), which is a voluntary program that allows cities to adopt regulations that are more restrictive than the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) in exchange for a reduction in flood insurance premiums to all of the property owners in the community. He stated that there might be an opportunity to adopt regulations that could reduce the risks that could be associated with the lower elevations of the new maps and provide an insurance savings to the owners in the community.

Mr. Kerr asked whether it was wise to add local requirements that would be more restrictive than the FEMA maps were suggesting as appropriate elevations. Mr. Ferencz voiced the opinion that some property owners might think that the City government was telling them that they know what is best for them. Ms. Safford stated that those residents who had been through Hugo and other flooding events had first-hand knowledge about flood elevations and understood the risks of building right on the ground on a barrier island.

The group agreed to look at what could be done to improve the City's CRS classification and to see if a flood insurance premium break for the residents could be achieved as a results. Mr. Ferencz requested that information about the CRS program be sent to the Commission members, and the Director agreed to do so.

## **MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

Mr. Kerr reported that City Council had given first reading to the ordinance about special exceptions for outdoor sales being granted to mobile units and that he expected the ordinance to be ratified at the next Council meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted, Richard Ferencz, Chairman