

MINUTES OF THE ISLE OF PALMS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
September 14, 2016

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission met in the City Hall Council Chambers, 1207 Palm Boulevard on September 14, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. Members attending included Ron Denton, Richard Ferencz, Lewis Gregory, Noel Scott, Vince DiGangi, Bill Mills and Lisa Safford and the Director of Planning Douglas Kerr. The press and public had been notified of the meeting, and the agenda 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 August 17th, 2016 minutes. Ms. Safford noted that the word “meet” should be “meeting” in the first sentence of the third paragraph on the second page. Mr. Denton made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and Mr. Mills seconded the motion. The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DISCUSSION OF NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION STUDY

Mr. Kerr explained that, since the last meeting, OCRM has provided data regarding the water quality in the waterways on the backside of the island. The sources of the sample collections seem to roughly correspond to the locations sampled in the 2002 study, but the format of the data requires a conversion to correlate to the samples from 2002. He indicated that he would continue to work with OCRM and Ross Nelson, if necessary, to find a correlation between the recent data and the old data to determine if any conclusions could be drawn about the water quality.

DISCUSS SEPTIC TANKS ON THE ISLAND- KRISTEN CHAMPAGNE AND BILL JENKINS, ISLE OF PALMS WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION

Mr. Kerr introduced Kristen Champagne and Bill Jenkins of the Isle of Palms Water and Sewer Commission (IOPWSC) and reported that he and Chair Ferencz had met with the IOPWSC staff twice regarding various issues, and they thought it would be good for the entire Commission to meet. He stated that there have been general discussions of providing public sewer throughout the entire island, but also there is a real-world example that will show the challenges.

Ms. Champagne thanked the Commission for having her and stated her belief that providing sewer to the entire island was a possibility and that the IOPWSC was researching the Whispering Palms area to see what it would take to build a new lift

station to provide sewer to the properties in the area. She explained that the Water Commission hired an engineer to do a feasibility study and cost analysis; he determined that it would cost approximately \$6,000,000 to provide sewer to approximately 300 homes in the area, or about \$20,000 per new property. She stated that this particular situation has the benefit of the IOPWSC already owning the property that would be necessary for the lift station, so this example eliminates any land acquisition hurdles, which could be significant. She added that the cost of the lift station was approximately \$850,000.

Mr. Mills asked how many properties on the island did not have sewer, and Ms. Champagne answered about 2,450.

Mr. Ferencz asked whether the situation at Whispering Palms was a best case scenario for providing sewer. Ms. Champagne answered that it was because the IOPWSC already owned the necessary land.

Mr. Ferencz asked about the cost to build a smaller lift station to serve only the properties immediately adjacent to the Whispering Palms area. Ms. Champagne responded that the smallest lift station would cost about \$350,000 and serve about 25 properties.

Mr. Denton asked how many properties were currently served by the grinder program and if those systems were seen more as a band-aid or a permanent solution. Ms. Champagne answered that approximately 130 properties have grinder pumps and she would agree they were not a great long term solution since they are very labor intensive. She explained that each grinder system had to be inspected twice a week by the IOPWSC staff.

Mr. Mills asked about the mindset of the Water Commission's Board to expand the sewer system. Ms. Champagne thought they were willing to participate, but that they were also aware of the failure of prior efforts to expand. So she was of the opinion that they were a bit guarded about the residents' perception of trying to expand the system.

The Commission thanked Ms. Champagne and Mr. Jenkins' for their time and their willingness to help.

DISCUSSION OF ZONING ORDINANCE RELATED TO FOOD TRUCKS AND TRAILERS

Mr. Kerr reported that, since the last Planning Commission meeting, City Council had met and many of the local restaurant owners came to voice their opposition to food

trucks on the island. He stated that the public appeared to misunderstand recent discussions and thought that Council was considering allowing food trucks and not restricting them further in the future. Additionally, he stated that he perceived an urgency among members of Council to enact something quickly before more requests for Special Exceptions were filed.

The Commission members discussed how an ordinance might be crafted to allow the Board of Zoning Appeals to hear requests for outdoor sales from restaurants on decks and porches, but prohibiting trailers, food trucks and other mobile units. Mr. Kerr suggested that the code be written to allow food trucks and other temporary uses for City-sponsored events, but prohibit them otherwise; the ordinance could allow businesses to request a Special Exception from the Board of Zoning Appeals to allow outdoor sales within the footprint of their permanent building and on decks and porches. The Commission generally agreed.

Due to City Council's sense of urgency, Mr. Kerr asked if Commission members would be willing to hold a special meeting to review an amendment and make a recommendation. The Planning Commission agreed and scheduled a special meeting for Tuesday, September 20th at 12:00 p.m.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Mr. Kerr stated that the City had recently received the draft of the new flood maps from FEMA, and they showed a dramatic drop in required flood elevations. He stated that he felt that this was an issue that would involve the Planning Commission since the flood regulations were included in the zoning ordinance, over which the Planning Commission has purview.

Chair Ferencz requested that City Council task the Planning Commission with analyzing the impact of the new flood maps on the island and making recommendations if necessary. Mr. Kerr stated that he would make this request.

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Ferencz, Chairman