

MINUTES OF THE ISLE OF PALMS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
April 13, 2016

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission met in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard on April 13, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. Members attending included Ron Denton, Lewis Gregory, Noel Scott, Vince DiGangi, Richard Ferencz, Bill Mills and Lisa Safford; 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 Richard Ferencz called the meeting to order.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Cathy Smith, 8 Intracoastal Court, explained that she was opposed to the drystack operation proposed in Concept A of the ATM reports.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Ferencz explained that the next item on the agenda was the approval of the March 9th and March 29th, 2016 minutes. Mr. Mills made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted and Mr. Denton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

SUBDIVISION- 2305 WATERWAY BOULEVARD

Mr. Kerr explained that this was a request for final approval of a subdivision at 2305 Waterway Boulevard. The property is currently configured as one 1.11 acre lot and the owner is proposing to subdivide the property into two lots, with the lots measuring 30,732 square feet and 17,647 square feet.

Mr. Kerr stated that the property is located in the SR1 zoning district, which requires lots be at least 17,500 square feet in area, be at least 70 feet wide at the building line, be at least 110 feet deep, and have at least 60 feet of frontage on the street. He explained that both properties would be served by public water and on-site septic systems. The newly created, vacant lot has been tested by the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and has been issued a permit for a new septic system. He stated that the City's staff has reviewed the plat and believes that request complies with the requirements of the ordinances and therefore recommends approval.

Mr. Mills asked if there was any issue with the fact that the existing driveway will be partly on both properties. Mr. Kerr stated that he has suggested that the owners consider creating an access easement over the driveway to clarify that the owner of Lot 2A has the right to access their property over Lot 2B, but there would not be a

requirement to do this and he understands that the current plan is for both properties to remain under the same ownership, so it may not cause any issues.

Ms. Safford asked about the driveway for Lot 2B crossing the drainage easement. Mr. Kerr said that there would be nothing prohibiting this, but if the pipe needed to have maintenance performed anything placed in the easement could be removed. He also stated that the owner could pursue moving the drainage easement to the edge of the property, if they chose expand the buildable area of Lot 2B.

Mr. Ferencz asked about the retaining wall shown of the septic permit on the edge of the drainage easement. Mr. Kerr stated that he assumed that this was to account for a change in topography that may be necessary for the septic system.

Ms. Safford asked if the application complied with all of the ordinances of the City and if so, would there be any basis that would allow for the Commission to deny the request. Mr. Kerr answered yes, that in his opinion the request complied with all of the codes of the City and because of this he did not think there would be any basis for the Planning Commission to deny the request.

Ms. Safford made a motion to approve the request and Mr. Scott seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

DISCUSS MARINA MASTER PLAN WITH ATM

Mr. Kirby Marshall with ATM addressed the Commission and explained that he had received comments and read the minutes of the previous minutes and he would like to respond to some of the concerns that have been raised.

Mr. Ferencz stated that the Commission has dismissed the option including drystack and is focusing on the issues of traffic circulation, parking, dockage and the gas pump location on the plan showing no drystack.

Scott Parker with DesignWorks stated that his firm worked on the circulation issues of the site and currently when people arrive it is very much like showing up to a boatyard and they wanted to improve the arrival sequence. To do this, the plan includes a roadway directly to the water's edge, as this was the most compelling and beautiful part of the site. He added that currently there was not really any public space at the water's edge and he thought it was important to add some greenspace and a boardwalk at the edge of the water to give the public an opportunity to enjoy the site. He added that the plan includes a community dock that could accommodate kayaks and paddle boards and get them away from the busy boat launch and commercial operations.

Mr. Marshall explained that the plan includes reducing the boat ramp from three lanes to two lanes for two reasons. First, the parking requirements published by SC Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) are driven by how many lanes the ramp contains and the site cannot accommodate enough parking spaces for three lanes, according to their standards. Secondly, by eliminating one of the lanes and using the area gained to add ground out docks will greatly improve the efficiency in boat launching and retrieval.

In response to concerns of the location of the gas pumps, Mr. Marshall said that it was made clear at the stakeholder meeting that these fuel pumps were one of only two areas on the island where people can get gas and the public and the tenants had an interest in keeping these facilities. He added that from a traffic flow perspective, it was important that the fueling be done before boats on trailers got to the ramp, so this was the reason for their location. He added that if cars stacking up down 41st Avenue was a concern, the fuel pumps may needed to be moved farther into the lot.

Mr. Mills asked if there was a perceived safety problem with having the pumps so far away from any oversight. Mr. Marshall answered that he did not think so and that most fueling takes place without any oversight or cash exchange.

Mr. Mills stated that he perceived a problem with patrons of the restaurant being stuck in the boat launching traffic. Mr. Marshall responded that the hours of use for the restaurant and the boat launch should be different enough to not cause much overlap.

Mr. Ferencz asked Mr. Marshall to explain the breakdown of asphalt and gravel in the pricing that was generated and mentioned that the square footage of the areas of each surface appear to match what is currently on the site. Mr. Marshall answered that the plan contemplates all of the drive aisles being asphalt and for all of the parking areas to be gravel.

Mr. Gregory stated that he felt like the plan needed to be modified to be more pedestrian, bike and golf cart friendly and have parking for bikes and golf carts added. He also stated that he questioned the wisdom of putting a kayak launch on the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW). Mr. Marshall responded that all of the Morgan Creek docks are commercially used, so there is not much opportunity to put the community dock anywhere other than on the ICW.

Mr. Marshall explained that one of the ideas investigated internally was to try to segregate the boat traffic from the rest of the marina site by moving the boat ramps to the side of the site that borders the Dewees Island property. He explained that the challenge with this idea was getting enough trailer spaces necessary to accommodate 55 trailers, which is what ATM believes is necessary.

Mr. Parker stated that in his opinion, if the Commission is confident in the idea of not leaving room for a future opportunity for drystack storage, moving the boat ramp is a game changer. He stated that it would involve permits and building a new bulkhead to capture the land that had been used for the ramps, but it would solve a lot of issues with traffic circulation and add a greenspace between the marina store and the restaurant.

Mr. Kerr asked Mr. Marshall what his opinion was on the cost to move the boat ramp and Mr. Marshall responded that typically construction cost would be about \$60,000 per lane.

Mr. Kerr stated that one of the reasons given to reduce the number of ramp lanes from three to two was to comply with the parking guidelines of SCDNR, but he asked if there was any thought that reducing the number of lanes would actually reduce usage and the need for spaces. Mr. Marshall answered that beyond the parking guideline the improvement of efficiency provided by adding the ground-out docks made the reduction in lanes desirable.

Mr. Gregory asked how critical the dry boat storage on the site was and asked if this land could be dedicated to onsite parking. Mr. Marshall answered that this would be a question for the marina operator and that the lease should be investigated to see if this storage was critical to maintain.

Mr. Mills asked what the rationale was to show an option that included drystack storage (option A). Mr. Marshall answered that the scope for the project included the financial pro forma for drystack storage and Councilman Loftus specifically requested that ATM provide two concepts, one with drystack and one without.

Mr. Mills asked if ATM could conceive any opportunity to partner with Dewees Island on parts of the plan. Mr. Marshall answered that ATM has been working on the Dewees site as well and generally their docks are in the same condition as the Isle of Palms docks, but the ferry boat dock is brand new and it is closest to the Isle of Palms site, so this really locks the site into its current configuration and limits the ability to partner on many uses.

Mr. Ferencz asked if silting would be any more of an issue, if the boat ramps were to be moved. Mr. Marshall answered that he did not think so.

Mr. Scott stated that he was encouraged to hear the excitement of Mr. Parker about the idea of a new location for the boat ramp and he would like to pursue this option with a new conceptual plan.

Mr. Ferencz stated that currently there is infinite capacity because the site spills out into the roadways and he would like to find a way to keep the marina use confined to the marina site.

Mr. Kerr stated that several people have expressed an interest in a public restroom on the site and ask for opinions on this idea. Mr. Parker responded that a stand along facility on the ground would be expensive and tough to fit on the site and potentially be a safety concern. He stated that he would suggest adding them onto the marina store facility, if they are deemed necessary beyond what is currently provided at the restaurant and the store.

Mr. Kerr stated that he has also heard the idea of adding a gate house to take launch fees and direct traffic. Mr. Parker responded that he hoped that by providing a better organized layout to the property, visitors would instinctively know where to go and that this would not be necessary. Mr. Marshall added that launch fees may be able to be taken by parking kiosks similar to what is being used in the commercial district.

Mr. Scott made a motion to take the steps necessary to have a new concept developed that showed the boat ramp being shifted to a location that would improve the traffic flow within the site. Mr. Gregory seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

DISCUSSION OF THE MARINA MASTERPLAN'S CONSISTENCY WITH THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Mr. Kerr explained that one of the responsibilities of the Planning Commission was to give an opinion of any major capital expenses' consistency with the City's Comprehensive Plan. He explained that he had distributed the excerpts from the Comprehensive Plan that he could find that related to the marina and he did not see anything that appeared to be in conflict, but at some point in the future the Commission would need to make a judgement on this issue.

The Commission agreed that they would take this item up at a future meeting after reviewing the Comprehensive Plan and the new conceptual masterplan for the marina.

DISCUSS SEPTIC TANKS ON THE ISLAND

Mr. Kerr explained that he has been in contact with the scientist who did the previous nonpoint source study and he was excited about the idea of taking some new samples and making a comparison. He stated that it sounded as though there would need to be several samples taken for the data to be meaningful and it would probably need to be

done at the same time of year to be consistent. He stated that a proposal would be coming forward on this issue.

He stated that he was also still expecting something from the Water and Sewer Commission on what their plan would be to sewer the island.

Mr. Ferencz stated that earlier in the agenda the Commission heard a subdivision request for new sites that would be served by septic tanks and he questioned the wisdom in allowing new lots to be created that would be served by septic systems. Mr. Kerr stated that he thought this would be a logical trigger for requiring sewer.

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Richard Ferencz, Chairman