

**TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND
SOUTH CAROLINA
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Wednesday, December 12, 2007**

The regular meeting of the Town of Sullivan's Island Planning Commission was held at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 12, 2007 in Town Council Chambers, 1610 Middle Street all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been satisfied. Present were Commission members Chairman Hal Currey; Aussie Geer, Nicky Bluestein, Anne Kilpatrick and Bobby Thompson (arrived at 6:35pm); Zoning Administrator Kent Prause, Building Official Randy Robinson and Assistant to Administrator Lisa Darrow.

I. Call to Order. Chairman Currey called the meeting to order, stated the press and public were duly notified pursuant to state law and noted that John Winchester and Elaine Fowler were absent.

II. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Ms. Kilpatrick made a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Ms. Geer; MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

III. Approval of Previous Month's Minutes

MOTION: Ms. Kilpatrick made a motion to approve the November 14, 2007 minutes as presented; seconded by Ms. Geer; MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

IV. Correspondence - None

V. General Public Comment – None

Chairman Currey noted that no public was present at this time for the public hearing. With general Commission consensus, the 2008 ten year Comprehensive Plan review item was moved up for consideration at this time.

VIII. New Business

1. 2008 Town Comprehensive Plan 10 Year Review

Chairman Currey welcomed Dan Hatley, Planning Director for Berkeley Dorchester Charleston Council of Governments (BCD-COG). Thereafter the Commission, Mr. Hatley and Staff discussed the requirements and timing for the required 10 year review of the Town's Comprehensive Plan ("Plan"), originally passed in October 1998.

Mr. Hatley noted that SC State Law requires two new elements to the Plan: transportation and primary investment. The Commission discussed a review timeline and generally agreed to strive for review of the Plan in winter 2008 with presentation of a final work product to Council in June 2008. Mr. Hatley noted he would check his staff availability to establish some meeting options (evenings, time before or after the regular

Planning Commission meetings and/or Saturday workshops). The Commission discussed the need to invite interested Council members to be a part of the Plan review, as part of a “task force,” or at least receive regular updates on the Commission’s progress.

Chairman Currey thanked Mr. Hatley for his time and returned to the order of business on the published agenda.

VI. Public Hearing

Chairman Currey noted a citizen had arrived and briefly reviewed the Commission’s procedures for a Public Hearing: Staff remarks; public comments taken; then Commission discussion and/or questions. Chairman Currey noted the Commission makes recommendations to Town Council, but Council makes final decisions and ratifies ordinances. He noted the Planning Commission was the first step in a multi-step process.

Amendment to Chapter 21, Zoning, Article XIII, Design Review Board, Section 21-C: nomination of historic homes designated as historic status pending Design Review Board determination of historic status

Staff Comments:

Zoning Administrator Prause briefly reviewed the Town’s past efforts to protect homes which may be considered historic in nature. He noted that Schneider Historic Preservation, LLC recently completed an historic survey of Island homes at the direction of Council. Based upon Schneider’s findings, Council has recommended a list of properties to the Design Review Board (DRB) for historic determination. In conjunction with that effort, Council passed a resolution (**attached as Exhibit A**) for the Planning Commission to consider amendments to Section 21-94C, invoking the pending ordinance doctrine. He noted that the proposed ordinance language (**attached as Exhibit B**) stipulated that any nomination to DRB would be granted protection from alteration or demolition, as if deemed on the list of historic homes already, until DRB rendered a disposition. Zoning Administrator Prause noted that, after Council passed its resolution (Exhibit A), there was discussion to possibly incorporate a timeframe for DRB to render a decision. Zoning Administrator Prause strongly recommended not incorporating a date or timeline for DRB’s decision.

Chairman Currey opened the public hearing at 7:15pm.

Public Hearing:

Cindy Ewing, 2514 I’On, Sullivan’s Island

Ms. Ewing noted she serves on the Design Review Board and concurred with Zoning Administrator Prause that the DRB should not be given an arbitrary timeline or date for rendering a decision on historic designation. She submitted that the DRB processed applications as soon as possible, but the DRB cannot always control the timeline for final determinations. She cited examples where an out-of-town property owner or an applicant’s attorney might request a deferral, the DRB might need additional research information or a site visit might be required before a decision could be rendered. For

these and many other reasons, the DRB might take more than a month or two to render a final determination.

Seeing no other public, Chairman Currey closed the public hearing at 7:20pm.

Commission discussion:

The Commission discussed inclusion of some type of language toward a timeline or deadline for DRB to render a decision. Chairman Currey commented that he could see the merits for not including a timeline, but also understood why the public would want some type of protection that the process would not be prolonged for a long period of time. Chairman Currey recommended amending the draft ordinance language to omit a specific timeframe for DRB decisions, but to urge the DRB to be as expeditious as possible in its renderings.

MOTION: Chairman Currey made a motion to recommend to Council approval of the following language amending Section 21-94C of Town Codes to read as follows:

“ C. The Design Review Board shall determine whether a property shall be designated an historic property or shall no longer be considered an historic property.

- 1. If the Town Council, Planning Commission or Design Review Board proposes an addition to the list of historic properties, the property proposed shall be subject to and controlled by the Town’s ordinances governing designated historic properties from the time of such proposal until final determination by the Design Review Board.**
- 2. The final determination provided above will be accomplished within a reasonable timeframe.”**

Motion Seconded by Mr. Thompson; MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

VII. Unfinished Business –

1. Accreted Land Management Consultant Services RFQ – Status update

Mr. Bluestein and Ms. Kilpatrick noted that the Selection Committee will interview candidates tomorrow afternoon, December 13, 2007, starting at 2:00 p.m.

2. Master Community Commercial (CC) District Plan Consultant Services RFP – Status update

Mr. Currey noted Council has not begun consideration of the candidates for this RFP, as Council was working to select the Accreted Land Management Consultant team first. He opined that Council would not consider this matter until January 2008, at the earliest.

Chairman Currey noted that the Commission discussed New Business earlier. He asked if there was any additional New Business before the Commission at this time.

VIII. New Business -

2. Historic Homes – Tax Incentives

Mr. Bluestein reported that he and Mr. Thompson performed some independent research on possible tax incentives available to property owners of historic homes. While both took different approaches to the research, Mr. Thompson noted that the conclusions were very similar: there are some tax incentives available for historic preservation efforts. Mr. Bluestein suggested the Town host a public information meeting to promote historic preservation and include a speaker on tax incentives as part of that meeting. Mr. Thompson suggested the public gathering incorporate a celebratory element, incorporating multiple speakers with strong promotion to citizens and interested historic organizations too. The Commission embraced the concept and felt it important that Council be made aware of this idea. Mr. Bluestein agreed to attend the December 18, 2007 Town Council meeting to provide a Planning Commission report to Council.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned (motion by Ms. Geer; seconded by Mr. Thompson; unanimously passed) at approximately 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Darrow
Asst. to Administrator

Approved at the January 9, 2008 Regular Planning Commission Meeting