

**TOWN OF SULLIVAN’S ISLAND  
SOUTH CAROLINA  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, March 13, 2013**

A regular meeting of the Town of Sullivan’s Island Planning Commission was held at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 13, 2013 in Town Hall at 2050-B Middle Street, all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been satisfied. Present were Commission members Chauncey Clark, Chair, Rusty Bennett, Hal Currey, Carl Hubbard, Carlsen Huey and Gary Visser; Staff members Asst. to Administrator Darrow and Building Official/Acting Zoning Administrator Robinson.

**I. Call to Order.** Chair Clark called the meeting to order, stated the press and public were duly notified pursuant to state law and welcomed Council member Jerry Kaynard to the meeting. Chair Clark noted Vice-Chair Kilpatrick had an excused absence and welcomed new Commissioner Carl Hubbard to his first meeting.

**II. Approval of Agenda**

**MOTION: Mr. Currey made a motion to approve the March 13, 2013 agenda; seconded by Mr. Bennett. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.**

**III. Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION: Mr. Bennett made a motion to approve the February 13, 2013 meeting minutes; seconded by Mr. Visser. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.**

**IV. Correspondence & General Public Comments – None**

**V. New Business - None**

**VI. Unfinished Business**

**1. Discussion Regarding Old Town Hall (1610 Middle Street)**

This is a continuation of discussion from the February Commission meeting, focusing on the potential uses for unique historic structures on the Island. These properties are unique in that they are:

- Historically contributing;
- Structure too large for the lot size;
- May or may not already “grandfathered” as multi-family, but usually unused/underutilized if not being used as multi-family.

The old Town Hall, 1610 Middle Street, is one such unique structure. Commission continued last month’s discussion of potentially creating a multi-family designation for such properties, either through an overlay district for contiguous properties on the Island, or, by creating a new zoning designation for all applicable properties, contiguous or not. Commission discussed some of the potential benefits and challenges attendant with zoning/land use change: parking of multiple vehicles could be a challenge, proper use and

maintenance of deteriorating, unused or underutilized properties would be a benefit and creating potentially more affordable housing options for Islanders would be a benefit.

Chair Clark noted he, Mr. Currey and staff members met with Town Attorney Dodds to review legal aspects related to any land use designation change. Town Attorney Dodds clarified that the Town could take one of two approaches to a change: (1) create overlay district incorporating contiguous properties with specific guidelines or (2) create a new zoning designation (multi-family) that would allow qualifying Island-wide property owners to use their properties accordingly.

Building Official Robinson noted that the current Fort Moultrie Quartermaster and Support Historic District incorporates many of the unique historic properties the Commission had previously identified as being candidates for a multi-family overlay district. He suggested this historic district might be a good starting point if Commission wished to pursue establishing the overlay district.

Resident Sydney Cook, who had arrived at the meeting after the Public Comments section, asked if she might be allowed to comment and was recognized by Chair Clark:

*Sydney Cook, 1614 Thompson Avenue*

Comments:

- She and her family live near the old Town Hall (1610 Middle Street) and the old Historic Warehouse (1704 Thompson Avenue);
- She purchased her residence with the expectation the Historic Warehouse would be single family. An owner purchased this property a year ago for around \$795,000 with the understanding that the Town was not interested in considering multi-family use for the property.
- One year later she is hearing discussions suggesting the Town might have a different position. She noted that, should the Historic Warehouse new owner be allowed to rezone his property for multi-family, he would probably see a windfall increase in his property value upwards of \$2+ million.
- She noted that multi-family would increase parking, traffic in/out of properties and possibly transient rental activity. She commented that the residents in neighboring area have not been made fully aware of this potential change and submitted that, as her neighbors wish to retain a single-family neighborhood, the Town would receive significant negative reaction from her neighbors should the Town pursue rezoning action.

Commission expressed general consensus that there was no need to rush toward any change but, rather, to explore this concept deliberately, methodically and with a long-range, Island-wide focus that incorporated public feedback along the process. However, the Commission made no motion/recommendation to Council.

## **2. Sullivan’s Island Comprehensive Plan (2013) – Plan Interim 5-Year Review**

Commission reviewed Executive Summary Report of Commission’s five-year review. Commission had no immediate additions or changes. Next Steps:

- Asst. to Administrator will create new 2013 Plan document incorporating the new data, findings and other modifications from the Executive Summary Report.
- Commission will review new 2013 Comprehensive Plan for additions or changes at the April 10, 2013 Planning Commission meeting.
- Thereafter Commission will schedule a public meeting/hearing to present the new 2013 Comprehensive Plan and receive public feedback (target: May 8, meeting)
- If Commission votes to recommend changes, these will be forwarded to Council for consideration. Council, if it chooses to adopt any recommendations, will do so through an ordinance procedure.

## **3. 2013 Planning Commission Work Projects**

### **a. Island-Wide Parking – No Report**

Commission asked for Administrator Benke to attend the April meeting along with Councilwoman McGee (Streets & Maintenance Chair), if available, to share the information gleaned from Streets & Maintenance Committee research regarding Island-wide managed parking.

### **b. Beautification/Landscaping – No Report**

Commission discussed enhancement and beautification of Town entrances, particularly the Ben Sawyer approach to the Island.

### **c. Underground Electrical Line Installation – No Report**

Commission noted the installation of underground wiring at the Ben Sawyer entrance would be ideal; however, these are high tension lines that are very expensive to convert underground.

- d. **Mosquito Abatement** – Town is pursuing educational outreach on this issue, including information on the Town website, flyers mailed to residents in future water bills, Town E-Newsletter, etc.

### **e. Bird Habitats**

Mr. Currey reported sightings of rare migratory birds that make Sullivan’s Island their annual winter habitat. Specifically, Mr. Currey mentioned sightings of the purple sandpiper and the very rare piping plover (only 3000 in U.S), seen in the Station 29 area along the current sand bars. He noted dogs on the beach, during the “at large” hours, tend to disrupt the birds on or near the sandbar. Mr. Currey recommended community outreach with dissemination of educational information and conducting conservation events to focus on the habitats.

**f. Island Access – Bikes and Pedestrians**

Mr. Huey, who is also the Chair of the Sullivan’s Island Bicycle Committee, commented on the group’s outreach activity. He noted that the Committee planned to apply again for the national Bicycle Friendly Community designation through the League of American Bicyclists (application deadline is in July). He noted that the big element mentioned as feedback on the original application was a need for a Comprehensive Town Bicycle Plan.

**4. Long Term Boat/Leisure Vehicle Parking on Middle Street & Jasper -**

Deferred to April meeting

**5. Demolition by Neglect – Deferred (New Zoning Administrator project)**

**6. Ongoing Town Projects – Staff Reported the following progress:**

- a. **Zoning Administrator** – Selection Committee held interviews the week of March 4 – 8, 2013 for 9 finalists from the field of 23 applicants.
- b. **New Town Hall/Police Station** – RFQ closed March 8, 2013. Seven candidates submitted packets currently under review by Council.
- c. **Sullivan’s Island Elementary School** – Project in-progress with foundation poured.

**VII. Next Meeting – (6:30pm) Wednesday, April 10, 2013**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15pm (Mr. Bennett motioned; Mr. Currey seconded; unanimously passed).

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Darrow  
Asst. to Administrator

Approved at the Wednesday, April 10, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting