

MINUTES OF THE ISLE OF PALMS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
March 11, 2015

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission met in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard on March 11, 2015 at 4:30 p.m. Members attending included Bev Ballow, Ron Denton, Vince DiGangi, Richard Ferencz, Bill Mills, Lisa Safford, and Noel Scott; 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.

Noel Scott called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Scott explained that the next item on the agenda was the approval of the February 19th, 2015 minutes. Mr. Denton made a motion to approve the minutes and Ms. Ballow seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

DISCUSSION OF THE TREE ORDINANCE AS IT PERTAINS TO SEPTIC SYSTEMS

Mr. Kerr distributed a copy of the City's tree ordinance and explained that Section 5-4-61(f)(2) allowed an owner to remove a tree for the repair or improvement of their septic system, but the code did not exempt the owner from the replacement provision of the code. He explained that within the past few years, the code was modified to allow an owner to remove a tree that is causing structural damage to a house or an accessory structure and exempted owners from needing to replace these trees.

Mr. Mills asked why this was coming before the Commission and how often this provision is causing owners problems. Mr. Kerr explained that he had included the correspondence he had with an owner on Hartnett Boulevard that has caused the issue to be on the Planning Commission's agenda. He stated that he had not been aware of other owners objecting to the requirement to replace trees, but it may be that they had not voiced their objection.

Mr. Denton explained that he became aware of the situation on Hartnett and it did not strike him as fair and he thought it warranted discussion. He stated that it may be that the Commission wants to consider exempting replacement when a property is already very densely wooded.

Mr. Kerr stated that the Commission should be aware that if the section is changed, owners may use the change to justify taking out trees and circumventing the replacement provision. Mr. Ferencz suggested that if a change is made it should somehow require the owner to show proof the problem with the septic system was addressed in order to be entitled to the exemption from replacing the trees.

Ms. Ballow explained that the existing code exempted an owner who removes a tree damaging a swimming pool from replacing the tree and she felt that it did not follow the same logic to require an owner to replace a tree that is damaging a septic system.

The Commission generally agreed that the code should be changed to not require an owner that needs to remove a tree because of damage to a septic system to replace the trees removed. Mr. Kerr explained that he would prepare an ordinance amendment for the next Planning Commission meeting.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Mr. Kerr explained that the City Council had heard from ATM regarding the prospect of developing a comprehensive redevelopment plan for the marina and that they had agreed to discuss funding the project at the next Ways and Means meeting which was scheduled for March 24th.

Mr. Kerr explained that City Council was moving forward with a program to manage beach visitor parking and that there was a request for proposals issued for software vendors that would handle the permits and passes. He explained that the cost of the software was a critical item in creating a budget for the program, so it will be a key component in the path forward.

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Noel Scott, Chairman