

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

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission met in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard on January 13, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. Members attending included Ron Denton, Vince DiGangi, Richard Ferencz, Lewis Gregory, Bill Mills and Lisa Safford; the Director of Planning Douglas Kerr was present as well. Noel Scott was absent. 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.

Vice Chairman Richard Ferencz called the meeting to order.

**NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN**

Mr. Ferencz asked for nominations for Chairman. Mr. Mills made a motion to nominate Mr. Ferencz and Mr. Denton seconded the nomination. With no other nominations, the vote was unanimous in favor of electing Mr. Ferencz as Chairman.

Mr. Ferencz asked for nominations for Vice Chairman. Mr. DiGangi made a motion to nominate Ms. Safford and Mr. Mills seconded the nomination. With no other nominations, the vote was unanimous in favor of electing Ms. Safford as Vice Chairman.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Ferencz explained that the next item on the agenda was the approval of the December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015 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.

**DISCUSS SEPTIC TANKS ON THE ISLAND**

Mr. Kerr explained that at previous meetings the Commission had discussed the issue of expanding sewer lines to areas of the island where soils are substandard and septic tanks would be prone to malfunctioning. He stated that three ideas discussed by the Commission were to investigate the possibility of inspecting septic systems when a property sold, adding a fee to the water bill of those properties that are not tied into public sewer to ultimately fund sewer lines, and formalizing a process of extending public sewer lines when interest is expressed by neighborhoods.

Mr. Kerr added that at the last Public Works Committee of City Council they made expanding public sewer to the entire island a long range goal of the City. He explained that the City Administrator had sent a message to the Water and Sewer Commission notifying them of this goal as well as a message to the City Attorney asking for an opinion on legal issues that could arise.

Mr. Kerr explained that he had included documents regarding the previous septic tank inspection ordinances in the packet. He said it was not clear exactly why the ordinance was repealed, but he suspected that real estate community objected to the code.

Mr. Gregory asked what the process would be for the Planning Commission. Mr. Kerr said he thought that the Planning Commission should develop a recommendation on how to best handle the issue and City Council would need to pass ordinances necessary to implement the recommendation, if they chose.

Mr. Gregory stated that he felt that of all the strategies discussed, he felt that the inspection program is the least onerous. Ms. Safford stated that she can understand why the real estate industry would object to the program, because of its potential impact on sales.

Mr. Gregory stated that he did not think that the idea of allowing some owners to petition for a sewer line and then obligate their neighbors to tying into the system was viable as it would pit neighbors against each other. Mr. Ferencz added that this is particularly true with the cost of tying into the system approaching \$20,000 according to the 2006 study.

Ms. Safford stated that she liked the idea of adding a fee onto the water bills. Mr. Mills stated that he questioned the fairness of only making those owners without sewer pay. He stated that it may be better to increase the rates across the board to fund the future expansions.

Mr. Ferencz added that a different approach could be to require new houses within a certain distance, maybe 500 feet, to tie into the sewer system. Mr. Kerr stated that the code now requires owners with sewer lines in front of their property to tie into public sewer and this requirement could be expanded to include new houses within 500 feet.

Mr. Ferencz asked if a representative from the Water and Sewer Commission could come to the next meeting and discuss any ideas they may have about expanding sewer services. Mr. Kerr answered that he would try to arrange this.

## **MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

Mr. Kerr explained that the City staff had set a meeting with ATM to review a draft of a market assessment and some conceptual layouts for the marina for January 14<sup>th</sup>, so he expected to be forwarding information to the Commission soon.

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He stated that the ordinances creating the SR3 district would be given consideration by Council in the next few months and he expected them to be ratified at the end of February.

He explained that he was working to try to get the City Attorney's legal briefing approved for continuing education credit and hopefully this would take place in February.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Richard Ferencz, Chairman