

The regular meeting of the Beaufort County Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") was held on September 7, 2004, in County Council Chambers of the Beaufort County Administration Building at 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort, South Carolina.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Jim Hicks, Chair	Mr. Alan Herd, Vice Chair	Mr. Ben Johnson, III,
Ms. Diane Chmelik	Ms. Joy Guyer	Mr. Cecil Martin, Jr.
Mr. Vernon Pottenger	Mr. Mike Zara	

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Jerome Goode

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: None

STAFF PRESENT:

Mr. Anthony J. Criscitiello, Planning Division Head
Ms. Delores Frazier, Assistant Planning Division Head
Mr. Robert Merchant, Long-range Planner
Mr. Arthur Cummings, Sr., Building Inspection Division Head
Ms. Barbara Ann C. Childs, Administrative Assistant to the Planning Director

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Hick called the meeting to order at approximately 6:03 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Chairman Hicks led those assembled to the Pledge of Allegiance.

REVIEW OF MINUTES: The July 6, 2004 Commission meeting minutes were reviewed. The following amendment was noted: Page 4, the last sentence of the rezoning motion should read, "Because of a tie, Chairman Hicks voted." **Motion:** Ms. Guyer made a motion, and Mr. Zara seconded, **to accept the minutes of the July 6, 2004, meeting, as amended.** The motion was **carried unanimously** (FOR: Chmelik, Guyer, Herd, Pottenger and Zara; ABSTAINED: Johnson and Martin).

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

1. **November 2004 Commission Meeting:** Chairman Hicks reiterated that the November 2004 Commission meeting would be on Thursday, November 4, 2004, instead of Tuesday, November 2, 2004, which is Election Day.
2. **October 2004 Commission Meeting:** Chairman Hicks asked Ms. Childs to poll the Commissioners to confirm that a voting quorum would be present for the October 5, 2004, Commission meeting since Ms. Guyer and Mr. Herd would be absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT on Non-Agenda Items: None were received.

OLD BUSINESS -- Southern Beaufort County Highway 170 (Okatie) Corridor Plan:

Mr. Criscitiello briefed the Commissioners on the history and the specifics of the Okatie Plan. Due the citizen concerns, the Commission directed the Planning staff to return to the community for further work. After three months of work with the community, the Planning staff recommended that the Commission return the Okatie Plan to the Southern Beaufort County Subcommittee of the Commission for review and action. Mr. Criscitiello presented a synopsis of the original and the current draft Plans. Mr. Criscitiello noted that Ms. Frazier and Mr. Merchant were present to answer any questions.

Public Comment:

1. Ms. Margaret Palmer asked about the recommended density for the Plan. (Staff replied that the community asked for a density reduction to 1 unit per acre from the staff recommended 2 units per acre.) The current residents and the school district are on hold until this Plan is finalized. She would like a projected timeline for the completion of this Plan tonight. Her property is between the Oldfield and the Riverwalk Planned Unit Developments (PUDs). She was told that she did not have the freedom to do what she wanted with her property since she waited too long to begin development. She wants to preserve the land, but she also does not like the timeframe and the extensive overlay of the Plan. She does not know whether to build or to sell. Time is of the essence. She wants to develop well. She bought the property to retire on. The Plan has put a hold on her life. She asked that the Commission expedite the Plan. She had been on a Planning Commission and a Zoning Board of Appeal in another town, so she realizes the constraints involved. She stated that maybe the least amount done in the area is the best.
2. Mr. Leo Zabinsky, an Oldfield resident, had attended numerous community meetings regarding this Plan. He was struck with the diverse opinions heard at the meetings from allowing intense development to maintaining the current zoning. The Planning staff has worked to consider the extreme opinions. The Jasper County development should not be copied. Some sanity ought to prevail. Compromise and more work are needed on the Plan. Consider what should be done for the ultimate fulfillment for the future generations.

Discussion by the Commissioners include a recommendation to expanding the river buffer to 100 feet to be consistent with the Town of Bluffton's setbacks and in keeping with environmental concerns, support to maintain the quality of life as it currently exists in the Rural zoning, a clarification on the ramifications of the PUD ordinance, clarification on the drive-through business requirement, the interconnectivity recommended by the Plan, clarification on the high school administration building as an allowed use of the Plan and in keeping with the community needs, a recommendation to contact the school district to determine if the Plan meets their needs, and the allowed use of government offices should be considered by the upcoming Southern Regional Plan.

Chairman Hicks directed the return of the Okatie Plan to the Southern Beaufort County Subcommittee in November 2004 for their review and action, and to the Commission in December 2004 for their review and action. After discussion on a quorum for the subcommittee, Chairman Hicks recommended asking other Commissioners to attend the subcommittee meeting or rescheduling the meeting date to accommodate the assigned subcommittee members.

Chairman Hicks extended the thanks of the Commission to Ms. Frazier and Mr. Merchant for their work on the Okatie Plan.

NEW BUSINESS: Beaufort County Hazard Mitigation Plan

Mr. Criscitiello introduced Mr. Cummings, who gave the history and rationale for this Plan. Mr. Cummings introduced Ms. Adrienne Sheldon, the County consultant for this Plan. Ms. Sheldon gave a power point presentation on the details of this Plan.

Discussion by the Commissioners included a recommendation to update the fire station list that lacks data on three existing Southern Beaufort County facilities, clarification on Commission action on this Plan, the vulnerability of the County roads, the lack of input from the County Roads and Bridges department and the South Carolina Department of Transportation, commending the annual review considering the rate of development in the County, suggesting a structured timeline, the diverseness of the County and its municipalities, the correlation with the renourishment of the Hilton Head beaches and this Plan, and the correlation between flood insurance rates for County residents and this Plan.

NOTE: *Ms. Guyer departed the meeting at approximately 7:17 p.m.*

MOTION: Ms. Chmelik made a motion, and Mr. Pottenger seconded, **to recommend approval of the Beaufort County Hazard Mitigation Plan, by County Council resolution, and to adopt the Beaufort County Hazard Mitigation Plan into the Beaufort County Comprehensive Plan at a later date.** No further discussion occurred. The motion was carried **unanimously** (FOR: Chmelik, Herd, Martin, Johnson, Pottenger and Zara).

OTHER BUSINESS: No other business was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Herd made a motion, and Mr. Martin seconded, to adjourn the meeting. No further discussion occurred. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Chmelik, Guyer, Herd, Martin, Johnson, Pottenger and Zara). Chairman Hicks adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:21 p.m.

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Barbara Childs, Administrative Assistant to the Planning Division Head

Jim Hicks, Beaufort County Planning Commission Chairman

APPROVED: October 5, 2004