

A special meeting of the Beaufort County Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") was held on Wednesday, May 8, 2002, in the County Council Chambers of the Beaufort County Administration Building at 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort, South Carolina.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Jim Hicks, Chair  
Mr. Jerome Goode  
Ms. Margie Jenkins  
Mr. Thomas Mike, Sr.

Mr. Ben Johnson, III, Vice Chair  
Ms. Joy Guyer  
Mr. Matthew Margotta  
Mr. Mike Zara

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mr. John Abney

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Mr. Anthony J. Criscitiello, Planning Director  
Ms. Barbara Ann C. Childs, Administrative Assistant to the Planning Director  
Mr. John Miller, Acting Director of Parks and Leisure Services

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Hicks called the meeting to order at approximately 6:02 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chairman Hicks led those assembled in the pledge of allegiance.

**REVIEW OF MINUTES:** The minutes of the April 10, 2002, Commission meeting were reviewed. No corrections were noted. **MOTION: Mr. Mike made a motion, and Mr. Goode seconded, to accept as written the minutes of the April 10, 2002, meeting. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Goode, Guyer, Jenkins, Johnson, Margotta, Mike & Zara).**

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** None was given.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mr. Reed Armstrong, a St. Helena resident and a South Carolina Coastal Conservation League representative, suggested when statistics are given that a notation should indicate if the numbers refer to the unincorporated part of the County or include the municipalities.

**NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENTS OF THE BEAUFORT COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Mr. Criscitiello briefed the Commissioners by highlighting the goals of the element, discussing the Staff recommendations, and responding to additional issues raised at the Commission's April 10, 2002, public hearing.

**Public Comment:** Ms. Wendy Zara asked for the inclusion of the following into the current Zoning & Development Standards Ordinance/ZDSO: 1- the 1990 bridge runoff standards, and 2- the River Protection Overlay District ordinance.

**Recommendations:**

- **Policy 1.1.2 - Recommendation:** Staff will evaluate the waivers issued and draft zoning text amendment to the waiver standards in order to obtain greater compliance with the intent of the setback and river buffer requirements.

Discussion included concern with objectives that do not have a target completion date or when the staff will accomplish the objectives, and prioritizing the recommendations.

**MOTION: Mr. Johnson made motion, and Mr. Margotta seconded, to recommend approval of Policy 1.1.2 recommendation. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Goode, Guyer, Jenkins, Johnson, Margotta, Mike & Zara).**

- **Policy 4.2.3 – Recommendation:** Staff will evaluate the wetland protection standards of the ZDSO to insure maximum protection is afforded this resource, and to permit mitigation only as a last resort under very strict standards. Text amendments will be drafted as necessary to ensure that wetland protection is a priority.

**MOTION: Mr. Margotta made motion, and Ms. Guyer seconded, to recommend approval of Policy 4.2.3 recommendation. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Goode, Guyer, Jenkins, Johnson, Margotta, Mike & Zara).**

- **Policies 1.1.1, 1.2.3, 1.2.5, 1.4 & 2.2.2 – Recommendation:** Implementation of recommendations that emanate from scientific studies, consultants and other projects, such as SAMP and LU-CES, is an important step in protecting or enhancing the natural resources and the environment in Beaufort County. A multi-jurisdictional group consisting of municipal, County, State and Federal staff and officials could be the vehicle to accomplish this. A policy advisory group, similar to BTAG, could be a model for oversight in implementing SAMP recommendations. Such a group, assisted by working technical subcommittees, could function as an Advisory Board for both integrating and addressing the SAMP recommendations.

Discussion included clarification on the makeup of the proposed group and of the Beaufort County Transportation Advisory Group/BTAG.

**MOTION: Mr. Zara made motion, and Mr. Johnson seconded, to recommend approval of Policies 1.1.1, 1.2.3, 1.2.5, 1.4 & 2.2.2 recommendation, with a change to**

**“should” rather than “could” in the last sentence. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Goode, Guyer, Jenkins, Johnson, Margotta, Mike & Zara).**

- **Policy 1.5 – Recommendation:** The SAMP River Quality Overlay District Report, and the recently published Okatie Pilot Watershed Report, which includes boundaries for the Okatie headwaters, could serve as a starting point for the implementation of the RQOD. An Okatie RQOD ordinance could be developed as a pilot project for the Okatie headwater watershed. Planning staff should begin the development of the Okatie Pilot RQOD ordinance.

Discussion included concern that dropping the 1500-foot requirement would leave County with a 100-foot requirement without SAMP results, the 1500-foot requirement not supported by the scientific arena, clarification of buffer standards, and examples of waiver requests.

**MOTION: Mr. Margotta made motion, and Ms. Jenkins seconded, to recommend approval of Policy 1.5 recommendation. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Goode, Guyer, Jenkins, Johnson, Margotta, Mike & Zara).**

- **Policy 4.1.3 – Recommendation:** The procedure of site capacity analysis for developments should be required initially, as in pre-engineering and pre-planning, so an accurate representation of a property can be verified by the Planning Department and DRT. Input on the site design can occur early in the process from the Planning Department to better protect the natural resources on the site. Threshold levels should be established to guide the requirements for a community impact analysis and environmental impact analysis. Text amendments to the ZDSO to establish procedures and thresholds for community and environmental impact analysis should be drafted.

**MOTION: Ms. Guyer made motion, and Ms. Jenkins seconded, to recommend approval of Policy 4.1.3 recommendation. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Goode, Guyer, Jenkins, Johnson, Margotta, Mike & Zara).**

- **Policies 1.2.2, 1.5.1 & 1.5.3 – Recommendation:** Staff recommends that these action items be deleted from the Comprehensive Plan.

**MOTION: Mr. Margotta made motion, and Mr. Mike seconded, to recommend approval of Policies 1.2.2, 1.5.1 & 1.5.3 recommendation. The motion was carried (FOR: Goode, Guyer, Jenkins, Johnson, Margotta & Mike; OPPOSED: Zara).**

- **Policies 1.5.4 and 2.1.2 – Recommendation:** Implement the SAMP RQOD Report recommendations, and develop the land use standards and requirements for the RQOD ordinance when watershed boundary data is available. Staff should prepare a text amendment to the ZDSO to require integrated pest management practices in all golf courses.

Discussion included clarification of the availability of watershed boundaries data and certification by DHEC/OCRM, suggesting a survey of golf courses near sensitive waters and their potential damage to the waterways, the implementation and enforcement of integrated pest management practice for all golf courses, and data on golf course non-compliance to regulations.

**MOTION: Mr. Johnson made motion, and Ms. Guyer seconded, to recommend approval of Policies 1.5.4 & 2.1.2 recommendation. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Goode, Guyer, Jenkins, Johnson, Margotta, Mike & Zara).**

- **Policy 2.1.1 – Recommendation:** The Planning Department should draft regulations to protect groundwater resource areas in Beaufort and Jasper Counties.

Discussion included deleting "...and Jasper County" from the recommendation and borrowing the groundwater resource data from BJWSA to use as background information to amend our ZDSO.

**MOTION: Ms. Guyer made motion, and Ms. Jenkins seconded, to recommend approval of Policy 2.1.1 recommendation, with the deletion of the phrase "and Jasper County". The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Goode, Guyer, Jenkins, Johnson, Margotta, Mike & Zara).**

- **Policy 3.2.1 – Recommendation:** Staff should utilize the new aerial flight data and LIDAR to delineate these resources. They can then become a data layer on the county geographic information system, and utilized by staff in reviewing projects.

**MOTION: Mr. Margotta made motion, and Ms. Jenkins seconded, to recommend approval of Policy 3.2.1 recommendation. Discussion included the definition of allees. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Goode, Guyer, Jenkins, Johnson, Margotta, Mike & Zara).**

- **Policy 5.1 and accompanying policies – Recommendation:** Planning staff should research and investigate ways to integrate technical assistance programs currently provided by the State Forestry Commission and Clemson Extension Service with innovative financing techniques to encourage timber production, while at the same time, improving water quality and habitat in Beaufort County. The Grants Administrator should investigate funding for financing programs similar to those employed in Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania under the Chesapeake Bay Program that can complement the work of the Rural and Critical Lands program and the Nature Conservancy.

**MOTION: Ms. Guyer made motion, and Mr. Johnson seconded, to recommend approval of Policy 5.1 recommendation. Discussion included clarification of subparagraph 1.1.8, enforcement concerns, and buffer requirements. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Goode, Guyer, Jenkins, Johnson, Margotta, Mike & Zara).**



**PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE ELEMENT OF THE BEAUFORT COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Mr. Criscitiello introduced Mr. John Miller, Acting Director of Parks and Leisure Services/PALS Department. Mr. Miller briefed the Commissioners. He noted attendees to tonight's meeting included Mr. Morris Campbell, County Deputy Administrator of Community Services, and Mr. Joe Penale, Acting Deputy Director of PALS. Mr. Miller discussed the improvements to various facilities; the joint venture efforts with non-County organizations and the municipalities; the implementation of park impact fees; the continued review for additional facilities and activities; the development of staffing plans for each facility; a study on the feasibility of consolidating centers; participating in various festivals; protection of open space, greenways, and waterways; the public accessibility of PALS information; CIP recommendations; PALS reorganization for efficiency, and the staff recommendations for the element.

**Public Comment:**

1. Ms. Mary Hall, representing Wood & Partners Inc., thanked Mr. Miller for the excellent job he has done. This element recommends 24 community and neighborhood parks by 2020 in the range of 10 to 25 acres each for Southern Beaufort County. The sizes of the proposed parks are too small and the community will have a difficult time funding and maintaining the parks. The national trend is toward larger parks such as the recent Buckwalter Park; these parks are easier and less expensive to maintain. She suggested that the County concentrate on having district parks. She urged the completion of the Shults & Buckwalter Parks as a priority for the Council. She noted that overusing the multi-use fields overstresses those fields and suggested having dedicated spaces for each use. She suggested hiring a consultant to redo the Recreation Master Plan to include programs, staffing and revenue-generating opportunities.
2. Mr. Reed Armstrong commended the park program and encouraged its expansion. He noted concern that the future parks for the Bluffton area appear to be within PUDs and gated communities, so the parks would not be accessible to the public.
3. Ms. Karen Heightman, as a representative of the Greater Bluffton Trails and Greenways Advocacy Group and the Sun City Cyclers, stated the mission of these organizations was to secure funding and support for the development of safe biking and walking trails in the Greater Bluffton area that encompasses Sun City to the Hilton Head Bridge. Pathways Connect is a sister organization in Northern Beaufort County. She noted the long-term goals of these organizations, the Town of Bluffton's 1999 Southern Beaufort County Greenway manual, the available funding for trails and greenways, and the benefits of cycling. The average cost of one mile of paved leisure trail is \$50 thousand, while one mile of an interstate highway is \$25 million. Regarding Policy 5.3 on fitness trails along the waterfront, she recommended 10 to 12 feet wide trails so that bikers and walkers could pass each other safely. Regarding Policy 2.4 on requiring developments to provide usable active park land, she suggested requiring developers to place leisure trails that would connect to nearby schools and parks. She asked that biking and walking trails be considered when redoing the Comprehensive Plan. She also asked that County Council fund for leisure trails and bike lanes in the November referendum for the proposed one percent sales tax.

**Discussion** included the clarification of parks being built within gated inventories that are not part of the County's park system, the status of the fish pond in the Burton Wells Parks, a reiteration that PALS would not seek park space within gated communities, the renaming of a park in the Town of Hilton Head, the partnering and combining of County and school district resources, the support of small neighborhood parks, a partnering with adjoining counties, a clarification of PALS leaning toward larger parks, the possibility of income generation by the PALS parks, and a recommendation to include the municipalities in the proposed County Greenways Commission.

Chairman Hicks thanked Mr. Miller for his work on the element review.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** Chairman Hicks noted the next Commission meeting regarding Comprehensive element review was on June 12, 2002, to hear the affordable housing element.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mr. Mike made a motion, and Mr. Goode seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Abney, Goode, Guyer, Jenkins, Johnson, Margotta, Mike & Zara). Chairman Hicks adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:02 p.m.

**SUBMITTED BY:**

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Barbara Ann C. Childs, Admin. Assistant to Planning Director

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Jim Hicks, Chairman, Beaufort County Planning Commission

**APPROVED: June 12, 2002**

***Abbreviations/Meanings (mentioned in the minutes):***

<b><i>BJWSA</i></b>	<i>Beaufort-Jasper Water-Sewer Authority</i>
<b><i>BTAG</i></b>	<i>Beaufort County Transportation Advisory Group</i>
<b><i>CIP</i></b>	<i>Capital Improvements Program</i>
<b><i>DHEC</i></b>	<i>Department of Health &amp; Environment Concerns</i>
<b><i>LU-CES</i></b>	<i>Land Use-Coastal Ecosystem Study</i>
<b><i>OCRM</i></b>	<i>Office of Coastal Resources Management</i>
<b><i>PALS</i></b>	<i>Parks and Leisure Services</i>
<b><i>RQOD</i></b>	<i>River Quality Overlay District</i>
<b><i>SAMP</i></b>	<i>Special Area Management Plan</i>
<b><i>ZDSO</i></b>	<i>Zoning &amp; Development Standards Ordinance</i>