

The regular meeting of the Beaufort County Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") was held on Thursday, January 7, 2010, in County Council Chambers, the Beaufort County Administration Building at 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort, South Carolina.

Members Present:

Mr. Jim Hicks, Chair
Mr. Ronald Petit
Mr. John Thomas

Mr. Robert Semmler, Vice Chair
Mr. Edward Riley III

Ms. Diane Chmelik
Mr. E. Parker Sutler

Members Absent: Ms. Mary LeGree and Mr. Frank Mullen

Staff Present:

Mr. Anthony J. Criscitiello, Planning Director
Ms. Delores Frazier, Assistant Planning Director
Mr. Brian Herrmann, Community Planner
Ms. Barbara Childs, Admin. Asst. to Planning Director

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 Chambers with the pledge of allegiance to the U.S.A. flag.

REVIEW OF MINUTES: The Commission reviewed their October 5, 2009, meeting minutes.
Motion: Ms. Sutler made a motion, and Mr. Thomas seconded the motion, **to accept the October 5, 2009, minutes as written.** The motion **was carried unanimously** (FOR: Chmelik, Hicks, Petit, Riley, Semmler, Sutler and Thomas).

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Chairman Hicks noted that Mr. Frank Mullen, the Northern Beaufort County Planning Commissioner, lost his daughter and grandchild recently. Chairman Hicks asked for a moment of silence in this regard.

PUBLIC COMMENT for items other than agenda items: No public comment was received.

**TEXT AMENDMENT TO THE BEAUFORT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
ADDING APPENDIX F, SECTION 7, DAUFUSKIE ISLAND PLAN (ADDS NEW
STANDARDS FOR DAUFUSKIE ISLAND)**

Chairman Hicks noted it has taken 3-1/2 years from the start to this date. Mr. Anthony Criscitiello briefed the Commission. County Council created the 1997 Comprehensive Plan with

16 Community Preservation (CP) districts. He gave the history of the CP process that required community input. The Daufuskie Island CP process began in 2005. Mr. Criscitiello introduced Mr. Brian Herrmann, the County Community Planner, who brought the Daufuskie Island Plan into fruition. The Plan will introduce a form-based code to Beaufort County.

Mr. Herrmann provided a power point presentation to the Commission. Daufuskie Island is currently accessible only by ferry. The Plan covers the entire island, including the Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and the Community Preservation (CP) District. Daufuskie lacks infrastructure, governance—no one voice to speak for the island, and ownership of most roads that are actual paths across private property. The Plan requests preserving the land while promoting traditional development patterns, improving the ferry system and promoting intense development around embarkation sites, improving the transportation infrastructure in a highly contextual manner, promoting tourism and improving the way-finding infrastructure, heightening historic preservation and land conservation efforts, increasing opportunities for obtainable housing, creating gathering places and civic spaces around the island, expanding the economy and promoting additional means of control and oversight, and establishing sustainable benchmarks and targets. An earlier Daufuskie charrette provided information for the Plan. Daufuskie is a national historic district. The Island will have five transects: 1-natural, 2-rural, 3-suburban, 4-waterfront/urban, and 5-urban center. Once the Plan is adopted, the CP Committee will be disbanded and two other committees will be formed—the Daufuskie Island council and the Sustainable Planning Team (SPT) that interacts with the County's Development Review Team (DRT).

Public Comment:

1. Ms. Cathy Tillman, Chairman of the Daufuskie Island Community Preservation (CP) Committee, stated that the Daufuskie Island community is proud of their effort in this plan. There are only 400 residents on Daufuskie Island. There are an estimated 200,000 visitors per year because of the active resorts. She addressed the needed signage and welcome center. She expressed urgency in moving the Plan forward. With an educator's background, she encouraged that the County include all the details in the Plan. The details will assist the Implementation Committee. Growth has occurred for all. The document is a living document that should be looked at each year. She thanked the Commission for the work done by the County, including the Planning Department. She encouraged the Commission to say yes because Daufuskie Island really needs it now.
2. Mr. Tom Crews, a Daufuskie Island CP Committee member, an architect and an Island property owner, stated that the Daufuskie Island CP process has been unique and challenging. A review of the process included a significant charrette 3 years ago. The Code is very usable; as an architect, it is wonderful and he is excited to use it. Daufuskie Island is really excited about the Code.
3. Mr. Charles Cauthen first visited Daufuskie Island in 1979. Time and money makes effort sustainable. He gave kudos to Mr. Brian Herrmann and Mr. Anthony Criscitiello. The process involved many hours of work. There is no hub to the wagon wheel which is Daufuskie Island. The portal is the glue that will hold the Plan together. The Planning staff has vision. Come to Daufuskie and see what is there. There is a group poised to remove the bankruptcy on the Daufuskie Island Resort. This plan needs to be acted on soon.

4. Ms. Marianne McEvoy, a Daufuskie Island teacher and resident, became involved in the process and later a voting member of the CP Committee. The community had an opportunity to mold the Plan. She gave kudos to Mr. Herrmann and Mr. Cooter Ramsey for their work. Most residents say they want to keep Daufuskie Island as it is. The Plan preserves the essence of the island and allows growth as well. Form-based code is an incredible idea for Daufuskie. It opens economic opportunity, instead of restricting commercial uses to certain areas. The essence of sustainable living is to work and live in the same area. Dissolving the CP Committee allows new eyes to implement the Plan. The Plan is thick, but thorough. Support this document. It will be a benefit to the island.
5. Mr. Chuck Henry stated that Daufuskie was a good canvas. Most development was well done.
6. Ms. Tory Downs, a Daufuskie resident and current acting president of the Daufuskie Island Community Improvement Club, extended kudos to Mr. Herrmann. She represents those who were unable to attend this meeting. She noted that some fear that implementation of the Plan will affect them financially. The improvements do not address the ferry system where the last ferry is at 3 p.m.

Discussion by the Commission included extending kudos to Mr. Herrmann and community for using the form based code, addressing transfer of development rights (TDRs) to affect growth control, concerns about the needed transportation system (for on-island and to and from the island) and medical care involving county and private development, the interpretiveness of Euclidian zoning, concern for the aggressiveness of implementing the Plan, funding concerns for the implementation of the Plan, concern with the numerous requests in the Plan, the difficulty of implementing TDRs, extending kudos to the inclusiveness of the Plan, concern that the Plan is not a community preservation plan but a community action plan, recommending to Council that the Plan is a community action plan, discussing the Plan and the Code separately, recommending that the Planning staff produce a CP Plan ordinance from the Plan presented, a clarification on prioritizing the items, a clarification on what is a comprehensive plan, reviewing what items can be afforded to be done, and a clarification that the Plan and the Code are statutory considerations.

Public Comment:

1. Mr. Tom Cruse is not sure the path that the Commission is going down. He has seen such plans work in other areas of the country. This is easier to work with than the current ordinance. It is a great risk to put money on an island that does not have a bridge. This Plan gives Daufuskie Island a chance. It is different, but different is not bad. Let this island take this different plan and make a difference.
2. Mr. Brian Herrmann clarified that the introduction of the Plan noted that the County is not held to the implementation of the Plan. (Chairman Hicks noted that the hopes and dreams of the community cannot be met readily; although the Plan was almost a brilliant document.)
3. County Councilman Stu Rodman noted that a financial plan would have to accompany the document to improve the existing infrastructure. The island is a largely undeveloped island, but when the economic situation rises again, there is a large potential increase in the property taxes that will occur. Also he took a great interest in the ferry situation and believes consolidating the ferries is the logical way to go. In order for the island to be successful, there should be a link to Savannah. Off-island parking will be difficult for potential ferry riders to Daufuskie Island. Without a good ferry system, Daufuskie will not develop.

4. Ms. Cathy Tillman asked for a clarification of the implementation plan. (Mr. Hicks noted that the CP Plan is a preapproval of implementation items, the action plan would be requesting of each item.) She asked if the Plan could be broken into 5-year segments, would the Plan then be adopted.
5. Mr. Cooter Ramsey was called forward to be thanked by the Commission for his work on the Plan. Mr. Ramsey noted that the plan did not request funding because the community wanted their plan to be embraced as their vision. The community as a whole does not expect the County to give them money as a whole.

Motion: Mr. Semmler made a motion, and Mr. Thomas seconded the motion, **to recommend that no action be done at this time on the Daufuskie Island Plan , but that following review of the form-base Daufuskie Island Code in February 2010 by the Commission, the Daufuskie Island Plan be forwarded to County Council as a community-sponsored community-based effort and recommend it be acknowledged as the Daufuskie Island Community Action Plan; also recommend that this Plan be considered by the County Planning Department for development into a Daufuskie Island Community Preservation Plan.** The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Chmelik, Hicks, Petit, Riley, Semmler, Sutler and Thomas).

TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE BEAUFORT COUNTY ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS ORDINANCE (ZDSO), ARTICLE XIII, SECTION 106-2729. STREET DESIGN STANDARDS (TO ESTABLISH CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS FOR UNPAVED ROADS AND TO PERMIT ACCEPTANCE OF UNPAVED ROADS BY THE COUNTY FOR MAINTENANCE OR OWNERSHIP WHEN APPROVED BY COUNTY COUNCIL)

Mr. Criscitiello briefed the Commission. He noted that this amendment was directed by County Council in order to assist affordable housing development.

Public Comment: None were received.

Discussion included a clarification that the development must put the crushed granite on the dirt road before the County will accept the road, a clarification that the County does not have to accept any unpaved road, and a clarification on the Habitat for Humanity request for the County to accept their unpaved road to their affordable housing development.

Motion: Mr. Thomas made a motion, and Mr. Semmler seconded the motion, **to forward a recommendation of approval to County Council on the text amendments to the Beaufort County Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance (ZDSO), Article XIII, Section 106-2729. Street design standards that establish construction standards for unpaved roads and permits acceptance of unpaved roads by the County for maintenance or ownership when approved by County Council.** The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Chmelik, Hicks, Petit, Riley, Semmler, Sutler and Thomas).

Note: Chairman Hicks recessed the meeting at approximately 8:05 p.m. and reconvened at approximately 8:15 p.m.

DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE CREATING JOINT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION FOR AREAS WITHIN THE GROWTH AREAS OF NORTHERN BEAUFORT COUNTY

Mr. Criscitiello briefed the Commission. The Town of Port Royal recommended 6 members, the City of Beaufort 7 members. The City of Beaufort recommended that its City Manager be a member, but the Town of Port Royal did not. Mr. Criscitiello noted that the council of both municipalities should weigh in on the duality of holding public offices. Also the County attorney must check on that legality. Mr. Criscitiello agrees with the concept, but the mechanics must be properly vetted.

Discussion by the Commission included endorsing the concept, a clarification that the document the Commission is viewing reflects the City of Beaufort ordinance with the County authoring its own document, a clarification that the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) will apply to the growth areas only, the possibility that the MPC could replace the Northern subcommittees of the County Planning Commission, a recommendation that the County membership of the MPC come from the Port Royal Island subcommittee, concern that the MPC not overwhelm the affecting planning staffs, a clarification on the phrase “performing all planning functions” in defining the MPC role, and a concern with the financial impact of annexations.

Chairman Hicks asked Mr. Robert Semmler and Mr. Ronald Petit to attend a 5:00 p.m. meeting on a date to be determined sometime next week. Mrs. Barbara Childs of the County Planning office will contact the City of Beaufort and the Town of Port Royal for their town managers and planning directors to attend the meeting to discuss the MPC. Chairman Hicks’ intent is that the outcome will be presented to the County Planning Commission for forwarding to County Council. Chairman Hicks anticipated that approval to occur in the April 2010 timeframe.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. **St. Helena Corners Area Community Preservation Committee Membership:**
Mr. Criscitiello briefed the Commission that Ms. Mary LeGree’s email indicated the replacement of one committee member due to non-attendance and the addition of a large property owner representative—Mr. Ivan Glover and Mr. Mac Sanders.

Motion: Ms. Chmelik made a motion and Mr. Sutler seconded the motion, to approve the recommended changes to the St. Helena Corners Area Community Preservation Committee Membership—replacing Mr. Ezekiel Miller with Mr. Ivan Glover and adding Mr. Mac Sanders to represent large property owners. The motion **was carried unanimously** (FOR: Chmelik, Hicks, Petit, Riley, Semmler, Sutler and Thomas).

2. **Change of Planning Commission Subcommittee Boards:** No change occurred from the 2009 assignments.
3. **Annual Election of Planning Commission Chair and Vice-Chair**

- **Chairman:** Mr. Ronald Petit made motion that the 2010 Commission chairman be Mr. Jim Hicks. The motion was seconded and accepted by all the other Commissioners. No discussion occurred.
- **Vice Chairman:** Chairman Hicks asked Mr. John Thomas if he would be available to serve as vice-chair. Mr. Thomas indicated he traveled frequently and would probably not be available. Mr. Edward Riley nominated Ms. Diane Chmelik. Mr. E. Parker Sutler and Ms. Chmelik nominated Mr. Robert Semmler. A secret vote was taken to determine the vice-chairmanship between Ms. Chmelik and Mr. Semmler. The final tally voted Mr. Semmler as vice-chair.

Note: Chairman Hicks noted for the record that there were no members of the audience when the Commission returned from its break earlier, therefore no public comment was taken.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion: Mr. Sutler made a motion, and Mr. Thomas seconded the motion, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Chmelik, Hicks, Petit, Riley, Semmler, Sutler and Thomas). The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:48 p.m.

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Barbara Childs, Admin. Assistant to the Planning Director

Jim Hicks, Beaufort County Planning Commission Chairman

APPROVED: February 1, 2010, as written