



COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY
BEAUFORT COUNTY PLANNING DIVISION
Multi-Government Center • 100 Ribaut Road, Room 115
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The special Workshop of the Beaufort County Planning Commission (hereinafter “Commission”) was held on Tuesday, May 8, 2012, in Executive County Council Chambers, the Beaufort County Administration Building at 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort, South Carolina.

Members Present:

Mr. Jim Hicks, Chair Mr. Robert Semmler, Vice Chair Mr. Charles Brown
Ms. Mary LeGree Mr. Ronald Petit

Members Absent: Ms. Diane Chmelik Mr. Edward Riley III
 Mr. E. Parker Sutler Mr. John Thomas

Staff Present:

Mr. Anthony Criscitiello, County Planning Director
Mr. Robert Merchant, County Long-range Planner
Ms. Barbara Childs, Admin. Asst. to County Planning Director

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Hicks called the workshop to order at approximately 5:35 p.m.

PROPOSED BEAUFORT COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CODE

Mr. Robert Merchant showed a power point presentation to the Commission. He noted that the Northern and Southern Regional Plans and the Comprehensive Plan supported walkable, mixed-use development. The proposed Development Plan was unique in that multi-jurisdictions were involved—Beaufort County, the City of Beaufort and the Town of Port Royal. He explained the various place types (rural crossroads, hamlets, villages, towns and cities) and how they would be placed in the county and the municipalities. The staff was looking to connect areas with trails. The proposed Code was more user-friendly and would contain the best of the existing code and form-based standards, with improvements on environmental standards. He gave brief descriptions of each chapter in the proposed Code. The Code would transition the County from auto-oriented to walkable environments. The Code is more visual, containing more graphics and diagrams than the existing Code. He noted that some of the existing zoning would transition as follows:

Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning
Suburban (S)	C3 Neighborhood Mixed Use
Commercial Suburban (CS)	C4 Community Center Mixed Use
Commercial Regional (CR)	C5 Regional Center Mixed Use
Industrial Park (IP) and Light Industrial (LI)	S1 Industrial

Discussion included:

- The proposed Code being the equivalent of the existing Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance;
- The Commission serving as the “keeper” of the Comprehensive Plan because they have a good feel for what the people want--however, what they want and what they need may be quite different;
- How the community preservation (CP) and rural business districts would be treated in the proposed Code, with the possibility of rezoning the Sheldon and Big Estate CPs to T2;
- A Technical Review Committee including professional architects, landscape architects and engineers that would review the proposed Code for recommended changes;
- A query whether the City of Beaufort Bladen Street project was using form-based code;
- The anticipated future growth between Gardens Corner and Whale Branch River bridge;
- The rationale for Rural Business Districts to legalize existing businesses as conforming uses—such districts will be redesignated Rural Centers maintaining the same boundaries and standards;
- The desire to have the least change in standards to avoid public outcry—i.e., large scale downzoning will not be occurring;
- An admission that form-based code education was required;
- The critical zoning coordination between the County and the municipalities;
- The development process under the proposed Code;
- Habersham development being a mature example of the form-based code;
- Planning Unit Developments (PUDs) are not in the proposed Code—existing PUDs will not be changed;
- The proposed Code provides a good tool box to make walkable neighborhood developments and assists the developer;
- A charrette for the Laurel Bay area;
- Planning cannot block development from occurring since the property owner has a right to develop;
- Daufuskie CP had its own Plan and Code and will be an appendix to the proposed Code—wondering if Lady’s Island CP would have its own Code like Daufuskie;
- Not believing form-based code fits all—it is too prescriptive;
- Manufacturing homes being allowed;
- Generation Y, the largest demographic unit, wanting walkable neighborhoods;
- Staff identifying placetypes—based on the areas of potential rate of development in the county and identified growth zones;
- The Air Installation Compatibility Use Zone (AICUZ) and Commercial Fishing Village Districts not being affected;
- The Town of Port Royal, but not the City of Beaufort, reviewing the Code with the County staff—concern by the uninvolvement of the City of Beaufort;
- Concern for how the proposed Code would impact economic development, how we sell it to the public, and will it be easier for new/existing businesses;
- The Memorandum of Understanding through the Northern Regional Plan where contiguous County properties could be annexed into the municipalities;
- Recommending a maintenance agreement among the entities; and

- Requesting early mail-out of packets to Commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Hicks adjourned the workshop, with no objections from the Commissioners, at approximately 7:27 p.m.

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

Jim Hicks, Beaufort County Planning Commission Chairman

APPROVED: **September 6, 2012, as written**