

The Planning Commission met via Zoom Video Call on Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners present: Bill Lyon, Ed Steers, Zennie Quinn and new Commissioner Deborah Bidwell Absent: Kay Kernodle. Also, Ashley Kellahan, Town Administrator, Kristen Crane, Planning Director, and Flannery Wood, Planner I, standing in for Frances Simmons, Town Clerk and Secretary to the Planning Commission.

Call to Order: Kristen Crane called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was present to conduct business.

Vote for acting Chair (In absence of Chair and Vice- Chair): Commissioner Steers nominated Bill Lyon as acting chair. Commissioner Quinn seconded and moved that nominations cease. This was seconded by Commissioner Bidwell. With no objections, Bill Lyon was appointed chair by acclamation.

Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act. Acting Chairman Lyon announced that this meeting was noticed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

Approval of June 11, 2020 Minutes: Acting Chairman Lyon moved for approval of the June 11, 2020 meeting minutes, Commissioner Steers seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments: None.

Staff Comments: Mrs. Crane explained that the meeting was called to order to introduce the new planning members and go over what the Planning Commission had been working on with the Comprehensive Plan. She reminded Commissioners that state planning law required that the Comprehensive Plan must be reviewed every 5 years and updated every 10 years. She explained that the Town was completing their 5-year review and had been in the process since March. Mrs. Crane reviewed how the different color highlighted in the Plan was a different round of edits. She reiterated that her goal was to have a draft ready for the Planning Commission to vote on next month. She stated that there were still updates at staff level and public comments to include. Mrs. Crane explained that there was still some work to be done but next month they would have a final draft to recommend to Council. Council would then have two readings and vote on the changes. Mrs. Crane asked the Planning Commission if they had any comments or questions. She noted that comments from the last meeting had not be incorporated into the Plan but were in staff's notes. Commissioner Bidwell asked if the best way to communicate was to send comments via email. Mrs. Crane said yes, and they could go over any comments at the next meeting. Commissioner Quinn asked about the outdated census data. Mrs. Crane noted that staff was continuing to work on that and update it through another source. She noted that they would add updates on Commissions of Council and update goals and timelines as well. Commissioner Steers asked about adding Mitchell Elementary to the education facilities element. Commissioner Bidwell explained they were there for the year while repairs were done on their building. Mrs. Crane said that it may not need to be added if it was temporary. She asked Commissioner Bidwell if she knew where their final building would be. Commissioner Quinn said that the school was usually located on the crosstown downtown. Commissioner Bidwell said that the old James Island Middle is now a flex space. Mrs. Crane expressed interest in finding out from Charleston County School District what the end goal was for the old James Island Middle. Commissioner Lyon then asked about changing the wording regarding homes for seasonal use because short term rentals were not allowed in the Town. Mrs. Crane said that needs to be clarified and that the Town does allow short term rentals. Commissioner Quinn asked if the Commission had discussed anything about veterinary hospitals. Mrs. Crane said that we did. Commissioner Bidwell asked for clarification on duplexes. Mrs. Crane explained that she often gets questions regarding MIL suites and accessory dwelling units which are not allowed unless the minimum lot size would support two units. She stated that the density standard was three dwelling units per acre. Mrs. Crane expressed interest in expanding on the issue for clarification purposes.

Commissioner Quinn stated that he knew medical facilities were discussed but asked if the Commission needed to discuss the interruption of normal operations because of COVID-19. Mrs. Crane said that it would be added to the Emergency Management section of the Plan. She stated that the Town was going to amend their Emergency Preparedness Plan to update Pandemics. Commissioner Quinn asked about updating the new fire station as operational. Mrs. Crane said that it should be fine to leave the description as completed in Fall of 2020. Commissioner Quinn asked if there were any other questions. Mrs. Crane restated that the goal was to vote at the next meeting, but another meeting could be added if needed.

Nominations for Chair: Commissioner Steers nominated Bill Lyon. He was seconded by Commissioner Quinn, and the motion passed unanimously.

Nominations for Vice- Chair: Commissioner Quinn nominated Ed Steers. Chairman Lyon seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting Date: The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be held on Thursday, October 8, 2020 at 6:35 PM.

Chairman Lyon mentioned the great service of Lyndy Palmer and David Bevon and how we appreciated them being on the Planning Commission. He also welcomed Commissioners Bidwell and Kernodle to the Commission.

Adjourn: There being no further business to come before the body, the meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Flannery Wood, Planner I