

The Planning Commission of the Town of James Island met on Thursday, August 11, 2022, at 6:35 p.m. in person at the James Island Town Hall, 1122 Dills Bluff Road, James Island, SC 29412.

Commissioners present: Deborah Bidwell, Zennie Quinn, Mark Maher, and Bill Lyon, Chairman, who presided. Absent: Ed Steers, Vice Chair, (gave notice). A quorum was present to conduct business. Also present: Kristen Crane, Planning Director, Flannery Wood, Planner II, (substituted for Frances Simmons, Town Clerk and Secretary to the Planning Commission), and Niki Grimball, Town Administrator.

Call to Order: Chairman Lyon called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. and lead the Planning Commission in prayer.

Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act: Chairman Lyon announced that the meeting was duly noticed in compliance with the SC Freedom of Information Act. The meeting was also live streamed on the Town's YouTube Channel and the public was provided information to participate.

Introductions: Chairman Lyon introduced the members of the Planning Commissioners and Town staff.

Approval of February 10, 2020 Meeting Minutes: The minutes of the February 10, 2022 meeting were approved upon a motion by Commissioner Bidwell, seconded by Commissioner Quinn and passed unanimously.

Public Comments: Chairman Lyon encouraged anyone who wished to speak during Public Comments to state their name and address for the record and limit comments to two (2) minutes. No one signed in to speak.

Staff Comments: None

Proposed Amendments to the Town of James Island Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR): Chairman Lyon announced that staff would give a review and answer questions regarding proposed amendments to the Zoning and Land Development Regulations

- a. Off-Street Parking Schedule A (153.332): Amending Civic/Institutional and Pre-school or Educational Nurseries Requirements: Ms. Crane reported that the parking amendments is a response from several applications received with the realization that the parking requirements needed to be adjusted.

The following amendments were reviewed by Planning Director, Kristen Crane.

- a. Civic/Institutional:
  - Historical Sites, libraries: 1 per 300 feet
  - Archives or museums: recommend 1 per 500 square feet of display area
  - Pre-school or educational nursery: recommend 1 per employee in single shift plus 1 per 1,000 sq of classroom area. Ms. Crane shared that there are two daycare centers in the Town that are non-conforming and this change would make them conform.
- b. Off-Site Parking (153.332 D2): Amending Off-Site Parking requirements for Civic/Institutional Uses:
  - A maximum of 50% of the required parking spaces may be off-site. Language added to read: except for civic/institutional uses that may have a maximum of 75% of the required parking spaces off-

site. Ms. Crane said this would help places that has an abundance of parking on site that is not being utilized that could be shared. Ms. Crane gave an example of the James Island PSD Fire Station on Harbor View Road, which is an older fire station that has space for 1??. The PSD wants to remodel the station and they would have to adhere to the Town's current parking requirements with a full site plan review and they would be required to have at least 10 parking spaces for five (5) firemen Ms. Crane also shared an example of the Town's JI Arts and Cultural Center and Town Hall utilizing shared parking.

- c. Use Table (Table 153.110): Changing Use Allowance for nonalcoholic Beverage Bars from a Special Exception Use to a Conditional Use in the OG, CN, CC, and I Zoning Districts: Ms. Crane explained this category was previously for restaurants, and fast foods, including snack bars, and non-alcoholic beverage bars which included smoothie and coffee bars. In order to separate them into its own category, fast foods were added as its own category across the board. Ms. Crane said she thinks it may have been an error that non-alcoholic beverage was separate because the Special Exception requirement was left in and it seems that a smoothie bar and a coffee shop would be more suited with the requirements for a general restaurant, cafeteria, or a deli in those zoning categories. The recommended amendment for non-alcoholic beverage bars including coffee shops and smoothie bars would be a Conditional Use on the Use Table and if they serve alcohol, they would need a Special Exception.

Commissioner Quinn asked if the recommended change would cause businesses to have more restrictions and Ms. Crane said that it would put them into another zoning category and take away the need for the BZA (Board of Zoning Appeals) to grant a Special Exception. The process would be simplified for processes that do not serve alcohol.

Chairman Lyon called for a motion to discuss the amendments presented by staff. Motion to approve was made by Commissioner Bidwell, seconded by Commissioner Quinn, and passed unanimously for discussion.

Chairman Lyon spoke in favor of the changes for Daycare Center. Commissioner Bidwell spoke about easing the burden and making sure people don't have to go through unnecessary hurdles to get their business established and making reasonable requests. She said the amendment for the Fire Station makes sense. They are good neighbors with the dentist next door which should work fine. Ms. Crane added that the dentist office has property on Mikell Drive which would make that easier.

Chairman Lyon said he was not as convinced about the coffee shops and cited the problems with Starbucks and doesn't know that we should open ourselves up to the same kinds of problems with having a new coffee shop. He shared information that as he travels around the country and visits some areas that has a little "coffee shack" where people drive thru for coffee. He can see how this could become a problem, especially on Folly Road. Commissioner Bidwell commented that it could be an issue, but service tends to be faster. It's the food and the fancy espresso coffees that slows the line but understands Chairman Lyon's point because there is not enough space for the line and we end up with the Chick-fil-a or Starbucks phenomena. Discussion followed about museums and historic sites.

Chairman Lyon called for a motion to approve the staff's recommendations on the amended changes to the Zoning and Land Development Regulations.

VOTE

Commissioner Bidwell	Aye
Commissioner Maher	Aye
Commissioner Quinn	Aye
Chairman Lyon	Aye

Passed unanimously

Discussion on Addition of Resilience Element to Comprehensive Plan:

Ms. Crane stated that she provided a copy of Charleston County’s Resiliency Plan because she feels that it would be similar to whatever the Town decides to adopt. The resilience element is now a requirement in the Comprehensive Plan. She does not think the Commission needs to spend a lot of time to hash it out tonight but review it and come back in a couple months with recommendations. Ms. Crane said a good thing is that our Town Administrator, Niki Grimbball, previously worked with Charleston County. She worked hard on the Resilience element and basically wrote it while she was there. Ms. Crane said she would defer to Ms. Grimbball for questions or comments the Commission has but this is important and is definitely something the Planning Commission needs to begin work on. Also included in the Commission’s packets were copies of Folly Beach and the City of Charleston plans.

Commissioner Quinn recalled information from the training workshop held on yesterday that information about Kiawah but their information does not seem to be applicable James Island and Folly Beach seems to have small problems that only applied to them. Commissioner Bidwell added that the outer barrier, i.e., Kiawah Island and Folly are definitely going to experience some challenges that our island doesn’t usually experience. Commissioner Quinn noted when he read over the information that it raises questions but doesn’t always give the solutions. Ms. Grimbball explained that the City of California in their Comprehensive Plan is that they do inventory and you will see different sections of what is documented, what the conditions are that brought about the need to for the element is added before something that is countywide takes on different factors and we know what may not be applicable to all of James Island. The element would give us a good foundation of where to start and we can chisel it down and put in specific issues that we see on the island and at the end with the recommendations could include steps on moving forward. Ms. Grimbball gave the formation of the Committee of 26 members, having a representative from every jurisdiction, builder associations, realtors association, Coastal Conservation League, and preservationists for feedback into the plan. Commissioner Quinn said this element could take a lot of man-hours and Ms. Grimbball said the County worked on the element for nine months and another couple to get through the Planning Commission and Council process. She said the element was voted on at the last meeting before COVID struck

Questions surfaced by Commission Quinn about sea level rise and Commissioner Bidwell shared her knowledge of this subject.

Commissioner Maher said a lot of people were involved in the element and obviously lawyers has seen it as well, which Ms. Grimbball confirmed. He further asked if lawyers do not see an issue with if you go to a contractor or a builder and you prohibit a piece of land that is not in a flood zone what are the determining factors of not filling in that piece of land. Would this be open to lawsuits? Ms. Grimbball responded that the flood plain management program can designate regulatory standards.

Chair’s Comments: None

Commissioners' Comments: Commissioner Bidwell expressed her excitement to work on the Resilience Element because her specialty is biomimicry, resilience, and regenerative design.

Next Scheduled Meeting Date: September 8, 2022

Adjourn: There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

Frances Simmons,  
Secretary to the Planning Commission and Town Clerk