



# Planning Commission

## Meeting Minutes – February 10, 2025

### CALL TO ORDER

3:35

A meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman, Benjie Morillo, and was held in-person on February 10, 2025, at 5:00 PM.

### ATTENDEES

Members in attendance: Benjie Morillo, Chairman, Mike Tomy, Vice-Chairman, Bill Bardenwerper, Clinton Hallman, Kim McFann, Bill Suter, and Paul Trask.

Staff in attendance: Curt Freese, Community Development Director, Christopher Klement, Community Development Planner III, and Nick Navia, Community Development Planner I.

### ELECTION OF OFFICERS

5:17

**Motion:** Mr. Bardenwerper made a motion to nominate Mike Tomy to be Chairperson. Mr. Trask seconded the nomination. The motion passed unanimously.

**Motion:** Mr. Trask made a motion to nominate Bill Bardenwerper as Vice-Chair. Mr. Suter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Motion:** Mr. Trask made a motion to nominate Kim McFann as Secretary. Mr. Suter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### WATERFRONT PARK COMMITTEE

9:27

**Motion:** Mr. Bardenwerper made a motion to nominate Bill Suter to serve on the Waterfront Park Committee. Mr. Trask seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### MINUTES

10:22

#### December 3, 2024 Worksession Minutes

**Motion:** Mr. Morillo made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2024 worksession. Mr. Hallman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**December 16, 2024 Minutes**

**Motion:** Mr. Hallman made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2025 regular meeting. Mr. Morillo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

*All Planning Commission meeting minutes are recorded and can be found on the City's website at <http://www.cityofbeaufort.org/AgendaCenter>.*

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**QUESTIONS RELATING TO MILITARY OPERATIONS**

**11:27**

None.

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**NEW BUSINESS**

**12:17**

- A. Rezoning.** The applicant (the City of Beaufort) is requested a rezoning of the Christensen Park and Pigeon Point Boat Landing located at 2440 Pigeon Point Road, a single parcel located at terminus of Pigeon Point Road and Wilson Street, bordered on the South by Albert Street, Beaufort, SC, identified as R120 002 000 0045 0000 from T3-Neighborhood District (T3-S) to T1-National Preserve District (T-1).

Christopher Klement presented the application and staff report.

Public Comment:

**Paul Sommerville, who resides at 1509 Pigeon Point Road**, gave some background information. He said it makes sense to change the zoning to T1-National Preserve District.

**Kay Merrill, who resides at 813 Audusta Place**, is the Chairman of the Pigeon Point Neighborhood and said Beaufort has a long history of celebrating its founders and its important people and even its visitors. She referred to the upcoming events regarding the visit of the Marquis de Lafayette. The Christensen Family, who Mr. Sommerville is part of, has a long history in Beaufort. The most recent event at the park was Arbor Day where the community planted a native American Holly tree with Public Works. Prior to Arbor Day the community had a 102<sup>nd</sup> birthday party for their neighbor, Maila Bianca. The community asks that the tree canopy is not destroyed because it gives a lovely ambiance that has become so important to Pigeon Point. The park area drastically and believes it should be left the way it is and specifically objected to expanding and any parking into the residential areas around Christensen Park.

Public Comment Closed.

**32:58**

Commissioner . Trask commented that he understands that the residents want the park to be down zoned in perpetuity. He addressed the comment that Graham Carr raised. The city has a landing that they are preparing to refurbish after a number of years of damage and neglect. Mr. Trask asked if people sometimes park along the edge of the park after they have launched their boat and requested public input as to whether that is objectional to the neighborhood.

Public Comment

**Mr. Carr responded** and said he **lives literally on the park and looks out onto the park.**

He said there is three or four people that do come up and back up on the grass, which is fine, but it would change the nature of the entire neighborhood if marked parking was put in or if gravel was put down on the ground. This would change the aspect of that area.

Public Comment closed.

Public Comment

**Robin Koppernaus, who resides at 2423 Pigeon Point Road** said it's always been a very quiet area and there are not a lot cars that go down here. She is hoping when the work is done on the landing it won't turn into a single lane ramp because it is deep in the heart of a residential neighborhood. Also, the boat landing has many parking spaces already.

Public Comment closed.

**Motion:** Mr. Morillo made a motion to approve the rezoning of Christensen Park and Pigeon Point Boat Landing as T1-National Preserve District (T-1) based on staff findings in the staff report. Mr. Hallman seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 6:1 with Mr. Trask being opposed.

**B. Beaufort Development Code Changes.** Amendments to the Landscaping, Parking, and Lighting Requirements of Section 5 of the Beaufort Development Code.

Mr. Freese said this chapter was presented to the Planning Commission (PC) at their last work session on February 4. The City's contract arborist was at the 2/4 worksession and was able to provide explanations of the work already done on the proposed draft and answer questions.

**Motion:** Mr. Trask made a motion to table further discussion of Section 5 until the work session that is scheduled for March 3. Ms. McFann seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**52:04**

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**Beaufort Development Code Changes:** Amendments to the open space, land Development and subdivision requirements of Section 7 and Section 9 of the Beaufort Development Code.

Public Comment:

None.

Public Comment Closed.

PC asked what the next steps are once they give their recommendations. Mr. Freese said it will go to the City Attorney for a legal review and then it will go to City Council for 2 hearings.

**Motion:** Mr. Bardenwerper made a motion to recommend that Council **approve the final PC draft of chapter 7** based on the authority that is set forth in South Carolina statues and the City Code. Mr. Trask Seconded. The motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Suter asked that the motion could be amended to specify that the draft the PC recommends approval of is *Chapter 7 clean copy as of January 13.*

**Motion:** Mr. Bardenwerper amended his motion to include that this is the clean copy of chapter 7 as of January 13, 2025. Mr. Trask Seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Regarding the PC draft of Chapter 9, Mr. Bardenwerper referred to Page 18, Section 9.8.2.a.5.c.i and Section 9.8.2.5.c.ii recommending removing the words *appropriate design review body* and just say the Planning Commission.

**Motion:** Mr. Bardenwerper made a motion to **approve the final draft of chapter 9 version February 4, 2025** with that change based on the authority that the PC is given by the State Legislature and by our Code . Ms. McFann Seconded. The motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Tomy asked staff to provide the PC with a synopsis of the progress of code revision work for the end of the month meeting for the City Strategic Planning Meeting.

Ms. McFann talked about the issue of annexation that is not addressed in the current Code and not addressed in chapter 7 and 9. There is no Code guidance, but there is a statutory guidance for annexation. She noted annexation petitions regularly come before the PC and stated that logically such a section should be part of Chapter 7 or 9. The other Commissioners agreed that such a section is needed

**Motion:** Ms. McFann made a motion that staff draft a proposed section of code regarding annexation standards for the City for consideration by the PC.

Mr. Freese said a motion is not needed but that Staff would draft such a section for PC review. .

## DISCUSSION

1:17:26

### A. Planning Commission Input for the Strategic Plan

Mr. Tomy referred to the Comprehensive Plan. He would like to have the Comprehensive Plan more in agreement with the city's Strategic Plan because there are elements that have not been incorporated yet that should be.

Ms. McFann asked staff if this session is going to be about how the city is doing on the current strategic plan or is this a session designed to create the next strategic plan for the coming years. Mr. Freese is not sure, but there is a 2 hour session on the Development Code and our current progress, which is very important. Once the code changes are done, we probably will start updating the Comprehensive Plan, next year.

Mr. Morillo asked about the Civic Masterplan being outdated. Mr. Freese said this needs to be discussed at the Strategic Plan meeting. The Civic Masterplan was approved in 2014.

Mr. Tomy will be attending the entire time of the Strategic Plan meeting and would like to see participation from the other commissioners. The other commissioners stated they did plan to attend as well.

## ADJOURNMENT

1:36:35

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**Motion:** Mr. Hallman made a motion for adjournment at 6:36 pm seconded by Mr. Suter. The motion passed unanimously.