



City Council Worksession

Meeting Minutes – Planning Conference Room – 1st Floor

April 8, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

5:00 PM

Philip Cromer, Mayor

Members of Council in attendance - Philip Cromer, Neil Lipsitz, Michael McFee, Mitch Mitchell, Josh Scallate.

II. EMPLOYEE NEW HIRE RECOGNITION

A. Public Works.

Nate Farrow, Public Works Director, introduced Christopher Pinckney.

III. PRESENTATIONS

A. Interviews of Applicants for Boards, Commissions and Committees.

Council held a question-and-answer session with Rita Wilson, Historic District Review Board applicant, Mike Tomy, Planning Commission applicant, Joanne Parrish, Tourism Development Advisory Committee applicant, and Patrick McMichael, Zoning Board of Appeals applicant.

B. Capital Improvement Projects update.

Raul Dominguez, Capital Improvements Program Director, provided an update on ongoing and completed Capital Projects that included the Pigeon Point Landing Master Plan.

Engineer Duncan O'Quinn, with O'Quinn Marine, presented a Conceptual Master Plan for the landing. The presentation was for informational purposes only. The design team, and city staff, will continue working with the public for additional input before bringing an actual master plan proposal to Council. He also spoke about the temporary repairs that were made to open the landing back up for use.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

A. 2026-2028 Strategic Plan.

JJ Sauv , Deputy City Manager, went over the proposed changes to, and the structure of, the Strategic Plan that resulted from the City of Beaufort Strategic Planning Retreat held February 24 - 26, 2025. There were updates to the Vision and Mission Statements. Each initiative will be broken down into a performance portal in Air Table. Each department will have an annual plan of work. These initiatives will be guiding the majority of the day-to-day work staff will be engaged in.

Councilman Scallate would like to see the Guiding Principle that deals with exploring development incentives for increasing family and youth entertainment, under Safe and Vibrant City, be moved from starting in Fiscal Year 27 to Fiscal Year 26. Council is supportive of this change.

Mr. Sauv  stated that a finalized document will be brought before Council to be adopted by Resolution within the next few months.

Councilman Mitchell inquired about the usage of “affordable livability” in the Vision Statement and wonders if there is a clearer, simpler way to convey the message.

B. Placing a moratorium on development.

Mayor Cromer started off by saying he is responsible for putting this item on the agenda and the reasons as to why. He feels this is an important, necessary conversation that needs to be had about placing a temporary six-month moratorium on large-scale development until the Development Code changes have been implemented. He wants to give the Planning Commission some breathing room so they can finish up the code updates. This would only affect new development and projects that are not already vested.

Scott Marshall, City Manager, stated that a moratorium will not affect any agreement already in place between the city and a property owner/developer. He asked if a moratorium is to be considered, what type of developments would this apply to.

Councilman Scallate stated that as it relates to the discussion, Chapters 7 and 9 are going to be the most relevant. Some of his concerns regarding development centered around the traffic impact analysis and the fact that perhaps even though our current code requires you to go a half mile out, it doesn’t take into consideration developments that have been proposed but are not permitted. That is the exact change that the Planning Commission has made in that regard which is to include development that has been proposed for a Planned Unit Development but hasn’t gone through the permitting process. The Planning Commission are done with those two chapters, so the next step is for us to see them in first reading. He thinks the changes they are making will address a lot of the concerns that deal with traffic. He feels that we could possibly have the first and second readings on these changes and have them implemented before a moratorium could be put into place.

A discussion followed about short-term rental properties, taking away housing stock off the market, as it relates to affordable housing.

Councilman Lipsitz stated that a moratorium sounds good, but it is not going to affect what is happening on Cane Island, and in the Salem Point area. Doesn’t know what a moratorium would accomplish. Wants to see smart growth.

Mike Tomy, Planning Commission Chair, updated Council on where they stand in the edit process.

The following addressed Council with their comments and concerns on topics discussed:

Dianne Farrelly, 2415 Oak Haven Street, a copy of her written comments are attached.

Lise Sundrla, Historic Beaufort Foundation.

Dick Stewart, Citizen.

David Tedder, Lady’s Island Resident, owns property in the city.

Conway Ivy, 501 King Street.

Disclaimer: This document is a summary. All City Council Worksessions and Regular Meetings are recorded. Live stream can be found on the City's website at www.cityofbeaufort.org (Agenda section). Any questions, please contact the City Clerk, Traci Guldner at 843-525-7024 or by email at tguldner@cityofbeaufort.org.

In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80 (a)(d)(e), as amended, notification of regular meetings was given at the beginning of the calendar year. A copy of the agenda was posted on the City's bulletin board and website www.cityofbeaufort.org twenty-four hours prior to the meeting. A copy of the agenda was given to the local news media and requested public on file.

approved: May 13, 2025
Traci Guldner



Comments for City Council Worksession

April 8, 2025, 5:00 pm

Respectfully submitted:

Dianne Farrelly

2415 Oak Haven Street

Beaufort SC 29902

Capital Projects

Allison Road- Punch list walk completed 3/26/25, items found were forwarded to contractor for resolution and repairs. Final walk for project closure scheduled for 4/9/25. (Bike path?)

Strategic Plan – (Kudos for a very ambitious plan)

A Safe & Vibrant City The City of Beaufort will maintain our authenticity while building a safe and equitable City. Beaufort will pursue affordable livability for all segments of the population, through the provision of responsive public safety, and improved public spaces. (This strategy does not match the goal – how do public safety and improved public spaces help the pursuit of affordable livability?)

Guiding Principle 2.5 that grow the city's tax base (Often, tax incentives are handed out for a number of years following development. Perform a cost/benefit assessment of new development taking into account lost revenue from tax incentives and the added cost to infrastructure and increased needs of resources, such as, police, fire fighters, schools, teachers, medical personnel, etc.)

Guiding Principle 2.6: Plan for climate change and sea level rise by designing, engineering, and implementing infrastructure improvements. (That do not conflict with best environmental practices to preserve the natural environment)

Guiding Principle 2.7: Maintain a development code that balances quality of life for residents, authenticity of the City, and that fosters smart growth (Define and list Smart Growth Strategies)

Chart after Guiding Principle 3.6 Initiative: Evaluate and make recommendations on feasible development code exceptions for the facilitation of affordable workforce housing (Without sacrificing resiliency, especially in the face of sea level rise)

Guiding Principle 5.3: Create and maintain a culture of ownership by empowering employees to make decisions. Ensure employees have the necessary intellectual and physical resources to perform their jobs and provide excellent customer service efficiently and effectively. (consider material resources or access to intellectual and physical property)

Moratorium on Development Pending Code Amendments

The Planning Commission has been working diligently and thoughtfully for almost a year and a half now on widespread Code Amendments to correct some of the unintended consequences of the form-based Code adopted in 2017 for recommendation to City Council. In the meantime, development projects continue to be constructed with the same consequences, even though they are known to be the result of following the current Code. Please take this into consideration as you deliberate on a moratorium.

PTAC – Agree that a Commission cannot be responsible for what does not exist or for what they do not have access. I urge City Council to look into contracting an Urban Forestry Management Plan, perhaps partially funded by the tree mitigation fees collected over the years, which currently are not being expended.