



Planning Commission

Work Session Minutes – May 12, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

A work session of the Planning Commission was called to order by Chairperson Mike Tomy and was held in-person in the Planning Conference Room on May 12, 2025, at 1:00 PM. The meeting was recorded and streamed on Facebook in accordance with City Policy.

ATTENDEES

All members were in attendance except for Clinton Hallman.

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

Jessie White of the Coastal Conservation League and submitted public comments during the session. **Lolita Huckaby Watson** also was present for a portion of the meeting. **City Arborist Michal Murphy** was also present, and he presented and explained proposed additions to the definitions and lists in Chapter 5 of the code in follow up to prior work session discussions.

Mr. Tomy updated the Commission on the status of the joint meetings and work with the Historic Review Board. A subcommittee has now been formed, and the work continues.

Mr. Freese advise that the Commission’s proposed revisions to chapters 7 and 9 of the code, excluding the sections pertinent to the HRB, were to be considered at the City Council’s Mat 13, 2025 meeting. Mr. Tomy stated he planned to attend the May 13, 2025, meeting.

The Commission continued work on Chapter 5 proposed changes. “Parking Lot Issues”, i.e., issues deferred from prior work sessions were discussed. Revisions by staff re: buffers and setbacks tables were discussed. Other changes and corrections through the end of Chapter five were discussed. The staff was able to make changes to the draft in real time during the session. Mitigation fees were discussed at length.

Proposed changes to chapter 5 will be considered at the Commissions next regular meeting, which will occur May 19, 2025, at 5 p.m. The Commission will move on to proposed changes to chapter 8 next. Mr. Freese advised re: issues in chapter 8 and advised that the Bluffton City Attorney has rendered a legal opinion that in certain instances development agreements can be overridden by ordinances, and that the Beaufort City Attorney concurs. The Commission requested a copy of the actual written legal opinion(s) to that effect before the next meeting, needed for consideration of chapter 8 issues and other issues before the commission.

The work session adjourned at 5 pm.