



City Council Worksession

Meeting Minutes – Planning Conference Room – 1st Floor

October 17, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

5:00 PM

Michael A. McFee, Acting Mayor

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

II. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Beaufort Development Code text amendment process update.

Curt Freese, Community and Economic Development Director, started off by introducing Ryan Green, who is a new planner in the department. Mr. Freese stated that the goal for tonight was to not to add anything new, but to go over what has already been discussed and accomplished. He did a recap on the four major code edit changes that included the removal of the Historic Beaufort Foundation seat recommendation, and the establishing of the new Planning Commission that will combine the Metropolitan Planning Commission and the Design Review Board.

Mr. Freese spoke in regard to the recommended changes to the Historic District Review Board Process. He stated that a discussion on this was held during the Metropolitan Planning Commission's meeting on October 16, 2023. There were some slight edit modifications that were recommended by the commission and those will be brought back in front of the newly established Planning Commission. He stated that staff has received a recommendation to rename the Historic District Review Board back to the Board of Architectural Review. He said that this would be more consistent with the State Statute.

Councilman Mitchell inquired about who made this recommendation. Mr. Freese stated that it was the Chairman of the Historic Beaufort Foundation.

Acting Mayor McFee stated the name change was suggested as the Historic District Review Board and the Historic Beaufort Foundation were often assumed to have been one entity.

Mr. Freese stated that any amendment to the name would have to be made throughout the entire Beaufort Code.

Councilman Lipsitz asked Mr. Freese if he sees the name of the board as a problem. Mr. Freese stated no.

More discussion is warranted before a decision is made to move forward with a name change.

Zoning Recap

Mr. Freese then discussed some items under zoning.

Height Transition.

Requiring Mixture of Uses for Certain Sized Developments/Site Plans.

Prohibiting Storage to Industrial Zones.
Separate policies for RMX/T5 Zones.

Council is supportive of all areas mentioned above, except for Prohibiting Storage. More discussion is warranted before limiting these to the Industrial zones. Staff will look for alternatives.

Councilman Scallate does not want to see an increase of applications to rezone a property as industrial for the purpose of building a storage facility. He stated that maybe a certain distance in miles can be used as a guide between existing and proposed facilities instead of limiting them in Industrial Zones. Mr. Freese stated that you can also regulate it by requiring it as a Special Exception.

Mr. Freese then spoke about the need for Clarification of Use Specific Standards, and Clarification of Accessory Dwelling Unit Standards. Council was supportive of these being cleaned up.

The definition section will also be looked into and expanded as necessary.

Mr. Freese stated they are also in the process of cleaning up the New Development Section as well.

Missing Middle

Allow Rowhomes and Apartments in T-3N, and as Special Exception in T-4HN.

Add Live Work only in special circumstances.

Add limited retail and restaurants, such as limiting to bakeries and cafes.

Will look to allow an additional Accessory Dwelling Unit in T-3S.

Will not include Cottage Courts in Historic Districts.

Will not change fill requirements for new construction.

Mr. Freese went over the areas stated above.

Council was supportive of moving forward with the items discussed, except for the below.

There was extensive discussion regarding the issues of adding limited retail and restaurants, such as bakeries and cafes in the Historic District. Right now, they are not permitted. The general consensus was that they do not want to see language limiting the uses to just these two types of businesses. Should proposed businesses be screened by how many employees they might have, by how much noise they might produce, or by how much vehicular traffic they might receive that would affect parking.

Mr. Freese stated that maybe these types of stores could be limited to the corners of streets. This might not affect the interior lots.

Acting Mayor McFee stated that there has been an overriding concern about sensitivity within the areas that would be too large or too onerous for certain sections. To him, Special Exception sounds much more restrictive. Maybe we just look at eliminating certain things within certain areas.

Councilman Scallate added that he wonders for the sake of the applicant, if there can be something added to the purview of the new Planning Commission that if someone wanted to have a business like these, that we do not use Special Exception but allow the project to be reviewed by one board for the sake of continuity. It is unclear whether or not this would be allowed by State Statute, but it is something that can be looked into.

More discussion is warranted before a decision is made on moving forward with amendments as regards to Special Exceptions, but not Overlays.

The following interacted with Council on the issues discussed:

Paul Trask
Graham Trask
Dianne Farrelly, 2415 Oak Haven Street
Cynthia Jenkins, Historic Beaufort Foundation
Maxine Lutz
Lise Sundrla, Historic Beaufort Foundation
Jeremiah Smith

III. ADJOURN

6:38 PM

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.