

MINUTES

ISLANDS PLANNING COMMISSION DECEMBER 17, 2013 - 6:00 P.M. The Casino Bldg, 530 Beachview Drive, SSI

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Dow, Chairman
Paul Sanders, Vice Chairman
Stan Humphries
Preston Kirkendall
William Lawrence
Oliver Seabolt
Robert Ussery

STAFF PRESENT: David Hainley, Community Development Director
Eric Landon, Planner II
Janet Loving, Admin/Recording Secretary

Chairman Dow called the meeting to order and the invocation was given, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. He then gave a brief recap of the rules, voting procedure and audience participation in discussing agenda items.

MINUTES

November 19, 2013 Regular Meeting

The following corrections were noted in the November 19th Minutes:

Page 4; Identify Mr. Robert Burr as Executive Director of the Airport Commission

Page 4; Last Paragraph, Second Line, Change “and” to “a”

Page 6; Paragraph 2, Change “iterated” to “said”

Page 7; Paragraph 2, Change “Garring” to “Goehring”

A motion was then made by Mr. Paul Sanders to approve the Minutes of the **November 19th Regular Meeting** as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Preston Kirkendall. Voting Aye: Messrs. Dow, Humphries, Kirkendall, Lawrence, Sanders and Ussery. Mr. Oliver Seabolt did not attend the November 19th Meeting and therefore abstained from voting.

Agenda - **Additions, Deferrals, Deletions, Postponements**

Chairman Dow advised that Application **ZM2712 (McKinnon Airport)** has been **withdrawn** concurrently by the applicant, Mr. Thomas Stark and by Mr. Robert Burr, Executive Director of the Glynn County Airport Commission. Also, upon a request for deferral from Attorney Jim Gilbert, representing the Sea Island Acquisition, a motion was made by Mr. Preston Kirkendall to **defer** Application **PP2713 (Cloister Residences East)** until the January 21, 2014 IPC Meeting beginning at 6:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Paul Sanders and unanimously adopted.

SP2736 Sea Island Jr. Ballroom: Consider a request to approve a site plan for a 240 seat ballroom addition to the Cloister Hotel. The property is located on the west side of the intersection of 4th Street and Cloister Cottages Drive, Sea Island. Parcel ID: 05-00462. Johnathan Roberts, agent for Sea Island Acquisition, owner.

Mr. Roberts and Attorney Jim Gilbert were present for discussion.

According to the staff's report, the adopted Future Land Use Map shows this site as commercial. The proposed use is for a 240 seat ballroom addition, which is in addition to the expansion of the Cloister's hotel rooms previously approved in November.

Under Section 619.4 (a) of the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Commission's review shall be guided by the following standards and criteria:

- 1) The application, site plan, and other submitted information contain all the items required under this Section. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met.**
- 2) The proposed uses, buildings and structures are in accordance with the requirements of this Ordinance and other ordinances of Glynn County. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met.**
- 3) Adequate provisions are made for ingress and egress, off-street parking, loading, and the flow of traffic, which may reasonably be anticipated. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met. The Cloister has adequate parking on their campus.**
- 4) Adequate provisions are made to control the flow of storm water from and across the site. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met subject to review by Engineering as part of the building permit process.**
- 5) Adequate provisions are made to protect trees that are selected to remain as depicted on the site plan. **Staff comment: The applicant is preserving existing trees as shown on the site plan.**

- 6) Adequate provisions are made to buffer intensive uses and to screen all service areas from view of the adjacent properties and streets. **Staff comment: A large number of existing trees are to be retained on the property as shown on the site plan. Buffers are not required.**

- 7) Adequate provisions are made to control the location, intensity, and direction of all outdoor lighting so that it will not have an adverse effect upon adjoining properties. **Staff comment: The applicant will be required to meet this provision at all times.**

- 8) Open space, as required, has been provided and appropriate means are proposed to assure maintenance of common areas and facilities. **Staff comment: Not applicable.**

- 9) Adequate provisions are made for water supply, fire protection, and sewage collection and treatment. **Staff comment: This project is approved by the Fire Department and will be served by JWSC utilities.**

Mr. Landon stated that staff recommends approval of *SP2736*, Sea Island Jr. Ballroom, subject to meeting all requirements during the development process.

Attorney Jim Gilbert gave a brief presentation and a general discussion followed; during which time, Mr. Stan Humphries stated that he has been getting comments and complaints from residents of Sea Island that the water and sewer situation continues to be a problem, and each time this comes before the Planning Commission “we duck for cover and say that it’s okay with the Joint Water & Sewer Board.” He then asked if the Planning Commission has an obligation to at least consider septic tanks, sewer systems and capacity. Mr. Gilbert stated that the company has a very competent outside contractor, Woodrow Sapp, who handles water systems all over Glynn County as well as adjacent counties and he does an excellent job. He stated that he hasn’t heard any complaints about the water, but if there are complaints he would report them to Mr. Sapp.

Mr. Gilbert pointed out that Commissioner Provenzano, Vice Chairman of the Glynn County Board of Commissioners, gave a very enlightening presentation at the November 19th IPC meeting about the capacity of the sewage treatment plant. Mr. Gilbert also noted that he has in writing that the capacity at the sewage treatment plant is very sufficient. He stated that there is a problem with water intrusion when there are profound rain days but the county is addressing that issue according to Commissioner Provenzano. Mr. Gilbert stressed that he would like to know about any specific water complaints so that it can be corrected. Mr. Humphries stated that he would relay this to the complainants and get the information to Mr. Gilbert so that this issue can be properly addressed. Chairman Dow encouraged anyone with a complaint about the water system to attend the Joint Water & Sewer Commission (JWSC) meetings and publicly present their comments.

For clarification, Mr. Hainley pointed out that once you cross the (Black Banks River) bridge, the sewer lines on the Island become a private system. Mr. Humphries stated that the main complaint is insufficient water pressure. Mr. Gilbert advised that the site plan approval process does not involve approval of sewer systems or whether there is sufficient capacity at the treatment plant. If the site plan is approved, there is still more work to do including a presentation to the Joint Water & Sewer Commission, at which time if there is a problem or any issue, the JWSC won't allow the project to proceed.

At this time, Chairman Dow opened the floor for public comments beginning with Ms. Jane Fulcher of Sea Island. Ms. Fulcher stated that the existing facility cannot handle any additional work. She presented pictures of the plant for review and stated that there has also been a poisoning of the marsh in front of the plant, and the machinery does not work properly. She stressed that the plant is clearly not ready to accept 68 more hotel rooms and a new ballroom. She stated that the sewage plant at Dunbar Creek is definitely running over capacity. Ms. Fulcher pointed out that storm water plays a big role in the system and when there is too much water the sewage does not get treated properly. In addition to the sewage concerns, Ms. Fulcher stated that construction traffic is a problem and needs to be addressed.

Mr. Gilbert distributed a copy of the letter from JWSC which clearly states that capacity should not be an issue. He stated that there are issues when there is a construction job, but there is a substantial list of requirements when there is a construction job. With this particular project, he stated that they have plans for an adequate storage facility that will be fenced and secured. Regarding the issue of poisoning the marsh, he stated that Mr. Holland pointed out to him that he had noticed a problem with the marsh near the "chillers" which service the hotel and will service the new building. The marsh appeared to be dying. Mr. Gilbert stated that during his investigation, he determined that the cause was simple and he believes that they have properly repaired it. He expounded on the process of repairing the problem as well as the function of the "chillers" and stated that currently, nothing is flowing into the marsh. He stated that this has all been reported to DNR. Again, Mr. Gilbert stressed that he is merely seeking approval of the site plan.

At the end of discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Oliver Seabolt to approve **SP2736**, Sea Island Jr. Ballroom, subject to meeting all requirements during the development process. The motion was seconded by Mr. Robert Ussery and unanimously adopted.

SP2737 Frederica Storage: Consider a request to approve a site plan for a 48,000 square foot multi-story storage facility. The property is located on the southeast corner of Center Street and Sylvan Drive. Parcel ID: 04-05168. Larry Bryson, agent for Victory Storage Company, owner.

Mr. Larry Bryson was present for discussion. Mr. Jim Watson, owner, was also on hand to answer questions.

According to the staff's report, the applicant is proposing to demolish the existing buildings at this location and construct a four-story, 48,000 square foot storage building.

Under Section 619.4 (a) of the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Commission's review shall be guided by the following standards and criteria:

- 1) The application, site plan, and other submitted information contain all the items required under this Section. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met.**
- 2) The proposed uses, buildings and structures are in accordance with the requirements of this Ordinance and other ordinances of Glynn County. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met.**
- 3) Adequate provisions are made for ingress and egress, off-street parking, loading, and the flow of traffic, which may reasonably be anticipated. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met. Parking and loading spaces are provided on site.**
- 4) Adequate provisions are made to control the flow of storm water from and across the site. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met subject to review by Engineering as part of the building permit process.**
- 5) Adequate provisions are made to protect trees that are selected to remain as depicted on the site plan. **Staff comment: This project is a redevelopment of an existing structure/footprint.**
- 6) Adequate provisions are made to buffer intensive uses and to screen all service areas from view of the adjacent properties and streets. **Staff comment: This project is adjacent to rights-of-way and other commercially zoned property.**
- 7) Adequate provisions are made to control the location, intensity, and direction of all outdoor lighting so that it will not have an adverse effect upon adjoining properties. **Staff comment: The applicant will be required to meet this provision at all times.**
- 8) Open space, as required, has been provided and appropriate means are proposed to assure maintenance of common areas and facilities. **Staff comment: Not applicable.**

- 9) Adequate provisions are made for water supply, fire protection, and sewage collection and treatment. **Staff comment: This project is approved by the Fire Department and will be served by JWSC utilities.**

Mr. Landon stated that staff recommends approval of *SP2737*, Frederica Storage, subject to meeting all requirements during the development process. As a point of correction, he stated that there was a miscalculation in the square footage, which should be 36,000 sq. ft. as opposed to 48,000 sq. ft. Mr. Larry Bryson apologized for this error, acknowledging that it was his office that made the mistake.

Mr. Kirkendall asked if there were any other 45 ft. tall buildings in the area. Mr. Hainley replied no, not to his knowledge.

Mr. Ussery stated that according to the height ordinance on St. Simons three habitable floors are allowed. Since this request is for storage, he asked if four floors would be allowed. Mr. Hainley replied yes because it is not considered to be habitable floors. Mr. Ussery stated that many years ago the height increase was a big issue on St. Simons and the discussions centered on limiting the number of floors to basically three. If there is something below the flood elevation, you would be allowed to have that in addition to the three floors. He stated that in this case, four floors of usable space would be allowed. Although this structure will be pretty big it is allowed and it does meet the requirements. Mr. Ussery also noted that according to the request, there are no trees on the site. He then asked if there is a requirement for tree canopy credits. Mr. Hainley was not sure, but he stated that staff would look into it. He added that since the property is a redevelopment, it would not take much to meet the tree requirement.

Chairman Dow expressed concerns about parking. He wanted to know the number of existing parking spaces and the number of spaces to be added. Mr. Bryson stated that the parking requirement for a storage facility is considerably less than what is actually required for office retail. He stated that with the new proposal, they are providing 13 parking spaces plus 2 truck dock loading and unloading spaces, for a total of 15 spaces. He stated that there are 25 existing marked-off parking spaces. Chairman Dow asked if any of the building would be considered office space. Mr. Hainley replied no, but there will be an office across the street in the existing building. Mr. Bryson stated that the building is considered an annex. He then pointed out the existing storage building and the annex for additional clarification.

Mr. Paul Sanders expressed concerns about the lack of fire hydrants in the area. Mr. Bryson explained that there are no large water lines into the area in question. The applicant is proposing to put in 6 or 8 inch lines or whatever is required by the county, and in the process he will pick up three fire hydrants. The building will be fully fire protected.

Chairman Dow had additional concerns about parking; however, Mr. Bryson explained that this particular use has considerably less impact on the community and if the use were to change, the applicant would have to come back to the Planning Commission for permission to make any changes.

Mr. Kirkendall stated that he has a problem with the height although it is legal and meets the requirements. He asked if any of the residents in the area said anything about the increase. Mr. Bryson stated that as far as he knows, no one has complained about it.

Mr. Ussery agreed with Mr. Kirkendall about the 45 ft. building height and asked the applicant to consider the community impact. In doing so, he suggested that perhaps some architectural changes would reduce the impact of the building height. Chairman Dow asked the owner, Mr. Jim Watson, if he would consider reducing the height. Mr. Watson stated that economically, the 45 ft. height makes sense. He stated that he has made a considerable investment in the property and he needs the four floors. He added that the property has no visibility from the surrounding area and 95% of the visits would be during the week and not weekends.

Ms. Stephanie Schleicher of 409 Pine Street, SSI, spoke in opposition to this request. She stated that a four-story building would obliterate the landscape for the residential area. She stressed that she would like to preserve the trees and her neighborhood. Ms. Schleicher stated that she will be calling to complain to the Commissioners.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Paul Sanders to approve **SP2737**, Frederica Storage, subject to meeting all requirements during the development process. The motion was seconded by Mr. Preston Kirkendall and unanimously adopted.

SP2738 Shops at Market Street Parking: Consider a request to amend the Shops at Market Street site plan to provide additional parking. The property is located on the northwest corner of Sea Island Road and Frederica Road. Parcel ID: 04-05141.

Mr. Johnathan Roberts, applicant, was present for discussion.

According to the staff's report, the applicant is proposing to add 28 parking spaces to the rear of the development. This site was previously approved by the Islands Planning Commission and is under construction. (A copy of the original approval was included in the packages for review.)

Under Section 619.4 (a) of the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Commission's review shall be guided by the following standards and criteria:

- 1) The application, site plan, and other submitted information contain all the items required under this Section. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met.**
- 2) The proposed uses, buildings and structures are in accordance with the requirements of this Ordinance and other ordinances of Glynn County. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met.**
- 3) Adequate provisions are made for ingress and egress, off-street parking, loading, and the flow of traffic, which may reasonably be anticipated. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met. The request is for additional parking spaces only.**
- 4) Adequate provisions are made to control the flow of storm water from and across the site. **Staff comment: This requirement has been met subject to review by Engineering as part of the building permit process.**
- 5) Adequate provisions are made to protect trees that are selected to remain as depicted on the site plan. **Staff comment: This project meets the tree canopy requirements. A calculation is provided on the site plan.**
- 6) Adequate provisions are made to buffer intensive uses and to screen all service areas from view of the adjacent properties and streets. **Staff comment: Buffers are not required. This project is within the same planned development as the adjacent property.**
- 7) Adequate provisions are made to control the location, intensity, and direction of all outdoor lighting so that it will not have an adverse effect upon adjoining properties. **Staff comment: The applicant will be required to meet this provision at all times.**
- 8) Open space, as required, has been provided and appropriate means are proposed to assure maintenance of common areas and facilities. **Staff comment: Not applicable.**
- 9) Adequate provisions are made for water supply, fire protection, and sewage collection and treatment. **Staff comment: This project is approved by the Fire Department and will be served by JWSC utilities.**

Mr. Landon stated that staff recommends approval of *SP3738*, Shops at Market Street Parking, subject to meeting all requirements during the development process.

Mr. Johnathan Roberts gave a brief presentation and general discussion followed. Mr. Edenfield was also on hand to answer questions. During discussion, Chairman Dow reminded Mr. Roberts that in the past, the developers promised that they were going to put a permanent solution in place for the right-in/right-out area. So far, monuments have been built but the situation still exists and has not been addressed. Mr. Roberts stated that he and Mr. Edenfield met with the County Engineer, Paul Andrews, and it is their understanding that the area in question has to be finalized before CO's will be issued for this project. He stated that they all came to an agreement to basically extend the median so that a left turn would be impossible. If west bound moving traffic on Sea Island Road attempts to make a left turn into the right-in/right-out entrance to Harris Teeter, it will be physically impossible. Chairman Dow thanked Mr. Roberts and was pleased with the proposed solution.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Preston Kirkendall, seconded by Mr. Oliver Seabolt and unanimously adopted to approve **SP3738**, Shops at Market Street Parking, subject to meeting all requirements during the development process.

Nominating Committee

Chairman Dow appointed Mr. Preston Kirkendall and Mr. William Lawrence to serve on the Nominating Committee for the election of 2014 officers.

2014 Meeting Schedule

Upon a motion made by Mr. Kirkendall and seconded by Mr. Sanders, the 2014 IPC Meeting Schedule was approved and unanimously adopted.

In other business, Chairman Dow asked Mr. Hainley to schedule a Joint Planning Commission Meeting before January 21, 2014 to discuss all items that have been approved by the Planning Commission and are waiting to be adopted. Mr. Hainley concurred. Chairman Dow also suggested that all members submit a prioritized list of items to staff to be included on the agenda for discussion.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.