



**SURFSIDE BEACH PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS
AUGUST 2, 2016 ♦ 6:00 P.M.**

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1. CALL TO ORDER. Chairman Pruitt called the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Commission members present: Chairman Pruitt, Vice Chairman Abrams and members Elliott, Gambino, Johnson, and Lauer. Member Lowery was absent. A quorum was present. Others present: Town Clerk Herrmann and Planning Director Morris.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. Chairman Pruitt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. AGENDA APPROVAL. Ms. Abrams moved to approve the agenda with an amendment to add public comments on agenda items prior to item number 5, Business. Ms. Johnson second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

4. MINUTES APPROVAL. Ms. Abrams moved to approve the June 7, 2016 meeting minutes as submitted. Ms. Gambino second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS – Added by approved motion, see #3 above. There were no public comments on agenda items.

5. BUSINESS. Amend the Town’s Zoning Ordinance to allow for the creation of the Limited Light Industrial Zoning District (LLI) and all supplements thereto.

Chairman Pruitt said the commission had discussed creating a LLI on Sandy Lane for a few months. Ms. Morris said during the May meeting, the commission went through the LLI proposed ordinance page by page. There were several amendments requested by the planning commission, and the LLI language was added where necessary. Except for a correction Ms. Abrams found, the ordinance is ready.

Ms. Abrams said there is a correction to Chart 17-622C, under the height limit in the Wall Sign portion there should not be any comments, as the commission decided that roof signs will not be allowed. The verbiage was left in as an oversight. Another correction was needed in 17-301, the description cites nine (9) districts. With the addition of the LLI, the description should state there are ten (10) districts.

Ms. Morris said that the Comprehensive Plan calls for Sandy Lane to be rezoned to LLI. The business committee supports the zoning change.

Chairman Pruitt said that the proposed ordinance is ready for recommendation to Town Council. Ms. Johnson moved to recommend the LLI ordinance to Town Council with the two corrections mentioned by Ms. Abrams. Ms. Gambino second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Chairman Pruitt said that HTC has set up high-speed internet with 1,000 MB/second on Sandy Lane, which should make the Sandy Lane LLI more desirable for high tech industry. HTC was very cooperative. There are several key people looking for businesses that could take advantage of the higher speed internet.

53 **6. DISCUSSION. Parking Issues (Harry Kohlmann – Parking Committee Chair to**
54 **attend.)**
55

56 Chairman Pruitt said that Mr. Kohlmann was unable to attend. Chairman Pruitt was concerned
57 about parking and traffic in town. He hoped the commission could have a discussion about future plans
58 and the current state of affairs.
59

60 Ms. Gambino said people do not abide by stop signs. Her neighbors park adjacent to Hollywood
61 Drive and you cannot see around the cars to enter the road. It is a safety issue. Chairman Pruitt had
62 heard that same concern. Ms. Morris said people were parking in the rights-of-way. A brief discussion
63 ensued about the situation with Ms. Gambino's neighbors.
64

65 Chairman Pruitt had heard concerns about the new parking spaces on Surfside Drive blocking
66 views, which was probably not anticipated when the parking was created. To mitigate that would be
67 difficult at this point. A vacationing neighbor of his was parked with wheels on the road and against the
68 flow of traffic, which is a "big no-no." The code enforcer actually gave the man the opportunity to
69 maneuver the car differently so a ticket did not have to be written. He thought that was appropriate.
70 Chairman Pruitt would like to see more parking and a better system. The current system deters visitors,
71 in his opinion. Much is said about day-trippers, but they will continue to visit. The town needs a 10 or
72 20 year plan to make parking available for those people, and probably not charge for it. He believed if
73 the budget was reviewed carefully, the parking would probably net zero. There might be some profit,
74 but he did not think the net gain was worth making everybody mad.
75

76 Ms. Elliott said the three lots were purchased with parking revenue. The parking function pays
77 for itself and it is not a net zero. There was quite a bit of parking removed, but that was to benefit the
78 owners on Ocean Boulevard, because they could not see to get out. Hollywood Drive has always been a
79 bad street. There is over one-quarter mile stretch between the four stop signs. There are many
80 accidents at 5th Avenue North and Hollywood where she lives. Ms. Gambino, who also lives on Hollywood
81 Drive, said an accident occurred at the house a few nights ago. Ms. Elliott thought parking money also
82 supported the beach renourishment. Ms. Herrmann said that the parking ordinance states that net
83 parking revenue will be reserved for land purchases.
84

85 Chairman Pruitt asked if the lots on 3rd Avenue South could be used for parking. Ms. Johnson
86 believed the property would be better used as a park. Chairman Pruitt reiterated that he believed there
87 should be more parking and a better attitude towards visitors.
88

89 Ms. Johnson said from what she had heard that not many people have a problem with paying to
90 park. They just want a place to park, and that the town has taken away so many parking places on
91 Ocean Boulevard. Trees were placed on Ocean Boulevard where the surfers using 13th Avenue North
92 parked. There is nowhere for those surfers to park.
93

94 Chairman Pruitt said there isn't much vacant land, and he expects there will be more people here
95 soon. Where are their cars going?
96

97 Ms. Abrams said we are talking about long range planning. The town is only so big and there will
98 be a point of diminishing return, if we keep providing more and more parking as they keep building in the
99 county to the point where our beach becomes unattractive to the weekly renters, because they are so
100 crowded with day trippers. We are going to have to watch very carefully to keep a balance so that the
101 beaches are not over loaded. The big money comes from the weekly renters; day trippers do not usually
102 buy much. The commission needs to consider this carefully.
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104 Chairman Pruitt said parking is a difficult issue. He hoped that Mr. Kohlmann could share what
105 the parking committee had seen and its future plans.

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Ms. Gambino knows that the town receives revenue, but we don't want to be Myrtle Beach. We want to keep parking where people can afford parking. Some of the plantings being done will overgrow if they are not maintained, and also shed. Maybe the town doesn't need all the plants. Surfside Drive is beautiful with the hanging plants. When you are at the beach the aesthetics do not look as nice. She, too, believes parking should be evaluated carefully.

Mr. Lauer did not know what the problem was with parking at this point. You really don't want to increase parking too much more. When he drives around town, he sees all the parking places filled. How many more people can we put on the beach? We do not have enough shops to entertain everyone that comes. I think during the season the shops do quite well. I never see any place without folks going in and out. We really have very limited space.

Chairman Pruitt said that brought attention to the bigger question: what do we want the town to be in 20 years? This is his last meeting and for the past six years serving on this commission that has been his thought. He thought a discussion around parking, a mixed use district on Surfside Drive is really going to be important, along with the design overlay district, for the town's future. I can attest to the fact that there will be more people here in 10 years; 20 years, and at some point the people here now will be doubled. There has to be something done to adequately preserve the feeling of the town while accommodating the visitors. What would be the best situation for Surfside in the long range? He was trying to spark that discussion before he left the commission.

Ms. Gambino asked how the parking situation was during the Guy Daniels Surf off Event. Chairman Pruitt said it was terrible. However, he went to Wrightsville Beach two weeks ago to attend a competition, and the parking there was worse. The town is not doing too badly. Ms. Johnson said Wrightsville Beach allows you to park wherever a spot was open, and their beaches are not too crowded. Chairman Pruitt said Wrightsville Beach has higher density housing, and the town blocked off a portion of the main street, which did not make any sense because of the extra visitors for the competition. He was grateful that the town worked with the Guy Daniels Foundation.

Mr. Lauer believed that was one reason the town does not have an event every weekend. We can't house that kind of activity. But to have a couple during the season, fine. We are a small town. I like the fact that I can drive down the roads and it's not like Myrtle Beach. You can get around here. Now, I wonder whether that many more people will come. When people come and cannot find a parking space, they stop coming. The question is do we need those people, and their influx of dollars when we have our rentals all filled. He did not know and thought perhaps a study should be done. Ms. Abrams agreed absolutely. Mr. Pruitt said the crowds had not stopped during the past 30 years, but at some point it might stop. Mr. Lauer said he was from the Jersey Shore area, and he saw what happened as it filled up. Those that couldn't find parking would go elsewhere, and they may not come back when they see the crowds. We are going to be more crowded, but he didn't want the town's beach to be like the Jersey Shore.

Chairman Pruitt said that was his point; let him rewind time to 30 years ago. Those are important issues that the commission will need to tackle. He was glad of the members that were serving and thought they would do a great job.

Ms. Morris heard from business committee chairman Truett after the agenda for this meeting was published. He did not think any recommended changes to the sign ordinance from the business committee were brought to the commission, which was under discussion in June. Copies of those minutes were sent to the business committee members with highlighted sections that she believed were very important and the section that said the commission would like to consider the sign ordinances as a whole instead of piecemeal review. Mr. Truett asked in an email message if the commission would not consider what was already proposed and then address temporary signs later. Ms. Morris said that was

159 exactly her understanding, but she would ask the commission again. Several members confirmed that
160 they preferred to review the sign ordinances in the entirety.
161

162 Mr. Cabell Young, a business committee member, said it had become more encumbered since
163 *Reed vs. Gilbert*, which redefines sign code. There were ten points discussed by the commission at the
164 June 7th meeting. The business committee was trying to help the business community. We are reaching
165 the end of the season. We started talking about grandfathering and things like that during the middle of
166 the season and that created some issues. The commission members are welcome to attend the business
167 committee meetings. Things work as a result of cooperation between committees. The business
168 committee is waiting for information from the town attorney. Ms. Morris said that had been received and
169 sent to the committee. Mr. Young said he would try to attend more planning commission meetings,
170 because he didn't know the commission saw the sign ordinances on June 17th until Ms. Morris sent the
171 minutes to him.
172

173 Ms. Abrams said there were questions from the planning commission in those minutes. Ms.
174 Morris said Mr. Stevens was present at the meeting and answered a lot of the questions. Ms. Abrams
175 said Mr. Stevens did not say to which districts the ordinances would apply; there were several questions
176 for the business committee. Mr. Young said the commission's minutes would be reviewed by the
177 committee.
178

179 6. PUBLIC COMMENTS- Agenda Items. 180

181 Mr. Ron Ott, 7th Avenue North. I've seen where the business committee needs to take little bites
182 of this, if you could accept that and take little pieces of it and do it a small chunk at a time. I know
183 you're used to taking the whole ordinance and putting it together, but maybe if you took a little one they
184 could see how it works, because the whole ordinance ... Ms. Herrmann interrupted Mr. Ott and explained
185 as a councilmember he should be cautioned about directing the commission. It was illegal for a
186 councilmember to influence the commission on a matter that would be presented to Town Council for
187 action. Chairman Pruitt said that the clerk had point; if Mr. Ott wanted to make some general comments,
188 the commission was happy to hear them. Ms. Morris said as long as Mr. Ott did not direct. Mr. Ott
189 continued saying that the commission, I believe, should to try to give council an idea of what the town
190 really is; who they are, and who they want to be in the future. I don't think anybody has collected that.
191 Where we are; what we want to be; what makes us different from Garden City and Murrells Inlet,
192 Surfside Beach, and North Myrtle Beach.
193

194 Chairman Pruitt said Mr. Ott's comments about what we want to be is a question hanging in the
195 air.
196

197 Ms. Julie Samples, North Hollywood Drive. Mikey Pruitt, you have been a gift to this town. I
198 want to thank you, but I know the town really appreciates you for your time, your attention and service.
199 You have been a real gift, and so, thank you for all your hard work and your input. We hope that we see
200 you often. *(Applause)* Chairman Pruitt said thank you. I'm not gonna cry! *(Laughter)*
201

202 Ms. Terri Lauer, Harbor Lights Drive. On the corners we do have a very big issue of shrubs being
203 grown, and taking away our view. There is also an ordinance in the town that says how many feet that
204 the shrubs should not grow. Maybe we need to address that and go around and finding those houses
205 that have that before there is an accident. Just a heads up. I have just an idea, I think maybe with the
206 signs for the parking spaces that we just talked about on Surfside Drive, if you block off the first two
207 parking spaces on each corner with yellow lines that might help visibility. Just a suggestion or a thought
208 before there is another accident. Parking, well, I think the town all knows about the parking. There is an
209 issue and we have to plan for the future. But, we don't want to make it that we're not looking ahead.
210 We want to make it everything in town not to waste money, and we have wasted money before with the
211 parking meters that we paid for and they went away. So, we have an idea that I think Town Council

212 approves something and then two years later the money's gone, and that's very wasteful. So, I'm hoping
213 that Town Council when they make some of their decisions that they think about that very carefully
214 without making a decision and then taking it back. I know it's very hard, because council comes and
215 goes and you have different people. But, we need to look more for the town for our financial security;
216 not just how we spend it and waste it. Thank you.

217
218 **7. COMMISSION COMMENTS.**
219

220 Ms. Abrams: I'd just like to take the opportunity to echo Ms. Samples' comments. Thank you for
221 your six years of service. Especially the time when you've so effectively chaired this commission. We're
222 really going to miss you.
223

224 Ms. Johnson: I ditto that as well. You've been a real asset to this board, and we're gonna miss
225 you. I've enjoyed serving with you. As far as the parking issue goes, I think it's been beat to death.
226

227 Ms. Elliott: Mikey, I have to agree with my members here. You have been a great asset. We're
228 gonna miss you, and I know Ms. Abrams is really going to miss you, because she's gonna have to sit
229 there in the hot seat. You did a wonderful job, and best of luck.
230

231 Ms. Gambino: Thank you, too, Mikey, my one meeting. *(Laughter)* Chairman Pruitt: This is the
232 best it's gonna get! *(Laughter)*
233

234 Mr. Lauer: Yes, I certainly want to thank you also, Mikey. I don't think people appreciate how
235 difficult it is to chair a meeting like this until you try and get somebody to take your place and nobody
236 wants it. Then you really appreciate how tough a job that is. Thank you very much.
237

238 Chairman Pruitt: Thank you guys, and I guess I just want to say I've had a great time being on
239 this commission and chairing it for a few years. I think the future is bright for Surfside. I look forward to
240 reading about it in the paper from Murrells Inlet. Seriously, Surfside has always been my home, and it
241 always will be my home. I'll probably be back one day.
242

243 **12. ADJOURNMENT.** Mr. Lauer moved to adjourn at 6:35 p.m. Ms. Johnson second. All
244 voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**
245

246 Prepared and submitted by,
247

248 _____
249 Debra E. Herrmann, CMC, Town Clerk

250 Approved: October 4, 2016
251

252 _____
253 Mary Ellen Abrams, Vice Chairman
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255 Clerk's Note: This document constitutes action minutes of the meeting that was digitally recorded, and
256 not intended to be a complete transcript. Appointments to hear recordings may be made with the town
257 clerk; a free copy of the audio will be given to you provided you bring a flash drive. In accordance with
258 FOIA §30-4-80(A) and (E), meeting notice and the agenda were distributed to local media and interested
259 parties via the town's email subscription list. The agenda was posted on the entry door at Town Council
260 Chambers. Meeting notice was also posted on the town website at www.surfsidebeach.org and the
261 marquee.