



**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE MEETING**

**August 31, 2010  
Council Chambers  
9:00 AM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Councilman Blair called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM. In attendance were Councilmembers Blair and Childs and adhoc member Truett. Councilmember Dodge was absent. Staff members in attendance were: Interim Administrator Fellner, Clerk Pinnell, Building and Zoning Director Donevant. Also in attendance were Bobby Moore and Steven Annese from Earthworks.

**EARTHWORKS PRESENTATION**

***Surfside Drive Design Change***

Presentation was given by Bobby Moore and Steven Annese from Earthworks. Mr. Moore presented the updated design. Some of the safety aspects had been considered in the resubmission. The original concept was #5 which included three raised medians and parking in the center of Surfside Drive. Concept #4 was resubmitted; this included no center parking and additional handicap access. This concept decreases parking spaces by 14 but the town would gain handicap parking. Mr. Annese reported that the sidewalk width has been increased and it is a little over 19 feet. There is an option where the town could use the same sidewalk width as previously designed and increase the median or come to a compromise of adding some feet to the sidewalk and some feet to the median. The difference is about 7 and one half feet. The median could be made wider which would give the town the opportunity to plant additional canopy trees and will help mitigate the oaks that would need to be removed. Mr. Childs asked if the town eliminated the center parking would it reduce stormwater costs. Mr. Moore stated that it would eliminate it a little; some of the stormwater boxes would be eliminated on the plan. This design is more in line in meeting the safety aspects. Mr. Annese stated that there would be a 16 foot wide lane but it would be striped at standard lengths of 12 feet giving a 4 foot give. Mr. Childs asked Ms. Fellner if she had been coordinating this project with the Department of Transportation for Glenn's Bay so it will all be tied in and done at one time. Ms. Fellner stated that this was correct; the plan was to tie all projects in together including the Poplar Park plan.

Ms. Blair welcomed Mr. Truett who was an original member of the subcommittee when he was on council and he has agreed to continue to serve. Mr. Truett stated that the original driving lane was 15 feet and the parking area was 19 feet and none of this has changed in the plan. Mr. Annese stated that the only change is the sidewalk width. Mr. Truett asked if Earthworks thought the 4 foot buffer would be enough space to allow backing out and pulling in. Mr. Annese stated that he thought this was sufficient adding that if the town went further the town would create a dead zone and this would create more of a tunnel effect where individuals would drive through it. Mr. Moore stated that this buffer zone was a recommendation from the Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments and the Grand Strand Transportation Study staff; they recommended this stating that the striping of the lane would encourage people to slow down. It was confirmed that irrigation and under drainage were included in the plan. The center isle crossing lane originally drove up the original cost in concept #5. Mr. Truett inquired about the new design and the cost and asked if this new design would bring the town down to its

49 original budget. Mr. Moore stated that he is not sure if this design would bring the town back  
50 within the original budget. Mr. Moore stated that it will help some with the cost of stormwater  
51 but he feels that they were under in the estimates for the cost of the original project. The major  
52 savings would be that there would not be as much asphalt used, the town will save on some of  
53 the overlay, and the cost of the raised concrete; they would not work with flat asphalt; that will  
54 be striped. The concrete may be the same but by tying all the projects together that would  
55 probably be the biggest savings. There would be raised crosswalks on the ends. The town may  
56 save on some of the curbing on this design as well. Ms. Blair asked about wiring for lights and  
57 sound. Mr. Moore stated that this has been included in the plan and then presented a copy of the  
58 wiring plan. The plan was to place enough conduits for future use.  
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60 Mr. Annese reported that with the new design there would be no room for a fountain, signage  
61 and flagpoles; there would not be room for all of these items. The fountain would pretty much  
62 take up the 10 foot median. Whether the fountain was still being considered was addressed by  
63 the subcommittee. Mr. Childs stated that he feels that signage is a little more important than  
64 having a fountain. He would like to advertise events in town adding that this was brought up by  
65 a few merchants in town as something they desired to see. Mr. Childs added that the cost of a  
66 fountain and upkeep may be expensive as well. There was a discussion that a fountain usually  
67 works best in a courtyard setting where people can sit around it and people would not be  
68 collecting around this particular area on the median adding that it would be more like a birdbath  
69 structure in size. Mr. Annese stated that a fountain in this area may also detract from what the  
70 town would like to accomplish. Ms. Fellner stated that she has a call into Brookgreen Gardens to  
71 see if they would be interested in rotating some art at Poplar Park. Being that Poplar Park would  
72 give the area a focal area there would probably be no need for a fountain on Surfside Drive as  
73 well. Mr. Childs asked about the three level sidewalk areas by the Borgata and asked how this  
74 was being addressed. Mr. Moore stated that the new sidewalks would need to be ADA  
75 compliant and in order to address the drainage they would also need to be graded away from the  
76 building. The idea was to remove the sidewalk and replace it in its entirety. Mr. Truett stated  
77 that there was another rendering of a brick sign and asked if everything should be removed from  
78 the entrance area including the flagpoles or just to eliminate the fountain. Mr. Annese stated that  
79 a sign and flagpoles would probably work but he would not suggest doing everything there  
80 adding that Poplar Park would be more of a collecting area and appropriate for added items. The  
81 entrance and downtown would be more of an inviting look. Mr. Truett stated that the town had  
82 spoken to the owner of the lot next to the Borgata and he would like to see a fountain with  
83 benches in that location.  
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85 A design of Poplar Park was presented. It was confirmed that there are approximately 20  
86 parking spots at Poplar Park. There will be more green space than lot. The land swap agreement  
87 requires a minimal acreage amount to be green space. There was some conversation about  
88 parking spaces. There could be added spots across from the mural on the street as well. The  
89 mitigation of trees would be placed in the Poplar Park area. Ms. Fellner reported that since the  
90 County will be removing some trees when they expand the library she has asked them if they  
91 could plant some replacement trees at Poplar Park. The County would be agreeable to plant  
92 larger trees which would enhance the canopy. Mr. Childs stated that he had spoken to Gary  
93 Forrester who is in charge of the Horry County Agriculture Center and he reported that the trees  
94 on Surfside Drive are Water Oaks and not Live Oaks.

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**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*Gene Maruca:* The only question I would have is why would we go through the expense of providing parking without putting meters. Every commercial owner in this town pays taxes on their property lots which they, in turn, would roll over, pass on to their clientele or their customers. In this case these merchants are getting a free ride from taxpayers' money when all of the other commercial owners in this town pay. It doesn't seem logical to me. Why would we use taxpayer money to provide free parking for commercial accounts when all of our other accounts have to pay?"

*Mr. Childs:* "Well I told the gentleman earlier that the committee kind of talked about parking. It was brought up then dropped and then Micki, I know, brought it up about a week ago about paid parking and I think, really I agree with you, I think that's probably a decision that should be made by council as a majority but you have a perfect argument. I see no problem."

*Mr. Maruca:* "If the recommendation to council came from this committee. Sammy, you just built a building, you pay tax on your property you own. I pay tax on my lots; these folks chose to be there; it's not like 20 or 30 years ago; they chose to be there. They could have went anywhere in the town and possibly paid a different rent. They selected Surfside Drive. Did they do it because they knew they were getting free services?"

*Mr. Childs:* "I'd ask the committee. What is your feeling on paid parking?"

*Mr. Truett:* "Well, I think we had discussed it before, you know the idea of what we're doing in the business district is to promote businesses and to get businesses back on Surfside Drive; get merchants back on Surfside Drive by having paid parking, to me, kind of defeats that purpose. We said we would look at it and possibly, at a later date, maybe go back in and pay for parking but . . ."

Ms. Donevant stated that this is a C-2 district and this district is supposed to be developed to be pedestrian friendly; this is what the town is trying to create there and there are no parking requirements for that district. Having parking located in the park that is actually away from the district would mean they can park and walk to the district; this is the intent. The intent is to reduce vehicular use. Ms. Donevant stated that the decision would be up to council; having paid parking in a park can be done but it is a pedestrian district.

There was some discussion that a merchant is located directly across from the park/parking as well so this is something to consider. Mr. Childs stated that this should be brought to council and agreed it is something that should be considered.

Mr. Maruca stated that he is more concerned with the restaurants and the bar where patrons would come for one to three hours. "Right at the end of Surfside Drive we have the pier and we have all kinds of parking."

140 **Mr. Maruca:** “Our tourists are not familiar with the parking system we have. You know a meter  
141 is easy you pull in, you see the meters, you put the money in but right now there’s been a  
142 tremendous amount of confusion with the central paying station. It’s new to a lot of people  
143 coming to our town but again, at the end of the street they pay for parking to go to that restaurant  
144 and here they’re going to get free parking.”

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146 Ms. Blair stated that Mr. Maruca makes a very good point but added that she would hate to see  
147 the new area dotted with parking meters and have them take away from the aesthetics the town is  
148 trying to create. Ms. Blair stated that at some point the hope was “as we went into other phases  
149 of this project, if it did progress, that we would have cafes and table and people able to have their  
150 tea or whatever out on the sidewalks and I hated the thought of seeing them but you make a very  
151 good point especially with . . . for some of the businesses, I agree with Mr. Childs you have a  
152 Cleaners that you don’t even have to turn off your car to run and pick up your cleaning and get  
153 back out there but then again you address that locals have their stickers and they wouldn’t have  
154 to anyway.”

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156 Ms. Fellner stated that she had spoken with Mr. Childs about meters not being considered in the  
157 downtown area but paystations would be considered for the area. Ms. Fellner stated that the  
158 town was contacting the owner of the lot where the mural is to see if they could come up with  
159 some kind of agreement to pay a percentage of paid parking. Ms. Blair stated that she is not  
160 opposed to have paid parking somewhere but would hate to see a whole sidewalk “jammed up  
161 with meters”. Ms. Blair stated that perhaps looking into other options could be placed in the  
162 recommendation to council. Ms. Fellner stated that Charleston does a nice job with paystation  
163 parking adding that they use smaller units in the downtown area. Mr. Truett stated that the town  
164 also would like to encourage the employees to not park on Surfside Drive; by giving them a  
165 parking lot and selling them a pass this would free up spaces on Surfside Drive. Ms. Donevant  
166 stated that council should look at the entire parking plan. Mr. Maruca stated that he had  
167 suggested placing meters on the west side of Ocean Blvd to help eliminate that parking situation.  
168 All property owners would be issued a parking pass for a fee and the owner would be able to  
169 distribute them to their renters to allow for additional parking since there are very few spots  
170 available at some of these rental places. Mr. Maruca stated that the town would get an influx of  
171 money in March, April and May adding that his rental company would be in the position to  
172 purchase 25 to 50 of those tags at whatever price to accommodate the tourists. Currently if the  
173 tourists park in the wrong place they would get a \$25 ticket and he feels it would be in the towns’  
174 best interest to pay a fee up front to avoid this.

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176 **Mr. Kohlmann:** “On the new drawing I see you have a bunch of extra spaces marked on Poplar,  
177 I don’t know what the street is next to west of Poplar; there’s a little side street there. Is all of  
178 those parking spots going to be included in the bid process?”

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180 Mr. Moore stated that he believes the town is still in negotiations on those parking spots. It was  
181 confirmed that on the current plan it just shows some parking spots that either currently exist or  
182 could exist in that area. Mr. Kohlmann asked about the crosswalks in the plan. Mr. Moore  
183 stated that the crosswalks are in the plan and the two ends are raised crosswalks to slow down  
184 traffic; it will act basically as a 6 inch speed bump. The idea was to put stamped asphalt in the  
185 crosswalk; it would be a brick design to tie in with the paver look. Mr. Kohlmann stated that

186 Market Commons has paver crosswalks. Ms. Donevant stated that the idea was for the town to  
187 change out the stamped crosswalks with pavers as the funds become available; it would be part  
188 of a future phase.

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190 **DISCUSSION: BUNDLING OF PROJECTS**

191 Ms. Fellner reported that the bundling would include the Surfside Drive redesign, Poplar Park  
192 plan, a concrete apron in front of the firestation, there are also some issues with the sidewalk that  
193 was installed on Poplar; they did not account for stormwater and this has been causing erosion  
194 problems and the town will do some grading there but the plan is to replace that sidewalk and put  
195 in some storm drains and also included would be the paving of a small alley behind the  
196 businesses on Surfside Drive. This was part of an agreement with Santee Cooper. Ms. Fellner  
197 reported that the concrete for the apron at the firestation will probably cost around \$25,000. If  
198 the town has someone working on the rest of the project it would make sense to have them do it  
199 all; the town would get a bigger bang for its buck. Mr. Childs asked if the contractors were  
200 responsible for the concrete apron. Ms. Fellner stated that this was a change order request that  
201 the previous Administrator would not sign off on. The contractor was going to install it for  
202 \$22,000 but the administrator had declined. Ms. Fellner added that this needs to be installed; the  
203 weight of the trucks will eventually take a toll on the street if it is not installed; the concrete  
204 apron will be around 8 inches deep. Mr. Truett asked of the town could also add the paving of  
205 the alleyway next to the Village Café. Ms. Fellner stated that this would depend on the added  
206 cost and whether council chooses to do it or not. Mr. Truett stated that if it costs the town  
207 another 3,000 to 4,000 dollars in the scheme of a \$200,000 project then he feels it is worth it.  
208 Ms. Blair stated that it would certainly be worth adding it in the bid and to ask for it to be broken  
209 down; if it was too costly it could be excluded. Ms. Donevant stated that the town would get the  
210 best price from a contractor who is already there doing the rest of the project. Mr. Childs made a  
211 motion to approve the recommendation presented with the bundling of projects. Mr. Truett  
212 seconded the motion. **All present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.**

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214 **FINALIZE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL**

215 Ms. Blair stated that this project has been discussed for many years and it is exciting to see it get  
216 started. Mr. Childs asked Ms. Fellner if this would be brought to council at the next meeting.  
217 Ms. Fellner stated that she could bring it to council at the next meeting. Mr. Childs asked what  
218 the estimated time frame would be to put it out to bid. Ms. Fellner stated that it could be done  
219 quickly; as soon as the 'ok' was received from council. Mr. Truett stated that he spoke to Mr.  
220 Strickland from Earthworks and he also confirmed that most of the bid is already completed and  
221 it should not take much time to put together a new one. Ms. Fellner added that the engineering  
222 for Poplar Park has already been done. Mr. Childs made a motion to bring a recommendation to  
223 council to move forward on the projects as presented in their entirety which includes Surfside  
224 Drive, Poplar Park, the firestation apron, sidewalk and the alley ways discussed. Mr. Truett  
225 seconded. **All present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.**

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227 The subcommittee discussed the lot where the mural is on the corner of Poplar and Surfside  
228 Drive. Mr. Truett stated that he would like to make that lot a sitting park area with benches and  
229 not a parking lot. The subcommittee agreed. It was discussed that there is still some parking  
230 available on the street which amounts to about 20 spaces.

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232 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

233 No additional public comments.

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235 **ADJOURNMENT**

236 Mr. Childs made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Truett seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned  
237 at 9:55 AM

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Sharon Pinnell, Town Clerk

243 Approved Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Robert Childs, Subcommittee Member

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Vicki Blair, Subcommittee Member

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Ann Dodge, Subcommittee Member

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Sammy Truett, Adhoc Subcommittee Member

