

A work session of Beaufort City Council was held on March 19, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, 1901 Boundary Street. In attendance were Mayor Billy Keyserling, Councilwoman Nan Sutton, Councilmen Mike McFee, Stephen Murray, and Phil Cromer, and Bill Prokop, city manager.

In accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d) as amended, all local media were duly notified of the time, date, place, and agenda of this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Keyserling called the work session to order at 5:03 p.m. [SEP]

DISCUSSION: LIGHT POLE STANDARDS AND/OR APPROPRIATE ZONING [SEP]

David Prichard said the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) discussed this issue at its meeting last night. The commission agreed that for predominantly auto-centric parking lots, 15' light poles were short, he said. The commissioners were okay with staff having some leeway to work with developers to put in taller light poles, if the poles aren't in a pedestrian space, Mr. Prichard said, and they recommended a range of 12' – 30'.

Mr. Prokop said the MPC's discussion also covered the fact that typically, tall light poles are 25' plus a 3' pedestal. The commissioners felt Mr. Prichard should have the flexibility to determine the pole height, he said.

Councilman Murray said in the Beaufort Code, the height limit for light poles is currently 15' in transect districts and 25' in conventional districts. He asked if the MPC's recommendation was that the maximum height could go to 28' in both districts. Mr. Prichard said that was the impression he got, and even that the maximum height could go to 30'.

Mayor Keyserling said he's hearing that the city should move forward with a text amendment.

Chuck Newton said this "was a much broader issue" when it came up last month. He said the Sea Island Coastal Coalition's issue is not with light pole heights but that they might be "picking at the code." There was so much input from the public and developers on the Beaufort Code, so he feels it "seems counterproductive" to "keep modifying the code on a sort of case-by-case basis." Mayor Keyserling said they weren't thinking about this issue when the code was written; now they realize that "nothing is going to happen fast, and this needs to be phased in." If the developer were redeveloping the whole parking lot right away, he said, this might be a different matter.

Councilwoman Sutton said she doesn't see this as picking apart the code, but as looking at "where we need to be flexible, when we need to be flexible."

Councilman Murray said council agreed when it passed the Beaufort Code that staff would make a tally of issues that arose with the code for review every 6 months. He doesn't think of this as picking the code apart, but as honoring the commitment that was made to stakeholders.

Mayor Keyserling compared this matter to the initial story requirements in the Boundary Street Redevelopment District, a requirement that was changed to be only "on principle corners," not having "it come all the way through." The initial requirement discouraged development, he said, rather than encouraging it. He feels it defeats the purpose of the code for the city to be "too rigid" with redevelopment. They want to "inspire development," not discourage it, Mayor Keyserling said.

Mr. Newton feels the "tilt needs to be toward *not* changing" the code, not toward changing it.

Mr. Prokop said, "We need to stop sending things to the" Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBOA) that don't fall within the board's purview. Also, the city always needs to be able to explain *why* things are being changed in the code, he said.

Councilman Murray said Mr. Newton's concern about light poles going beyond 30' in the future is "legitimate," but public input is important. There are still opportunities for that with this issue, as there will be for any future amendments. There is general agreement that what the city is aiming for is the vision of the Civic Master Plan, he said, but there needs to be a balance with the physical and environmental realities of redevelopment in a small, historic town.

SCHEDULE FOR THE UPDATE OF THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SEP

Mr. Prichard said this is the ten-year anniversary of the Comprehensive Plan, so it's due for an update. Staff will review the 2009 Comprehensive Plan and the Civic Master Plan and "assess how it is today" to determine "what needs to be changed." April 5 is the deadline for staff's assessment, he said, and then there will be a public meeting about the draft changes on April 8 at City Hall at 2:00 p.m. followed by a presentation to MPC on April 15. Mr. Prichard would then like to bring the draft to city council's work session on April 23.

The Town of Port Royal, Bluffton, Hilton Head, and the county are all also doing their comp plan updates, Mr. Prichard said, so they may work on some aspects of it together.

Councilman Murray said he'd be interested in what staff says about what needs to be modified. As for collaboration with other jurisdictions, he sees both sides; collaboration on costs would be good, for example, but he's concerned that the county and the other jurisdictions "are very different in some ways." He'd be concerned that with too much collaboration, the City of Beaufort would not get a comp plan that is "appropriate" for

it. Mr. Prichard said he's said that whatever happens as far as collaboration is concerned, city council would want "a unique comp plan for them," as would the other jurisdictions, though there are places where they "could find agreement."

Mayor Keyserling said the City of Beaufort, Town of Port Royal, and Beaufort County "did the form-based code together," and the result was "so generic" that there were aspects that the city didn't need, so it created the form-based code planning again on its own, and therefore "paid for" the plan "twice." All of the jurisdictions went farther on their comp plans than was required by law, Mayor Keyserling said, so he asked if "a good bit of the work toward a comp plan" update has already been done, given that, as well as the way the plan has been "tied to the budget" in the last ten years. Mr. Prichard said that's his expectation. Because council has been updating the city's strategic plan, he said, he thinks the comp plan will have been effectively updated, too.

Councilman McFee said his only concern is that the staff presentation to the public for its comments is scheduled for 2:00 p.m., and for transparency's sake, it might be better to have that meeting later, so it's not in the middle of the workday. He suggested 5:00 or 5:30 p.m. Mr. Prichard agreed and said he would amend the time on the announcement that has been sent to the newspaper.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) NEEDS

Mr. Prokop said "infrastructure" was the city's top priority, but **Barbara Johnson** told him when she made her presentation to council that "if we wanted to do infrastructure, we had to have our letter [of intent] in that day," and "I missed her deadline." He added that the city has applied for a \$500,000 grant for stormwater from a different entity than CDBG.

Deborah Johnson said there's "a fall category" that "includes special projects," but the city isn't currently eligible for that because of the Greenlawn Drive project. However, "if something shifts" (i.e., the Greenlawn Drive project is done by that time), and the city has chosen its top 3 to 5 priorities, it could apply in the fall category, so she suggested doing that so "you'll be covered." **Kathy Todd** said she agrees with that. If the priorities aren't put in, then "it precludes you from being able to apply" in the future, she said.

Mr. Prokop said he'd suggest the following categories, based on the strategic goals, in this order: affordable housing, stormwater, streetscapes, and infrastructure improvements.

Mayor Keyserling said if the Spanish Moss Trail extension remains a consideration, and if it were to go "through the interior in neighborhoods that qualify," it would be considered to be "streetscape improvements." Ms. Johnson suggested calling that priority "streetscape and trails," and said it would need to be in the city's top three priorities.

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SEP

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, and Section 70 (a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Law, **Councilman Murray made a motion, seconded by Councilman Cromer, to enter into Executive Session for an update on legal claims. The motion passed unanimously.**

Councilman Murray made a motion, second by Councilman McFee, to adjourn the Executive Session and resume the work session. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before council, the work session adjourned at 7:24 p.m.