



City Council Worksession

Meeting Minutes – Planning Conference Room – 1st Floor

April 18, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

5:01 PM

Stephen D. Murray, III

Members of Council in attendance - Neil Lipsitz, Mike McFee, Mitch Mitchell, Josh Scallate and Mayor Murray.

II. DISCUSSION – APPROVAL AUTHORITIES/CHAPTER 9

A. Metropolitan Planning Commission.

Curt Freese, Community and Economic Development Director stated that some of the goals for today were to discuss some of the Committees and processes that are located in Chapter 9. He went over the Metropolitan Planning Commission's structure and some concerns. He stated that the question is should the City establish its own Planning Commission.

Mayor Murray feels that the City should stand up its own Planning Commission, and sunset the Metropolitan Planning Commission. Policy and major regulatory issues can be sent to the Northern Regional Plan Implementation Committee for discussion.

Councilman Mitchell inquired what the relationship would be between the City Planning Commission and the Northern Regional Plan Implementation Committee.

Councilman Lipsitz asked if we did sunset the MPC, would Council be making the final decision or would this need to go to the Metropolitan Planning Commission. Mayor Murray stated no matter what is done, we would need to notify our partners in Beaufort County and the Town of Port Royal prior to the decision being made. Beaufort County would probably have no major issues, but the Town of Port Royal would then need to set up their own Planning Commission.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee, expressed there is some merit in having our own Planning Commission.

Mr. Freese stated that any changes would need to be made by Ordinance.

The following addressed Council:

Sue Cosner, Chair of the MPC, a City appointed member.

Wendy Zara, Co-Chair of the MPC, a Town of Port Royal appointed member.

Graham Trask, 1211 Bay Street.

Paul Trask, City of Beaufort.

Benji Morillo, Chair of the Design Review Board.

Grant McClure, Coastal Conservation League.

Jeremiah Smith, Chair of the Historic District Review Board.

Council is supportive of the City having its own Planning Commission, but that ample time needs to be given to the County, and the Town of Port Royal, to consider what they would need to implement moving forward.

B. Text Amendment request regarding Redevelopment Review Authority.

Mr. Freese stated that a citizen submitted a text amendment change request. The proposal would be to change the reviewing authority on the Boundary/Bladen Street Redevelopment Districts from the staff level and send it to the Design Review Board. This was heard by the Metropolitan Planning Commission on December 19, 2022. The Board approved this request.

Mayor Murray inquired if the Design Review Board and the Planning Commission should be combined.

Councilman Scallate stated he would be supportive of the two entities merging together.

The following addressed Council:

Libby Anderson, requester of the text amendment.

Paul Trask, City of Beaufort.

Lisa Sundrla, Historic Beaufort Foundation.

Benjie Morillo, Chair of the Design Review Board.

Courtney Worrell, 303 Associates.

Dianne Farrelly, 2415 Oak Haven Street.

Ian Scott, 907 Emmons Street, Director, Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Graham Trask, 1211 Bay Street.

Alice Howard, Beaufort County District 4, City resident.

Mayor Murray is supportive of the courtesy review that was suggested by Ms. Anderson. Staff should come up with a notification tool that pushes out all new applications to the citizens. This will allow for public feedback before final approval by staff.

Councilman Lipsitz would like to see staff level approval for smaller projects, and larger projects be sent to the Board.

Councilman Mitchell would like to see the approval stay with staff, but that there be time for public opinion.

Councilman Scallate agrees with the courtesy review notice and the reviewing authority staying with staff.

III. ADJOURN

7:07 PM

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