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A meeting of the Beaufort-Port Royal Metropolitan Planning Commission was held on **June 20, 2016 at 5:30 p.m.** in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Vice Chairman James Crower, Commissioners Robert Semmler, Tim Rentz, and Bill Harris, and Libby Anderson, City of Beaufort planner. Chairman Joe DeVito and George Johnston were absent.

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

Vice Chairman Crower called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Commissioner Harris made a motion, second by Commissioner Semmler, to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2016 meeting. The motion to approve the minutes as submitted was approved 4-0.

Commissioner Semmler made a motion, second by Commissioner Rentz, to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2016 special meeting. Commissioner Bill Harris was not present at that meeting, so he abstained from voting. **The motion to approve the minutes as submitted was approved 3-0.**

REVIEW PROJECTS FOR THE CITY OF BEAUFORT

City of Beaufort – Street Naming

Naming a new street located at 1120 Ribaut Road (the new fire station), “Firehouse Lane”

Applicant: City of Beaufort

Ms. Anderson showed the location of the street and said that the firefighters had been polled and selected this name, which is available, per the county’s 911 office.

Commissioner Semmler made a motion to name the street “Firehouse Lane.”

Commissioner Rentz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Semmler asked about the fire station across from the county buildings on Ribaut Road, and Ms. Anderson said that’s the county station. The new fire station at 1120 Ribaut Road replaces the Mossy Oaks fire station. Commissioner Semmler remarked on the number of fire stations so close to one another. Ms. Anderson said the location of the new station was “carefully selected in conjunction with the Town of Port Royal,” so it could serve both Port Royal and Beaufort.

City of Beaufort – Annexation

Annexing a parcel of property located at 255 Sea Island Parkway, identified as R200 018

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000 054F 0000 and zoning it Highway Commercial District – The current zoning is S1 Industrial.

Applicant: Beaufort Retail Investment

This is a rezoning request as a result of a request for annexation, Ms. Anderson said; she showed it on an overhead projector. It's approximately ¼-acre in area and is undeveloped. The Open Land Trust owned it previously, she said. The property is contiguous to the existing city limits. All municipal services will be available upon annexation.

The parcel is currently zoned S1-Industrial under the county's development code, Ms. Anderson said. Moderate- to high-intensity uses are permitted. The proposed zoning is Highway Commercial District, which permits all types of office and commercial uses, including auto-oriented uses.

Ms. Anderson described those properties surrounding this parcel that are also zoned Highway Commercial District. With regard to surrounding land uses, Walmart is there, and there are 3 other outparcels available for development. The Island Shops development – which will include Walmart –is zoned PUD (planned unit development), she said; a produce packing operation and the Frogmore Airport are also near this parcel.

Letters were sent to adjacent property owners, Ms. Anderson said, and the Lady's Island Business and Professionals Association was also notified. No public comments were received. She said staff recommends approval of the application.

Vice Chairman Crower asked if the larger property behind this one on Airport Circle was part of the PUD. Ms. Anderson said it's not. The PUD was approved a number of years ago, she said; this property "was brought in in July of last year and was zoned Highway Commercial." She said she felt sure the intent was to combine them into a developable lot. Commissioner Semmler asked if it was correct that the taxpayers had given money to the Open Land Trust to purchase this piece of property, and then the Open Land Trust sold it to Walmart. Ms. Anderson said she knew the Open Land Trust had owned it, and at one point, the county had owned it and used this piece of property as a buffer for the county's convenience center.

Kevin Rogers, WRS, said the old dump site was donated by the Trasks to the county, and at the same time, the strip in front of it was donated to the Open Land Trust, which the Trasks helped to start.

Chuck Newton, Sea Island Coalition, said there had been discussions about the movement of vehicles at the packing shed. He asked if the annexation and rezoning would "affect the opportunities for them to move their trucks in and out" because it will

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be very congested. Vice Chairman Crower said he would guess that annexation and rezoning would have no effect on that.

Lolita Watson, Ribaut Road, said she had arrived late to the meeting and asked if this property “is the same property the Open Land Trust had.” Commissioner Semmler said they had just discussed that. He told Ms. Watson what Mr. Rogers had explained to the board about the property being donated to the county and the Open Land Trust. What the development will do with the parcel is unknown, Commissioner Semmler said, though “we hope it’s a buffer.”

Ms. Watson asked the tax value of the property. Commissioner Semmler asked Mr. Rogers to explain the situation again. Mr. Rogers said it was his understanding that the land for the dump site had been donated to the county around 40 years ago; at about the same time, “the little strip that were asking to be rezoned and annexed was donated by the same family to the Open Land Trust.” Some members of that family – the Trasks – “started the Open Land Trust,” and WRS bought the property from the trust for “a pretty significant amount of money,” following a unanimous vote to sell it by the trust’s board of directors, Mr. Rogers said. Vice Chairman Crower said if the Open Land Trust owned it, they could sell it.

Commissioner Semmler asked if a traffic impact analysis had been completed. Ms. Anderson said it had been done for Walmart, which includes the outparcels. **Commissioner Rentz made a motion to recommend approval of the annexation of the parcel. Vice Chairman Crower seconded.** Commissioner Harris asked the outcome of that traffic analysis. Ms. Anderson said a signal would be installed at the corner of Airport Circle and Sea Island Parkway. The addition of this ¼-acre property will not likely change the traffic flow and circulation, she said, “even for the packing shed uses.” A planted median will be “installed along the frontage of the Walmart property, down to the traffic signal, so any access to this property (will have) to be from Airport Circle.”

The packing shed has “come to the city with ideas to rework their access,” Ms. Anderson said. The city is trying to engage a consultant for traffic issues on Sea Island Parkway, and they want to hire him/her before the packing shed issues makes “any major changes.” She said the city hopes the traffic study’s recommendations can be implemented before the next produce packing season starts.

Vice Chairman Crower asked if Ms. Anderson was saying that there was access planned off of Sea Island Parkway into Walmart. She replied that there would be two access points to Walmart: full turning access and “right in-right out further to the east.” There will be internal access from the Walmart development and from Airport Circle, but not from Sea Island Parkway; the access points have already been determined, Ms. Anderson said. **The motion passed unanimously.**

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Commissioner Semmler made a motion to rezone the parcel Highway Commercial District. Commissioner Harris seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

STATUS REPORT ON BEAUFORT CODE PROCESS

The Metropolitan Planning Commission started its review of the code at two meetings last month, Ms. Anderson said. At both meetings, there was a good deal of public comment, especially about the Depot neighborhood development standards, and as a result, staff has “stepped back a little bit on the code,” she said. They have planned several meetings; this week staff will meet with stakeholders and those interested in the change in zoning in the Depot area.

The development community has some issues with the code, Ms. Anderson said, such as “the authority granted to the administrator.” Staff plans “to have at least 4 meetings with that group,” and there are “likely to be some changes to the code after that,” she said. Staff also feels they need to meet with the Hermitage Road neighborhood and perhaps other neighborhoods, so residents understand what is being proposed in the code in their neighborhoods, Ms. Anderson said. After these meetings, staff will do another draft of the code, give the public time to review it, and then it will go back to the Metropolitan Planning Commission, probably in August. Everything is still available online, she said.

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

Ms. Anderson said the “only outstanding item” was a parcel at 46 Robert Smalls Parkway (at the corner of Neil Road) that has been annexed into the city and zoned Highway Commercial District. The owner hopes to convert it to “some trail-related use,” she said.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Semmler asked Ms. Anderson about a house on Ribaut Road that is dumping a lot of dirt into the Beaufort River, which extends their backyard. He asked if that is allowed. Ms. Anderson said no work is permitted below the critical line without a permit from OCRM, and there is a critical area buffer. Ms. Watson said the people Commissioner Semmler is referring to are her neighbors, and they have “faced major erosion,” so they had to put in a new seawall. Commissioner Semmler said it’s 20’–30’ high.

Vice Chairman Crowder adjourned the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

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