

BEAUFORT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1 -- October 30, 1997

Ron Huffman, Robert and Company

Lee Walton, Robert and Company

Jeff Walker, Robert and Company

Attendees:

Mayor David Taub

Gary Cannon, Beaufort City Manager

Isiah Smalls, Beaufort Public Works Director

Libby Anderson, Beaufort City Planner

6 members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee

13 additional citizens of Beaufort

Summary Minutes of Public Workshop #1

Introductions:

Opening of the meeting by Mayor Taub.

The Mayor provided a thorough explanation of the Comprehensive Planning Process for Beaufort. The importance of a new plan rather than an update of the previous plan was stressed based on the fact that the previous plan was not a comprehensive plan.

The Mayor extended apologies from City Council members who were not able to attend.

City Planner Libby Anderson introduced other city representatives including the City Manager and director of Public Works and introduced Ron Huffman, Lee Walton and Jeff Walker of Robert and Company.

Introduction to Comprehensive Land Use Planning in South Carolina

Ron Huffman discussed aspects of the South Carolina *Comprehensive Planning Guide for Local Governments*.

The City of Beaufort Comprehensive Planning Process

Description was given for the process of creating the plan and for each element of the plan:

Lee Walton presented a summary of the demographic profile of Beaufort. An explanation of data available for Beaufort was given. Statistics were presented for the 1990 Beaufort population, populations of surrounding jurisdictions, and population projections for the Beaufort/Port Royal Island area.

Working Sessions: Natural and Cultural Resources

Instructions were given to the Workshop participants to divide into three groups for working discussions of Natural and Cultural Resources in Beaufort. Comments and ideas from the working groups were as follows:

Natural Resources:

The marshes and wetland areas are very valuable to Beaufort. They are endangered by pollution from boaters and nonpoint source pollution from stormwater runoff. The recent nonpoint source pollution ordinance must be enforced and strengthened.

The harbor and rivers of Beaufort must be preserved. Problems exist with pollution, dredging, and improper mooring of boats.

1. The city should investigate regulations on mooring of boats and houseboats. "Zoning" of the water areas may be appropriate. Policies on floating houses should be developed.
2. Enforcement of existing regulations on boaters must be improved.
3. Waterways must maintain their natural direction and flow. Dredging is a serious issue.
4. The possibility of connecting the Beaufort River to Battery Creek at the Boundary Street "DOT Property" should be investigated as a way of improving water traffic.

Zoning should enforce proper watershed management.

The scenic vistas of the marshes and rivers must be preserved. The Open Land Trust should continue to receive support from the City in its acquisition of properties for conservation.

Air quality needs to be protected from automotive emissions and open air burning. Tour buses also significantly contribute to air pollution. Tour vehicles should be non-polluting.

Cultural Resources

The Palmetto Greenway Program should be given high priority for implementation.

A bicycle component of the greenways plan needs to be developed and implemented.

There are some problems with access to existing parks and open spaces. The parks need to be networked together. A plan for passive parks and open space should be developed.

The city should consider trading some park areas that are better suited for development. Small parks that are not accessible could be traded to achieve larger and more accessible

park areas.

Many parks are in need on renovation:

1. Boundary Street tennis courts
2. North Street Park
3. Waterfront Park
4. Pigeon Point Park

City should pursue the development of a botanical gardens that could emphasize the resources of the coastal environment.

An outdoor performing arts venue should be developed in downtown Beaufort. The Waterfront Park is a possibility along with Pigeon Point park.

Transportation solutions are needed to enhance and preserve the historic downtown. A shuttle service should be required for large events downtown. Non-polluting transportation solutions should be sought, but no themed trolleys or streetcars.

Any more “ISTEA” type streetscape projects in the historic district must be more sensitive to businesses and the need to function normally during construction

Traffic through downtown is threatening the quality and stability of the area and its buildings.

Places of entrance into the historic district need to be marked and enhanced.

A landscape ordinance could address the problem of buffers between land uses.

The University of South Carolina at Beaufort needs to be supported as a valuable asset to the community.

The deterioration of the NW Quadrant area needs to be addressed.