



**SURFSIDE BEACH TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP – ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS
115 US HIGHWAY 17 NORTH, SURFSIDE BEACH, SC
JANUARY 6, 2018 AT 10:00 A.M.**

CALL TO ORDER. Mayor Childs called the workshop to order at 10:00 a.m. Mayor Childs, Mayor Pro Tempore Ott, and Councilmembers Courtney, Pellegrino, Samples and Stevens were in attendance. Councilmember Johnson was absent. A quorum was present. Others present: Administrator Fellner; Town Clerk Herrmann, and Deputy Administrator Harrah.

Mr. Harrah introduced Ordinance #17-0862 to establish the Entertainment “E” District, and outlined the parking requirements, a copy of which is on file. Parking requirements have been a main concern throughout discussions about the E district. The E district is an opportunity to brand and market the pier area, which should revitalize current businesses and bring in new businesses. The resulting increase to the hospitality and accommodations tax base is a benefit to the town. There is no other district like this on the Grand Strand. There are roughly 226 private parking spaces. The town has 121 spaces between Yaupon and the pier. There are 61 spaces on Surfside Drive. There is a potential loss of 28 spaces, if the area businesses decide to have outdoor dining or improve their buildings. The remainder of the spaces are protected and shall remain parking subject to Section 17-420(T) which states: *Any lot(s) containing parking areas for existing businesses that do not have a structure relinquishes the right to develop the area devoted to parking until such time as parking is provided elsewhere by the business/property owner. The required off-street spaces may be located and maintained on an adjacent property not to exceed 400 feet from the lot or use served.* When the pier was built, there were no parking requirements. The town will be required to have one space for every 200 square feet (87 spaces just for the pier; not for the businesses on the pier) when the pier is rebuilt, if the E district is not adopted. All new construction or repairs over 48-percent must comply with current flood damage prevention ordinances. Establishing this E district will ensure that the area remains a commercial district, and eliminates residential construction in the E district. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding possible residential construction that could occur under the current ordinance, and the potential to lose accommodation tax revenue due to second home owners moving into their beach houses permanently, and also increase the demand for services.

Mr. Ott said asked if this included a mixed-use area. Mr. Harrah said yes, but there's never been an area designated on a map. Mr. Ott suggested including that while this is being done. I need to know and understand how this impacts the future. What will this end up looking like? We need to see projections for how the area will look five years, 10 years from now. Mr. Harrah said visioning is very important as you look ahead. Do you want to see an area that is only commercial? Or do you want to see an area that that may evolve from commercial to residential? This area can be set out to be a walkable area in the future. If the town decides to build a boardwalk the E district would be the destination for the walkers. The Myrtle Beach Sky Wheel seats a 100 people, but there is not one parking spot provided, because it's all walkable area. The Second Avenue pier that has parking out private parking out front, and the city has paid parking beside it. The town is unique, because we own the parking for the pier. Yaupon lot is a carryover for everybody in the area, not just specifically for the pier. Mr. Ott asked if future parking could be provided away from this area from which a shuttle service would operation. Mr. Harrah said that is certainly a possibility that Town Council could consider. He displayed a map of vacant lots that could possibly be used as satellite parking provided a transit system was in place.

Ms. Samples said I support the ordinance. What is the intent in including the Yaupon parking lot as part of the district? Mr. Harrah said to protect the parking lot from being able to have any kind of expansion. The town attorney suggested removing the residential house located next to the parking lot. Ms. Samples asked if any discussion was held with the owner residential house. Mr. Harrah said other than the hearings; nobody has come in with comments, other than a few business people and a few residents. Ms. Samples was concerned about allowing outdoor music until 12 midnight, and under Section 17-396.34 restaurants and other establishments with outdoor dining it states no live music or sound produced through electronics speakers shall be permitted. During our festivals we use that pier parking lot and we have loudspeakers. Since we're so concerned about following our own ordinances, will that require the town to get a special permit for its festivals? Mr. Harrah said the noise ordinance already establishes a decibel limit; if it doesn't exceed the decibel limit it is fine. We were not going to consider

56 having special permits for town events. There's already businesses that have acoustical outdoor events on their
57 decks. The timeframe can be adjusted. I don't think it's necessarily going to be an issue with loudspeakers.
58

59 Mr. Stevens said in that particular district there are 121 public parking spaces, and 226 private spaces. I'm
60 glad the music was mentioned. We have a lot of people in the area that are residential and tourist. They may not
61 want to listen to music after ten o'clock. I think that that definitely needs to be changed to ten o'clock. Many times
62 I've seen the town pass an ordinance and turn around and violate their own ordinance. Under this ordinance it seems
63 like you've actually reduced the setbacks on the lots, but everybody that rebuilds in that area will have to build up
64 and have parking underneath. Mr. Harrah said that's correct. That code is set out in the flood zone and it's
65 automatically required. Mr. Stevens said one of things that concerns me is I asked what would happen if we got hit
66 with category five storm. The Surfside Beach Resort is an iconic landmark that would not be able to be rebuilt under
67 this code. I would like to see the Surfside Beach Resort grandfathered. Mr. Harrah said a single property cannot be
68 treated differently in a rezoning, but if either the Surfside Beach Resort, the Holiday Inn or any height exceeding
69 structures are destroyed, the owners could ask for a height variance from BZA to enable them to rebuild. A lengthy
70 discussion ensued regarding restrictions on height limitations, building codes, elevator and stairwell requirements,
71 impact to tourism if the hotels were destroyed, and what or how investors may join together to rebuild.
72

73 Mr. Courtney said we're creating an at entertainment district. When we first started with this, I thought it
74 was going to be a light entertainment district, because the information was not clear. You want an entertainment
75 district, but you don't want music after ten. I'm not sure that will work. If you're worried about the visitors and
76 residents staying down the block, maybe we should not be doing this. Where do we go with this? If the residents
77 want an entertainment zone, that is what we will give them. He continued saying he didn't understand putting a time
78 limit on outdoor entertainment, and discussed the atmosphere at Garden City pier, which was much busier than the
79 town's pier, because it has a bar at the end of the pier, dancing, and an arcade. Have you contacted the area year
80 round residents for comments? Mr. Harrah said we had the public meeting at the planning commission for the
81 residents. Mr. Courtney said it was ridiculous to charge a dollar to get on the pier. Putting a time limit on the music
82 is [questionable.] If this is an entertainment district, let's do it right. The people that live here year around don't want
83 to lose their parking. That's what I hear from the constituents. It's not the town's place to tell them to walk and get
84 exercise. This a golf cart community, and I don't want to lose any parking. A discussion ensued regarding the
85 number of spaces, and potential loss of parking based on future development and outdoor dining permits, and
86 frontage road parking. Mr. Courtney said he speaks with tourists. After travelling 13 hours, a family with young
87 children will likely leave the area if everything is closed.
88

89 Ms. Samples said the ordinance regards outdoor noise. Being on the beach, the outdoor noise carries pretty
90 far. My concern was the outdoor entertainment. The ordinance has always been to end at midnight. So far we've not
91 changed. We're just discussing options. Nobody has come up with any specific recommendations. We should be
92 mindful of the fact that noise carries pretty far when you're outside. That is something that I think this counsel just
93 needs to have a discussion about. Many tourists come to enjoy the Family Beach. I want to see the pier area
94 improved upon. I think what the E district will help do that. I want to see some progress, change, and improvement
95 in the area, we are the Family Beach. I don't want to lose that. Putting in some sort of controls, I personally do not
96 think is a bad thing, and certainly don't want to compare us to Garden City pier.
97

98 Mayor Childs said I agree with Mr. Courtney. I think everybody up here is visualizing every restaurant
99 there having a loud steel band the same time. I don't think that's the case. I think most people down here on vacation
100 enjoy themselves staying up late, and midnight is not too late. I don't think that many bands will be outside at the
101 same time. Mr. Stevens said many times I can hear the bands at Scotty's Beach Bar from my house on 1st Avenue
102 North when I'm sitting on my front porch. If I can hear music from my house and I'm hard of hearing, how loud will
103 the music be for others who can hear well? I wouldn't have a problem with an acoustic guitar playing at a sidewalk
104 café. But you would be able to hear a full-fledged band. Mr. Courtney said I worked on the waterways 15 years, and
105 I worked with nightclubs on waters. I know how the sound carries. I dealt with party boats and had to advance on
106 them. The point I'm trying to make is, if we are going to have an entertainment district, it needs to be just that. There
107 aren't any homeowners near this district. Sound will carry. I hear it from Wild Water & Wheels, and once in a while
108 Surfside Freddie's bar. I just wish this council would reconsider. Mr. Stevens believed only acoustic bands should
109 be allowed outside to eliminate noise problems, because I don't think you can hear that from a long distance.
110

Town Council Workshop – Entertainment District
January 6, 2018

111 Mr. Ott said we aren't here to discuss decibels. Bands like MegaDeath and the Suicide Clown Posse will
112 never perform in Surfside. If the music from Scotty's didn't keep you awake, it shouldn't have been brought up.
113 Let's end this conversation and move on. I'd like to see them open and calm outside music till two in the morning.
114 This is an entertainment district. That's what we do for a living here. This is this is a resort, and that's what I want it
115 to be. I want people to come here and have fun, and not go home at ten o'clock. I thought parking was the main
116 issue.

117
118 Mr. Truett, representing the business committee, said I have talked to several of the business committee
119 members who have a few concerns. One was that if the district is established, it needs to benefit the town. I
120 personally think it's a good idea, because we discussed years back about annexation; growing the town; growing our
121 footprint, and growing our tax base. I think we all know we're not going to do that. So we have to be creative within
122 our footprint. I think this E district will creating more tax revenue; more hospitality money, and more business
123 license revenue. Regarding the outdoor music, I agree with 12 o'clock. Let's do it. That's what I have envisioned in
124 the E district. Street cafés much like we have in the business district.

125
126 Mr. Courtney said the number one complaint by the business owners on Surfside Drive is that they cannot
127 have a menu board displayed three feet past their business. Mr. Truett said that is up to council to change the rules.
128 This is this is a perfect opportunity, if this is what we want to see then we need to encourage it by relaxing some of
129 the advertising signs, and sandwich boards requirements. The business committee is about driving businesses to
130 Surfside Beach. I think the entertainment district is a perfect example of that. We're not going to have any
131 residential property in the E district; it protects businesses there. That's a good thing. We think it's safe for the most
132 part. It's a good idea, and we appreciate the consideration. We bogged down the parking, but if you look around the
133 other area piers, we provide more parking any of them by far. Mr. Courtney said I just want to make sure we are not
134 losing any parking for our constituents or our residents. Mr. Truett said the only parking you would potentially lose
135 be six spaces if an outdoor café was set up. Worst case scenario, you lose 28 parking spaces. Again, the business
136 committee believes this is a good idea to drive business to Surfside Beach.

137
138 Mr. Stevens said the 61 parking spaces on Surfside Drive were included in the total, but they are limited to
139 two hours, unless you have a permit. What would be done there? Mr. Harrah said that was up to Town Council to
140 develop a comprehensive parking plan. Perhaps an option to have free parking after 7 o'clock should be considered;
141 or placing meters on Surfside Drive or sell decals. The options for the body to consider are wide open.

142
143 Mr. Ott said Mr. Harrah was right. We need to ask ourselves, i.e. Town Council, what we're going to do
144 about this. I believe we can do this and do it right. Mayor Childs said Mr. Ott was absolutely correct. Mr. Harrah
145 said I've been revisiting old ordinances. If something unforeseen comes up in the future, Town Council can revisit
146 this ordinance to adjust and adapt it to the town's needs.

147
148 Ms. Mary Maruca, 7th Avenue South, said I have grave concerns about late night music. Neal and Pam's
149 has always closed their doors at 10 o'clock at night so noise won't affect their neighbors. They have been a good
150 neighbor. Sometimes people staying at my beach house next to Scotty's complain because they don't like the
151 afternoon karaoke. In the afternoon, we don't care. At night, they general close outdoor music about 10. Not
152 everyone that goes on vacation goes to bars. We take our family on vacation, and we're probably done for the day at
153 by 9 o'clock. We have to look at all of the different things that families do when going on vacation. I want to protect
154 those that are coming with families that want to just enjoy the beach, and go home and be done by 9 o'clock or 10
155 o'clock. I own Old Colony Realty. We hear the complaints. There are noise problems. I understand that you want
156 this to be an E district, but we also want to keep that area good for the families who already invested and rent there.
157 The beach houses are businesses and we need to protect them, also. I spoke with Chief Hofmann about the parking.
158 Even now, Scotty's lot fills up and overflow comes into my office parking. Unless we are busy, we never
159 complained to them. To think that you're not going to have other parking issue by growing the area, you're only
160 fooling yourself. I'm not saying that you shouldn't be doing this, but parking is always going to be an issue. The
161 chief said we can issue a citation to illegally parked cars, but I don't know what good that would do. Give the area
162 businesses some other options for someone that would tow the car immediately, if they so choose. Let's be realistic,
163 people will not walk to this area. Please be concerned with the neighbors around the area.

164
165 Mr. Matt Scalise, Scalise Realty, said it seems the town is headed in the right direction with this
166 entertainment district. We are excited about the possibilities and are looking at what kind of contribution we can

167 make to further enhance the town over the years. My family has done a lot to redevelop the area. We redeveloped
168 the pier and then sold it to the town. The town has enhanced it further. The rebuild is a work in process. We don't
169 know exactly what will come about, but assuming this proposal is adopted, we're looking at different possibilities of
170 what we can do to enhance the area. Aside from having businesses that are profitable, we would like to do
171 something to basically help revitalize the area, and that is a positive asset for the community. I understand the
172 council is considering adopting an ordinance that will potentially encourage hundreds of thousands worth of
173 investment in that small area to revitalize it. Otherwise, it is just going to be stagnant and not change. Our company
174 has chosen to build restaurants in the pier area, instead of residential property. River City Café and Bubba's has their
175 own parking areas, where individuals are welcomed to park to walk over to the beach. It is shortsighted to delay
176 adopting the entertainment district for the loss of possibly 5-percent of the over 400 parking spaces in the immediate
177 area, which includes public and private spaces. This is a small price to pay for positive progress. If diners are at
178 restaurants until ten or 11 at night, keep the meters active because that will be more revenue for the town. Losing
179 private parking spaces should not be considered, because the town does not own them. Mr. Scalise continued with
180 several examples of how the parking could be utilized. We all want something everybody can be proud of, and
181 again, I think this is a win-win scenario. Hopefully, the businesses, the town, and the residents can all benefit by
182 [establishing this entertainment district.] I suggest increasing the height limit to match the hotel, because it is highly
183 unlikely anyone would build higher than two stories, because of all the other limitations. That would eliminate
184 concerns about a second level on the pier buildings and also allow reconstruction if the hotel was destroyed.

185
186 Mr. Stevens said several years ago a group met to discuss how the town could create more business. The
187 Chamber of Commerce said the town should create a destination where people want to come. Our pier was our
188 destination. The only way were going to get investment in this area is to have that destination that will benefit
189 everybody that rents condos, beach homes, and that have businesses in the area. We've talked about creating a
190 boardwalk along the oceanfront from River City Café to Scotty's Bar. Surfside needs the revenue, so we need to get
191 the pier rebuilt. I prefer a concrete pier, which will cost more, but in the long run will last for years and years. What
192 is going to be the benefit of the town, not just now, but 20 years from now? We need to leave future generations our
193 legacy.

194
195 Mr. Phil Vassar, Surfside Beach Resort, said I was a resident here for 35 years. We are Surfside Beach, not
196 the Jersey Shore; not Myrtle Beach with nightclubs. We've had some self-regulation from the business point of view
197 in that area already. The point was made that at 9 o'clock Scotty's Beach Bar, since we've taken it over, takes the
198 bands inside. Neal and Pam's does the same thing. The people who rent here come with their families. I like to have
199 the opportunity for my five-year-old lay to down and not have a rock-n-roll band playing. My opinion is that this
200 district may not have been named correctly. I believe it will be more of a restaurant and entertainment district than
201 just an entertainment district. We have said for years that we are the oceanfront hotel in the resort Town of Surfside
202 Beach. We got a great family oriented resort town. I totally endorses the E district. I think it can be a great idea, and
203 is good for business. Mr. Harrah did a great job of reaching out to those of us in the business community to explain
204 some of the parking, because I had parking concerns, too. I think that there is a good plan in place so that this can
205 happen. I would ask that you reconsider that outdoor entertainment should be allowed until midnight, because there
206 are beach houses and people all along Ocean Boulevard that have been coming to Surfside Beach for years because
207 we are a family beach. Again, thank you very much for having the insight and vision to help the Town of Surfside
208 Beach grow. Business taxes provide 84-percent of the budget that runs the town to give residents the quality of life
209 that they enjoy. Thank you for the opportunity speak to you.

210
211 Mr. Boyd Sadler, 8th Avenue South, said I think the entertainment is probably a really good plan, if you
212 take care of the parking. I think the concept of opening up a business without having a place for your customers to
213 park is like putting the cart before the horse. I think that everybody's really putting some effort into this. I really like
214 this. It's about the best thing I've seen, since I've been coming to the meetings. I don't think anybody really
215 suggested to actually check into the parking. With 303 vacant lots in town, how many would be available to
216 purchase, and can the town afford them? I don't want to see an eight story parking garage. Out of towners would
217 think it's great to park for \$10 a day, but what is the cost to the view of the neighborhoods around that area? I think
218 satellite parking is a phenomenal idea. Establish a transportation system prior to that. It would be expensive, but it
219 would also be a benefit in time. Using golf carts instead of shuttle busses would enhance the town's family beach
220 atmosphere. Think about parking; think about handling the traffic you are going to have. If people come here and
221 there is no parking, they will leave. Find out how many of those 303 lots are available, and can we afford them.

222

Town Council Workshop – Entertainment District
January 6, 2018

223 Mr. Ott said thank you for your input. That's what we needed. Mr. Truett's [description] of Surfside Beach
224 is perfect. That's who we are. We're not a concert town. I want to have all restaurants and things for people do. We
225 have outdoor events a couple of times a year, but they are by special permit, and they are over by ten or eleven
226 o'clock. We need to become that destination. I said at the council meeting that I wouldn't vote for the E district
227 unless I understood that we can handle the parking. Now I see that we can. We can do the right thing. We need to
228 work together with our business community.
229

230 Mr. Pellegrino said the goal is to make a destination so we can bring more customers; bring more visitors;
231 promote our town; bring more first-time visitors, and bring more families here for vacation. I think Mr. Harrah did a
232 good job writing the ordinance to address the parking issue. I think council needs to give Mr. Harrah direction on the
233 time for the music to stop. We've discussed ten o'clock and twelve o'clock, but no direction has been given. I see
234 both sides of the discussion. We do have a lot of families here. I only lived a few blocks from the pier and I hear
235 music in the summer time, but doesn't really prevent me from sleeping or going about my business. Obviously, if
236 you were staying right next to the pier that can be an issue. Mr. Courtney made a good point, are we creating a
237 destination. In the summertime everything runs later. After spending the day on the beach, dinner is later than the
238 normal six o'clock when you're on vacation. There are many visitors that want to go out later. I do like the fact that
239 our businesses already bring their music inside at a certain time, and are good neighbors. Thank you all for coming
240 out.
241

242 Mr. Courtney thanked everyone for attending and said please understand when I say this, I don't expect The
243 Who to be playing on the pier or the Country Music Festival. Many establishments with live entertainment don't
244 begin playing until 9:00 p.m. I think the businesses can regulate that kind of problem. It is up to council to decide
245 what we are here in Surfside Beach. Yes, we are the family beach, but we are supported by the rentals and the
246 businesses. It disturbs me that families come to walk on the pier and find a locked gate. I think the businesses can
247 police their own music. Thank you very much for coming out.
248

249 Mr. Stevens said I hope that council will really listen closely to this and think about what we need to do for
250 the long-term. This is a good way for economic development, and Surfside needs it. Personally, I'd love to see a
251 bunch of rooftop restaurants in that area. Imagine sitting there next to the beach at a rooftop restaurant listening to
252 the waves, watching the ocean with the moon shining on the water. That's the type of things people like. You create
253 the destination. We have to be bold sometimes, and this is time to be bold. Create something that's going to last us
254 for years and years. Thank you.
255

256 Mayor Childs said I think a lot of these issues can be addressed once we adopt this. It will be hard to
257 resolve every single issue in advance. I really feel that that Town Council can address any issue that comes about
258 regarding this district. I don't really see a lot of bands playing outside. I don't think the restaurant are big enough to
259 have bands. There won't be any monstrous buildings built there. Some of the conversation seems to imply that every
260 building will have an outside band and that is not going to happen.
261

262 Ms. Samples said thank you very much, Mr. Truett, for representing the business committee. We appreciate
263 that. Ms. Fellner and Mr. Harrah, great job on this. I know you've put a lot of time and effort into it. I do not have an
264 issue with the parking. I think filled parking lots are a good thing. I do support the district, and certainly will be
265 voting in favor. I see that it is on the agenda for Tuesday night, and I think that's great. Mr. Pellegrino brought up a
266 good point; we do need to provide direction. Reading the ordinance, it is specific to outdoor entertainment. My
267 recommendation for outdoor entertainment is that it ceases at ten o'clock. I will not change that opinion come
268 Tuesday night's meeting. I have no problem with it being taken indoor and going for as long as they want. My
269 position is that we need to represent not only the businesses, but the residents in town. I think a compromise of
270 ending outdoor entertainment at 10:00 p.m. is fair.
271

272 Mr. Courtney asked Mr. Harrah to find out how other municipalities handle outdoor music and let
273 councilmembers know before the Tuesday night meeting. Mr. Harrah said yes, sir.
274

275 Mayor Childs said any councilmember may make a motion during second reading. I, too, want to thank you
276 for all you've done a great job of pulling this together. Thank you to all the business people for their input, because I
277 know this is something that you are very, very interested in. Thank you to our council for coming out today to this
278 workshop.

Town Council Workshop – Entertainment District
January 6, 2018

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Mr. Matt Scalise said the city of Charleston is a premier tourist destination, and they have a significant parking problem. All big cities do. In this day and age, more people are using his taxi services, and Uber. Just keep in mind that people are using driving services more often, particularly when parking is a problem. If cities like Charleston have been able to overcome their parking problems, surely the town can, too. Golf carts cannot be driven after dark, so regular vehicles have to be driven at night. If they know the parking may be a commodity, it may increase the likelihood that some people will walk, especially when it is only a few blocks. There is a natural buffer between the entertainment district and permanent residences, because of the rental properties that surround the pier area.

Mr. Ott agreed with Mr. Scalise. I wanted to know what options we have for parking. I see many options. We don't have to really address these until they happen, but we have options to correct and make everything good.

Mr. Harrah read a response from Mr. Cramer from Pier Outfitters: In regards to the E district, I'm excited to see Surfside Beach taking a business friendly approach to the pier area. The zone will ensure continued business success for all. The parking situation will not be better or worse with the zoning change. In the eight years I've been working here, parking has always been a premium in the summer months. This is a great deal better for the businesses than the alternative, and I know my success will continue to grow with the new zone. Kurt Cramer,

There were no other comments. Mayor Childs declared the workshop adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Prepared and submitted by

Debra E. Herrmann, CMC, Town Clerk

VOTE:	Yes	No	SURFSIDE BEACH TOWN COUNCIL
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ Robert F. Childs, III, Mayor
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ Ron Ott, Mayor Pro Tempore
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ Timothy T. Courtney, Town Council
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ Mark L. Johnson, Town Council
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ David L. Pellegrino, Town Council
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ Julie M. Samples, Town Council
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ Randle M. Stevens, Town Council

Clerk's Note: This document constitutes minutes of the workshop that was digitally recorded, and is not intended to be a complete transcript. Appointments to hear recordings may be made with the town clerk; a free copy of the audio will be given to you provided you bring a new, unopened flash drive. In accordance with FOIA §30-4-80(A) and (E), workshop notice was distributed to local media and interested parties via the town's email subscription list. The notice was posted on the entry door at Town Council Chambers. Workshop notice was also posted on the town website at www.surfsidebeach.org and the marquee.