



**SURFSIDE BEACH PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS
DECEMBER 6, 2011 ♦ 6:30 P.M.**

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1. CALL TO ORDER. Chairman Seibold called the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Commission members present: Chairman Seibold, Vice-Chairman Pruitt, and members Abrams, Hanson, Livesay, and Rhoades. Commission member Lowery was absent, because she was out of town. A quorum was present. Staff present: Code Enforcement Official Morris. Others present: Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments (COG) Representative Britton, Daniel Newquist, COG Water Quality/Community Planner, and Town Clerk Herrmann.

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2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. Chairman Seibold led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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3. AGENDA APPROVAL. Ms. Abrams moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Rhoades seconded. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

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4. MINUTES APPROVAL. Ms. Abrams moved to approve the November 1, 2011 meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Pruitt seconded. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

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5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT. Ms. Morris reported that no plats were approved last month. Two variances were granted by the Board of Zoning Appeals: (1) replace signage as it currently exists at Sea Cloisters, and (2) rear yard easement on Melody Lane. Public Works Director Adair sent word that the Stormwater Committee would review the lake buffers during its January meeting.

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6. PUBLIC COMMENTS. There were no public comments.

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7. OLD BUSINESS. There was no old business.

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8. NEW BUSINESS.

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Discuss Population and Economic Elements of the Comprehensive Plan (update.) Mr. Britton presented a slide presentation and explained the Population and Economic elements of the Comprehensive Plan, a copy of which is in the code enforcement office. When 2005-2009 figures are cited, they are *estimates* based on surveys sent to a sample population over a four-year period. 2010 Census numbers are 100-percent actual counts. Notable differences are:

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General Population Data and Trends

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Regional Population: 1980-2010: general area has had an 178-percent increase over 30-years, which is in line with the county

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Age Cohorts: about 36-percent of the town's population is between ages 45-64. Age 65-plus equals 22.6-percent of the town's population, compared to 19-percent in 2000. The gap between younger and older ages is widening, but will eventually plateau.

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Median Age: 50.3 years of age, which is mid-range compared to other area ocean-side communities.

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Female Population: State: 51.4-percent. National: 50.8-percent. Surfside Beach: 52.0-percent.

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Hispanic Population: This was included because the Comp Plan has a reference to the Hispanic population. Based on the 2010 Census, it is 2-percent, which is much lower than the national average of 16.3-percent, and state average of 5.1-percent.

Educational Attainment: Bachelor's Degree or higher: 26.2-percent. Some College or Associate Degree: 30.0-percent. High School only: 32.7-percent. Less than High School: 11.1-percent.

Percentage of Population Born in South Carolina: 37-percent

Household Size: Household sizes are decreasing as people have fewer children and are aging. The town current has a much lower persons-per-household average, about 2, than either the national, county, or state averages. In town, 30-percent of households are one-person households, compared to 26-percent statewide.

General Housing Data and Trends

Population versus Housing Units: typically there are twice as many people as there are housing units. The vacancy rate is usually about 10-percent.

Area Comparison of Population and Housing Units: 2010 Census - Surfside Beach population 3,837; total housing units is 4,299. This is the first decennial in which the number of housing units passed the number of people, which is not atypical for coastal communities.

Vacancy Rate (All Units): 50.6-percent, compared to 39.7-percent in Horry County, and 15.7-percent statewide. The highs-and-lows for Horry County and the town mirror each other.

Housing Occupancy Status: Note the increase in *vacant seasonal units*, which accounts for the 50.6-percent vacancy rate above. Mr. Britton believed that during the previous Census periods more people moved into seasonal units as their primary residences as they retired causing a shift in the vacancy and population rates. In his opinion, the current totals represent a reverse trend in that paradigm as more people move out of town and rent their homes seasonally. He referred back to the Age Cohorts slide and said that most communities have a 'replacement factor,' i.e., young families raise their children whom buy or rent homes in the community when they become adults. Surfside Beach does not have that replacement factor, meaning that people have to be recruited to occupy vacant homes.

	<u>2010 Census</u>	<u>2000 Census</u>	<u>1990 Census</u>
Occupied-permanent	1,866	2,150	1,671
Vacant-non-seasonal	1,010	665	883
Vacant-seasonal	1,423	883	877

Owner-Occupied Dwellings as Percentage of Occupied Units: owner occupied units in town is 63.3-percent compared to Horry County 68.6-percent; statewide 69.3-percent, and national 65.1-percent.

Owner-Occupied Dwellings as a Percentage of Occupied Units: The town has 63.3-percent owner occupied, which is mid-range for other area coastal communities.

Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing Units. This information is submitted by the homeowner and is subjective, which is \$227,100, compared to \$165,500 in Horry County, and \$128,400 statewide.

Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing Units. Values compared to other area coastal communities:

Pawleys Island	\$1,000,000+ (multiple high-dollar ocean front homes)
Garden City CPD	\$ 129,000 (excess numbers of mobile homes)
Surfside Beach	\$ 227,100 (everything is close to the coast)
Myrtle Beach	\$ 165,900 (high numbers of attached structures)
Briarcliffe Acres	\$ 599,600
Atlantic Beach	\$ 232,000
North Myrtle Beach	\$ 261,000

111 **General Economic Data and Trends 2005-2009 (Estimates based on surveys over 4-year**
112 **period.)**

113
114 Median Household Income: \$43,351 Surfside Beach; \$42,642 Horry County; \$43,572 South
115 Carolina, and \$51,451 National

116
117 Household Income, 2005-2009: \$43,351 Surfside Beach, which is much lower than Pawleys
118 Island \$95,208 and Briarcliffe Acres \$94,688, less than North Myrtle Beach at \$50,264, and higher than
119 Garden City \$36,990, Myrtle Beach \$36,839, and Atlantic Beach \$21,484

120
121 Per Capita Income: Surfside Beach \$24,540, which is higher than Garden City and Myrtle Beach,
122 which Mr. Britton attributed to multiple earners per household.

123
124 Percentage of Population 16+ in Labor Force: Surfside Beach 61.5-percent, which is line with
125 other area coastal communities

126
127 Mean Common Time to Work (Minutes): 18.1 minutes for town residents; apparently most of
128 them work within a reasonable proximity to their homes

129
130 Industry of [sic] Civilian Employment: Retail trade is almost 20-percent; Arts, Entertainment,
131 Accommodations, Restaurants, etc. a little over 15-percent; Education & Health Care approximately 14-
132 percent; Construction about 6-percent, and Manufacturing about 5-percent.

133
134 Mr. Hanson asked if the population included renters. Mr. Britton said permanent residents,
135 whether they rent or own. Chairman Seibold asked whether absentee owners were included. Mr. Britton
136 said only if the Surfside Beach property is their permanent residence. Ms. Abrams asked if the median
137 value was higher because more valuable properties recently sold. Mr. Hanson asked if the amounts were
138 based on tax value. Mr. Britton said the Census value was what property owners reported, which he
139 assumed were based on purchase price, recent sales, or tax notices. Chairman Seibold asked if the
140 median values for other communities were determined by homeowners. Mr. Britton said yes. He is
141 gathering information and expects to have a population, and possibly an economic, element prepared for
142 the next meeting.

143
144 *Discuss Comprehensive Plan Questionnaire (update.)* Chairman Seibold asked who would write
145 the new plan. Mr. Britton said he and Mr. Newquist would write drafts to present to the commission; the
146 commission would approve the drafts with appropriate changes, and make a recommendation to town
147 council for approval. Mr. Hanson asked whether public hearings would be scheduled. Mr. Britton said
148 town council is mandated to hold a public hearing prior to plan adoption. He suggested that the
149 commission hold one or two public hearings during its review process.

150
151 Chairman Seibold referred to page 43 that lists "Resources" and asked where they originated.
152 Mr. Britton said he and Mr. Newquist would generate the resources and provide them along with draft
153 elements for the commission's review and recommendation to council. Those resources no longer
154 applicable would be omitted and current resources would be included. Ms. Livesay asked if maps would
155 be provided. Mr. Britton said yes, and updating the town's zoning map was a top-priority. Determining
156 the town's boundaries is vital to implementing a successful plan.

157
158 **The Existing Comprehensive Plan**

159
160 *What aspects of the current plan are the most useful?*

161
162 Ms. Livesay: Land Use & Economic Elements

163
164 Mr. Pruitt: Goals and Objectives, because priorities from 5-years ago are identified

165

166 *What improvements can be made to the existing plan to increase its usefulness to the planning*
167 *commission and city officials in making decisions?*
168

169 Ms. Abrams: Goal #8, page 42, “insure staff and formal committees such as P&Z and ZBA have
170 a close working relationship with improved communications.” She suggested adding “town council”
171 between ‘insure’ and ‘staff.’
172

173 Chairman Seibold: Determine responsibility and accountability for implementation. Remove
174 items that no longer apply, i.e. firehouse construction, water and sewer, resources being stressed.
175

176 Ms. Livesay: Ask staff to specifically refer to the Comp Plan in findings when writing ordinances
177 and making recommendations to town council.
178

179 Mr. Pruitt: Determine milestones and set target dates; require sign-off by appropriate staff.
180

181 Ms. Abrams: Assign staff member at management level to track accomplishments and report.
182

183 *Are there any new or recent development/community issues where the existing plan fails to give*
184 *guidance?*
185

186 Mr. Hanson: Declining population; lost businesses.
187

188 Mr. Pruitt: Owning commercial properties and incorporating them into the town’s vision,
189 particularly the pier; plan for growth.
190

191 Ms. Livesay: Create an appeal to younger population and young families by providing facilities
192 like a community center; annexation. The town needs to move forward and it should be reflected in the
193 Comprehensive Plan.
194

195 Mr. Hanson: Annexing residences costs more than what is generally paid in taxes; annexing
196 businesses earns revenue and enhances economic stability. The town currently has a surplus, and funds
197 on hand to last an appropriate amount of time according to the recent audit report.
198

199 Ms. Abrams: The town should be financially secure, resolve the pier issue, and bring services to
200 the highest possible level; then if the economy improves, there may be possibilities for commercial
201 annexation.
202

203 Chairman Seibold: In favor of annexation of commercial property. He agreed that the town’s
204 budget is okay. The town needs to have a separate identity from its neighbors.
205

206 *Are there any major policy goals in the existing plan that are contrary to public sentiment and should be*
207 *revised or re-evaluated by the planning commission?*
208

209 Mr. Hanson: Development of Business 17, which has been in the plans numerous years, but is
210 continually rejected. Businesses pay 85-percent of the town’s taxes.
211

212 Chairman Seibold: The transportation element also has had problems. Interaction between the
213 town and its businesses need to be improved
214

215 Ms. Livesay: The transportation element and the beautification elements need to be separated
216 so that the aesthetics are not dependent upon infrastructure changes. The plan should emphasize
217 keeping the residents happy, and work towards having more cultural elements. The Huckabee Complex
218 could have an all-purpose building that would give staff something to work with.
219
220
221

222 **Community Strengths**

223
224 *What are the Town of Surfside Beach's greatest assets?*

225
226 Mr. Pruitt: Beach, the pier is an enormous potential asset

227
228 Chairman Seibold: The beach, the police department, public safety

229
230 Ms. Livesay: Senior population feels safe, water, and water filtering shed, governmental controls
231 to protect property and persons

232
233 Mr. Hanson: Stable, experienced government; parks, sanitation, recreation

234
235 *Other than family connections or employment, what would be the number one reason why people move
236 to or choose to remain in Surfside Beach?*

237
238 Chairman Seibold: town size

239
240 Mr. Hanson: Health care, shopping, all kinds of services close by; town regulations

241
242 Ms. Abrams: Tourists become residents once they retire, less noise, crowding and
243 commercialization near the beach

244
245 *What does Surfside Beach have to offer that other communities lack? What does Surfside Beach offer
246 that is unique or different?*

247
248 Mr. Pruitt: the town is less chaotic than Myrtle Beach; the town has an established government,
249 infrastructure and services that communities south of us do not have

250
251 Mr. Hanson: complete beach access and parking for the public at large

252
253 Chairman Seibold: boulevard area is manageable

254
255 **Community Weaknesses and Future challenges**

256
257 *What are the town's weaknesses?*

258
259 Mr. Hanson: ad hoc parking committee is being appointed by town council to address parking
260 issues along Ocean Boulevard; lack of growth

261
262 Chairman Seibold: excess regulations; regulate zoning, HOA type government, i.e. everything
263 has to be approved and have a permit. He would like to see less government.

264
265 Ms. Livesay: said goals and objectives don't need to be listed as they are on page 37; they
266 should be incorporated into the plan; more residents should voice opinions at council meetings; with a
267 *****strong Comp Plan and community involvement, there isn't a need for lots of committees see page 8**

268
269 Ms. Abrams: lack of community and resident involvement in government; negative press

270
271 *If you could change one thing about the town, what would it be? If you could change one thing about the
272 street you live on, what would it be?*

273
274 Ms. Livesay: make the pier more user-friendly; fill the empty restaurant; improve cultural
275 resources and events, and a recreation center. Underground wiring is the one thing she would change on
276 her street, which she believes should be done town-wide.

277

278 Ms. Abrams: reduce negative press; get a town-specific ZIP code

279

280 Mr. Hanson: improve public relations, only have underground wiring on Surfside Drive and
281 Ocean Boulevard from 5th Avenue North to 5th Avenue South

282

283 Chairman Seibold: referencing President and Lady Bird Johnson's Beautify America program-
284 similar efforts should be made here

285

286 *What would be the number one reason why people choose not to move here or decide to leave?*

287

288 Ms. Livesay: high taxes and insurance, especially wind and hail, cost of housing

289

290 Chairman Seibold: jobs, business

291

292 *In the next ten to twenty years, what is the number one challenge facing the community?*

293

294 Chairman Seibold: in the next 10- to 20-years the number one challenge is managing growth

295

296 Mr. Hanson: supporting the budget

297

298 Ms. Livesay: apathy

299

300 **Growth, Growth Management, and Community Vision**

301

302 *How would you rate the town's ordinances that deal with growth and development? What areas, if any,*
303 *should be improved?*

304

305 Ms. Livesay: staff should refer to the Comp Plan when proposing ordinances and/or
306 recommendations

307

308 *What should the town's policy be with respect to annexation and density? Should population and/or*
309 *geographic growth be encouraged?*

310

311 Chairman Seibold: personally supported annexation

312

313 Mr. Hanson: supported commercial annexation, because commercial business generated
314 revenue

315

316 Ms. Abrams: town should not consider annexation unless it is in a position to increase staff to
317 meet new service demands

318

319 *In a few sentences, describe your vision for Surfside Beach as you would like to see it in ten years,*
320 *twenty years, or fifty years?*

321

322 Chairman Seibold: managing growth, providing recreation facilities, determine adequate staffing,
323 accountability and implementation of the Comp Plan

324

325 Mr. Hanson: supporting the budget, raising parking meter fees, maintaining older and abandoned
326 houses, accountability for implementing the Comp Plan, revisit SC Department of Transportation
327 improvement plan for Highway 17 Business

328

329 Ms. Abrams: provide more facilities, revisit commercial façade improvement grants, Highway 17
330 Business improvements and beautification

331

332 Ms. Livesay: make the town inviting, improve Comp Plan mission statement, socio-economic

333 *****status projections — page 11, dealing with absentee homeowners and retirees, attracting young page 8**

334 professionals to the town by providing quality cultural and leisure events; mixed use should be developed
335 as young professionals are drawn to that style, continue to address density, responsible growth
336

337 **Threats and Opportunities**

338
339 *List what you perceive as threats facing the community?*
340

341 Ms. Abrams: being overrun by day-trippers from neighboring communities going to the beach,
342 overburdening the town's infrastructure and the beach; over commercialization
343

344 Chairman Seibold: the town being taken-over by another municipality, if the town doesn't grow;
345 loss of businesses; expand and grow commercial district; new commercial areas should be developed
346

347 Mr. Pruitt: median age, getting young families to live here and establish roots
348

349 *List what you perceive as opportunities for the town in the upcoming years.*
350

351 Mr. Pruitt: improving the pier to make it a first class attraction, target one or two businesses to
352 improve façades to create interest and develop an improvement trend
353

354 Mr. Hanson: growth to support the budget, which has almost tripled in the past ten years
355

356 Ms. Livesay: apathy; page 39, Comp Plan, goal four, attract commercial development to support
357 family values, she believes the existing commercial districts should be redeveloped and new commercial
358 development, remove asphalt and replace it with 'green' **Line 357 amended, see page 8**
359

360 Chairman Seibold asked the members to give these questions more consideration and submit
361 additional comments to staff. Mr. Britton said a rough draft would be prepared incorporating the ideas
362 and suggestions.
363

364 **9. PUBLIC COMMENTS.**

365
366 Mary Beth Mabry, Chairman of the Horry County 5th District Beautification Committee, reported
367 that Garden City had developed a beautification plan for the medians along Highway 17 Business from
368 Melody Lane to Atlantic Avenue that were submitted to the SC Department of Transportation for approval.
369 The community is beginning a fund raising effort to implement the plan. She wanted to advise the
370 commission of the upcoming improvements and let it know that the committee is willing to share its plans,
371 if the town wishes to utilize them.
372

373 **10. COMMISSION COMMENTS.**

374
375 Ms. Abrams said she would be absent until the April 2012 meeting as she will be out of town.
376

377 Mr. Hanson thanked Mr. Britton for his assistance. He was most concerned about housing
378 occupancy status vacant, non-seasonal, which is the rental property is now at 1,000 units. At one time
379 property rented in about a day. He believes the rates will need to drop to encourage renters.
380

381 Chairman Seibold thanked the commission and Mr. Britton for their input and said even though
382 they might not agree it was great to work with everyone.
383

384 **11. ADJOURNMENT.** Mr. Pruitt moved to adjourn at 8:38 p.m. Mr. Rhoades seconded. All
385 voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

386 Respectfully submitted,

387
388 _____
389 Debra E. Herrmann, CMC, Town Clerk

Approved: January 3, 2012

Charles Seibold, Chairman

Mary Ellen Abrams, Commission Member

Robert Hanson, Commission Member

Lynn Livesay, Commission Member

Betty Lowery, Commission Member

Mickey Pruitt, Vice Chairman

Marty Rhoades, Commission Member

Note: Be advised that these minutes represent a summary of the Planning Commission meeting and are not intended to represent a full transcript of the meeting. Meeting tapes are available upon proper request by appointment to be heard in the office of the secretary to the planning department. An agenda of this meeting was made available to persons, organizations and local news media as requested, a list of which is available in the building department, and posted on bulletin boards in Town Hall and outside Council Chambers. This disclosure is in compliance with the SC Code §30-4-80(e).

Amendments to minutes made by approved motion during the January 3, 2012 meeting.

Line 267: changed to “strong Comp Plan and community involvement, there isn’t a need for lots of study committees or consultants”

Line 333: changed to “Status projection – page 11, address absentee homeowners responsibilities and incorporate the needs of retirees while attracting young”

Line 357: changed to “family values, she believes the existing commercial district along Hwy 17 Business should be redeveloped and new commercial”

**Debra E. Herrmann, CMC
Town Clerk**