



Town of Surfside Beach
Planning, Building & Zoning Department
115 US Hwy. 17 North, Surfside Beach, SC 29575
(843)913-6341

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PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
TOWN CIVIC CENTER
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2021 AT 6:00PM

1. **CALL TO ORDER - Sammy Truett, Chair**
2. **INVOCATION**
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
4. **AGENDA APPROVAL**
5. **MINUTES APPROVAL - August 3, 2021**
6. **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**
7. **BUSINESS ITEM**
An ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance for the Town of Surfside Beach, Chapter 17, Article VII Landscaping and Tree Protection, Division 2 Tree Protection
8. **PUBLIC COMMENTS - General Comments**
9. **COMMISSION COMMENTS**
10. **ADJOURNMENT**



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**PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
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TUESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2021, AT 6:00 PM**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - Chairman Truett called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
2. **INVOCATION**- Chairman Truett gave the invocation.
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Chairman Truett led the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. **AGENDA APPROVAL** Mr. Kinken made a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Abrams second. All voted in favor. Motion carried.
5. **MINUTES APPROVAL** - July 6, 2021. Mrs. Abrams made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mrs. Lane - Laveglia second.
Mr. Von Buseck reiterated the comments emailed to the Town Clerk for correction but has not received an updated copy.
Ms. Abrams made a motion to rescind the last motion and moved to defer the approval of minutes for July 6, 2021, until the September meeting. Mrs. Lane - Laveglia second. All voted in favor.
6. **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS** - None
7. **PUBLIC HEARING**
An ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance for the Town of Surfside Beach, Chapter 17, Article VII Landscaping and Tree Protection, Division 2 Tree Protection

Ms. Coleman recapped the events regarding the Tree Ordinance. She provided the decision letter that was submitted to Council with the recommendations from the Planning Commission. She also reiterated all the research and changes that have been addressed in the last few planning Commission meetings.

Some of the changes were:

Residential

1. Zone R-1 - 5 trees per lot, at 3 inches from the ground to equal 60 inches.
2. Zone R-2 - 5 trees per lot, at 3 inches from the ground to equal 40 inches.
3. Zone R-3 - 3 trees per lot, at 3 inches from the ground to equal 30 inches.

Vacant property, redevelopment, or a significant addition

1. Zone R-1 - 5 trees per lot, 60 inches total of all trees, 188 inches in circumference.
2. Zone R-2 - 5 trees per lot, 40 inches total of all trees, and 125 inches in circumference.

3. Zone R-3 - 3 trees per lot, 30 inches total of all trees, 94 inches in circumference.

The intent of requiring a minimum number of diameter inches per lot is not to force additional new trees to be planted but to encourage existing trees to be preserved.

Ms. Coleman stated there needs to be a time limit to keep trees after a Certificate of Occupancy has been issued. It has been found that trees have been removed as soon as a C/O has been given.

Palmetto trees shall be allowed as replacement trees. Many people disagree with that. Also, a builder can get an approved landscape plan with palmetto trees (if planting in the off-season), but someone would have to go back and ensure that the plantings are done. This allows them to continue construction. However, there should also be language that states if the plants do not thrive during a specific period, they need to be replaced.

Another recommendation was to create a tree mitigation fund. Currently, all penalties from trees are put in the general fund.

Chairman Truett stated from a cost factor it may be wiser to keep the larger trees because they are expensive to replace. Also, some of the larger trees take up a lot of water and produce oxygen. Trees are important for more reasons than just flooding issues.

Ms. Coleman stated that trees could increase property values, cut energy consumption, stabilize the ground and prevent erosion.

There were no public comment by the public during the Public Hearing.

After a lengthy conversation, a majority of the Commission agreed that the recommendations sent to Council remain the same.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS - General Comments

1. Lynn Livesay, 10th Ave south, Ms. Livesay stated she felt the notice for the public hearing was not published properly. Also, she agreed with the tree mitigation fund. However, trees should be specified by species. This may be something that Keep Surfside Beach Beautiful can do.

Ms. Livesey stated the best practices should still be followed in accordance with Tree City USA. Also, no more trees should be cut until the tree ordinance is in place.

9. COMMISSION COMMENTS

1. **Mr. Kinken** thank Ms. Coleman for her input. I do not agree with the clear-cut lots. With the size of the homes being built, they are almost to the property line, which does not leave room for trees. I was very disappointed when they changed the second reading, which allowed all the clear-cutting. This is not good for our Town or the environment.

2. **Ms. Abrams** stated that she said a few months ago that if the Town wants to protect its trees, the Town needs to staff the effort. No law will protect our trees if there is no will or ability to administer them properly. The Council needs to show us some of that will.

3. **Mrs. Lane - Laveglia** thanked Ms. Livesay for her comments. Also, there is an opening on the planning commission, and we would be thankful to have someone who is experienced. Thank you for your comments and for the work you did when you were on the Planning Commission. I know that you have put way more time into this than we have.

4. **Mr. Von Busek**, I'd also like to thank you for your comments. I agree with what you said that it would be nice to have a more diverse crowd here. We had three people in the public show up. This is disappointing. Many people have passionate beliefs on both sides of things, and I think it would also be nice for people to understand and be educated a little bit on this matter.

I don't particularly agree with thinking that it's OK, and be happy to fine someone \$10,000; I grew up poor. So, \$10,000 to me, it's a lot. But thank you for your comments, and thank you all for understanding a different point of view. I did learn a lot and, I try to empathize and understand perspective. Our Surfside Beach, it's two square miles; it is unique. So, some of the laws that we have to pass are unique to this area. And so, but I appreciate and respect you all.

5. **Chairman Truett**, this is what a healthy debate is all about. Hearing somebody else's opinion with an open mind, I think that's some of the problems we have. We've got blinders on. Mrs. Lynn, it was nice to have you here and hear your thoughts. I'm glad you were here.

ADJOURNMENT Chairman Truett adjourned the meeting at 7:49 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Sheri L Medina