



Town of Beaufort, NC

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Town of Beaufort Planning Board Regular Meeting 6:00 PM Monday, December 19, 2022 - Train Depot 614 Broad Street, Beaufort, NC 28516 Minutes

Call to Order

Chair Neve called the December 19, 2022 Planning Board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Members Present: Chair Neve, Vice Chair Merrill, Member Bowler, Member Meelheim, Member Willis

Members Absent: Member LoPiccolo, Member Vreugdenhil

A quorum was declared with five members present.

Staff Present: Kyle Garner, Town Attorney Arey Grady, and Laurel Anderson.

Agenda Approval

Chair Neve asked if there were any changes to the Agenda and hearing none, he asked for a motion.

Vice-Chair Merrill made the motion to approve the agenda as presented and Member Bowler made the second. Chair Neve took a vote that was unanimously approved.

Voting yea: Chair Neve, Vice Chair Merrill, Member Bowler, Member Meelheim, Member Willis

Minutes Approval

1. PB Draft Minutes for 11.21.22

Chair Neve asked if there were any changes to the Minutes from the November 21, 2022 meeting.

Vice-Chair Merrill made the motion to approve the minutes and Member Meelheim made the second. Member Bowler abstained as she had not been present at the meeting and Chair Neve took a vote that was otherwise unanimously approved.

Voting yea: Chair Neve, Vice Chair Merrill, Member Meelheim, Member Willis

Public Comment

Chair Neve opened public comments and asked if anyone would like to speak.

Logan Louis, 900 Cedar St, spoke regarding Salt Wynd's Environmental Impact Statement required by the Planning Board and the Board's right to make the request.

Public Hearing

1. Zoning Text Amendment – Section 2-H-4 (General Provisions Residential Zones – Docks and Piers in Certain Areas of R-8, R-8A & RS-5)

Mr. Garner introduced the zoning text amendment requested by Martha Harrell of 909 Front Street to modify Section 2-H-4 of the Land Development Ordinance to allow roofs over docks. Included in the proposed amendment are standards that the area under the roof cannot exceed four hundred square feet in area or be enclosed and may only be at a maximum height of sixteen feet above the decking of the dock.

Chair Neve opened the floor for the public hearing and requested the public direct all email correspondence to the Town and not the Board's private email addresses.

Mr. Charlie Harrell, 909 Front St, explained his request and read a letter dated 11.18.22 from Rachel Love-Adrick, District Planner for the NC Division for Coastal Management, stating that she had reviewed the Town of Beaufort's Land Use Plan and had not found "covered platforms" or any policies that prohibit "covered platforms".

Mr. Ron McClary, Beaufort, asked the applicant what the usage for the roofs would be and stated that he was concerned that allowing roofs would obstruct views of the Rachel Carson Preserve.

John Stephens, 1107 Ann St, spoke about the height of docks and structures obstructing the water views along Front Street.

Vice-Chair Merrill made a motion to close the public hearing and Member Bowler made the second. Chair Neve took a vote that was unanimously approved.

Voting yea: Chair Neve, Vice Chair Merrill, Member Bowler, Member Meelheim, Member Willis

The Board Members discussed the number of properties that would be affected, the impact on resiliency, a possible negative impact on the view, maintaining the character of the town, and the best interest of the town's taxpayers.

Member Bowler asked Mr. Harrell about the benefits of allowing roofs over docks to the town as a whole and he stated that sailboats at anchor in Town Creek also obstruct the view of Rachel Carson Preserve, and referring to possible damage he noted that boats coming unmoored had damaged his dock and he had not seen storm damage from existing covered dock structures. He also shared that their family would appreciate a permanent cover to prevent sun damage so they can enjoy the dock. He stated that tents can currently be utilized over docks but he personally felt that tents are not attractive, they also can obstruct the vista, and they are damaged in windstorms.

Member Bowler stated that she appreciated the applicant's comments but had reservations about approval as those structures could have a large impact on the public's enjoyment of the Rachel Carson Reserve and Carrot Island.

Member Meelheim made a motion to recommend denial of the Zoning Text Amendment – Section 2-H-4 based on safety and aesthetics and to preserve the current vistas. Vice-Chair Merrill made the second and Chair Neve took a vote that was unanimously approved.

Voting yea: Chair Neve, Vice Chair Merrill, Member Bowler, Member Meelheim, Member Willis

Old Business

1. To recommend approval or denial to the Board of Commissioners for the rezoning of 457 NC Highway 101 from R-20 to I-W

Mr. Garner gave an overview of the rezoning request and to address the Board's request from last month, staff added information to the packet to include: a new zoning and surrounding land use map, a survey/site plan of the property showing the storage structure under construction, the list of uses in the R-20 and IW zones, and an aerial photo map showing the surrounding use pattern for the Board to draw use comparisons. He also gave the Board an additional handout from the applicant which had just been submitted to the Town.

The owner and applicant, Mr. Jimmy Johner, stated that the submitted handout would replace page 55 of the application. He gave an overview of his request and explained the zoning adjoining his property, demonstrating that it was mostly commercial and included the airport.

Member Willis stated his appreciation of the clarification of the current zoning surrounding the property. Chair Neve expressed his concern about that area being rezoned as industrial, and Vice-Chair Merrill asked if there were landscape requirements. Mr. Garner explained that there was a 20-foot vegetative or combination of fencing and landscaping buffer to the adjacent residential zoning requirement. He also noted that there were no comments from adjacent property owners regarding the rezoning request.

Member Willis made a motion to recommend approval for the rezoning of 457 NC Highway 101 from R-20 to I-W, and Member Bowler made the second. Chair Neve took a roll call vote that was unanimously approved.

Voting yea: Chair Neve, Vice Chair Merrill, Member Bowler, Member Meelheim, Member Willis

The Board also requested the applicant remove the illegal sign which was currently on the property.

Commission / Board Comments

The Board thanked the staff for the comprehensive packets and wished everyone a happy holiday season. Chair Neve thanked the staff and the Board and reminded the Board members to input requests to be considered for the new Land Development Ordinance and the design standards for commercial property.

Staff Comments

- Mr. Garner said that traffic studies would be requested in the FY 2023/2024 budget.
- The Board of Commissioners have authorized the Town attorneys to draft the text to update the zoning and subdivision ordinances to Chapter 160D standards.

Adjourn

Member Bowler made the motion to adjourn and Vice-Chair Merrill made the second. Chair Neve took a vote that was unanimously approved.

Voting yea: Chair Neve, Vice Chair Merrill, Member Bowler, Member Meelheim, Member Willis

Chair Neve then declared the meeting adjourned.

Ryan Neve, Chair

Laurel Anderson, Board Secretary