

MINUTES OF THE ISLE OF PALMS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
April 6, 2011

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission met in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard on April 6, 2011 at 4:30 p.m. Members attending included Bev Ballow, David Cohen, Ron Denton, Pete Doherty, Diane Oltorik and Noel Scott; the Director of Planning Douglas Kerr was present, as well. Don Smith was absent. The press had been notified of the meeting, and the agenda for the meeting was posted in City Hall and the Building Department to comply with the Freedom of Information Act.

Chairman David Cohen called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The next item on the agenda was the review of the minutes of the March 9, 2011 meeting. Ms. Oltorik noted that the time of adjournment should be 7:10. Ms. Ballow pointed out that Ms. Oltorik's name had Mr. before it on page 6, that the word "allowed" should be "allows" in first sentence of the radio tower section and that it should be noted that she also had a scheduling conflict with the meeting date referenced in the Miscellaneous Business section.

Mr. Doherty made a motion to approve the minutes with the noted amendments. Ms. Oltorik seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

RECOMMENDATION ON SIGN ORDINANCE

Mr. Kerr explained that at the last City Council meeting several issues were raised about the recommended change to the sign ordinance to allow sandwich boards. He explained that the first issue raised was that at properties with multiple businesses set well off the road, there could be a line of signs at the edge of the road to try to attract driving traffic. He explained that other issues raised included the liability the City might have in allowing temporary signs and the fact that no businesses have expressed an interest to City Council to have this change.

Mr. Kerr explained that he had received a number of e-mails from business owners indicating their support for this amendment, which he included in the packets.

Ms. Oltorik explained that she felt that the purpose of the sandwich board was to convey information to pedestrians, not vehicular traffic, so she thought the concern about signs out by the road was legitimate. She made a motion to amend the language to include a provision that would keep signs within 15 feet of the front entryway of the business. Ms. Ballow seconded the motion. There was discussion about the appropriate wording to make it clear that a driveway could not be considered the entrance for the placement of a sandwich board. The group agreed to have the City Attorney verify that their proposed wording would be appropriate, but that the effect would be to allow sandwich

boards no further from the main building entry of the business than 15 feet. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

RECOMMENDATION ON RADIO TOWER ORDINANCE

Mr. Kerr explained that this ordinance was before the Planning Commission last month, but that the staff still had concerns about the wording and that City Council had deferred action on the ordinance to give the staff an opportunity to improve the ordinance. He explained that the significant changes in the ordinance were that City Council would now have to review and approve the specific location and design of any modifications of a tower allowed under this section and that the list of agencies that would be eligible for a tower under this section had been narrowed to only the City.

Mr. Cohen asked if the group thought it would be prudent to include a provision that specified that if a tower qualifying under these provisions to be 200 feet tall ever ceased to be needed for public safety reasons, then the tower would have to be lowered to comply with the other sections of the ordinance. Mr. Kerr stated that he felt that it would be tough to force cellular service providers to alter their equipment once it was installed and he would urge the group to be comfortable with the idea that if a tower this tall is ever built, it will probably never be lowered.

Mr. Cohen questioned whether it was necessary to include provisions for the 911 service, as that is not handled by the City. Mr. Jonathan Yates, an attorney representing the owner of the cellular site on 41st Avenue, explained that the way the ordinance was written, the tower could only be erected when it was for the City's purposes. Therefore there is no harm in leaving the reference to 911 in the ordinance, because it will have to be for the City and of a location and design approved by the City Council, so he felt the ordinance was adequately tight to restrict against a tower not supported by the City.

Mr. Scott made a motion to recommend approval of the ordinance as amended by staff. Ms. Oltorik seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

DISCUSSION OF PARKING MANAGEMENT

Mr. Kerr explained that since their last meeting, the members of the Planning Commission had completed a questionnaire to determine where the group had reached a consensus and where they had not. The group went through each question individually and reviewed the group's answers (see attached document titled "Planning Commission Parking Questionnaire").

It was determined that the group had reached a consensus on the following points: a parking management program should have the effect of more evenly distributing beach traffic around the island; that beach visitors should be required to pay a similar rate and at the same times as they are currently required to pay in the commercial district; that at least some portions of Ocean Boulevard should be opened up to public parking; that roads not immediately adjacent to the beach should not be available to non-resident beach traffic; that future roadway designs should include provisions for multimodal transportation including bike lanes, bike racks and golf cart parking areas; and that even though it will be challenging to address parking, something should be done.

Mr. Kerr explained that based on the group's answers, he had prepared the following synopsis of the Planning Commission's position on parking:

"The goals of the City's parking strategy should be to more evenly distribute the beach traffic across all parts of the beach and to keep roadways not immediately adjacent to the ocean free of non-resident beach traffic and parking.

Things that can be done to help achieve these objectives include opening up some portions of Ocean Boulevard to parking, keeping Palm Boulevard and the ends of the avenues between 42nd and 53rd open to parking and prohibiting non-resident parking on all other streets of the island.

Non-resident beach visitors should be required to pay to park in the areas where parking is allowed. The fee that they should pay should be as much, if not more, than the fees charged to park in the commercial districts. The time of enforcement should be the same as the commercial area (mid-March to early October, 8am to 6pm).

In all future road design considerations, adequate provisions should be made for alternate modes of transportation including bike lanes, golf cart parking and bike racks."

Ms. Ballow explained that the Commission had discussed only allowing parking on the ocean side of Palm Boulevard and she explained that she did not support this idea as it would be too constricting to the traffic. Mr. Cohen stated that he agreed and thought that if there was not enough space available, it would result in cars circling the island for a spot, which would be more problematic than having them park.

Ms. Oltorik explained that she felt that parking on Palm Boulevard should be limited to the ocean side of the road only, because the owners on the ocean side generally did not spend time enjoying views of the street side of their house, as the ocean was on the other side. Additionally, she stated that there was a high percentage of owners on the

waterway side of Palm Boulevard that were residents and the road side is the front of their house and it would benefit them if the parking was across the street.

The group collectively agreed that it would be impractical to limit the parking on Palm Boulevard to only one side of the street.

Ms. Ballow explained that on Ocean Boulevard it would be impractical to allow parking in areas on the waterway side of the road as there is a sidewalk and not enough space.

Mr. Kerr explained that the Ocean Boulevard area was different from the Palm Boulevard area because each beach access path at the end of the roads had a wide right-of-way (40 feet at 2nd, 3rd and 5th Avenues and 60 feet at all others), and that these areas could be improved to have small parking nodes. The group generally talked about the possibility of the creating small parking areas at the end of the avenues in this area and then prohibiting parking in all other roads in this area.

The Commission discussed the avenues between 42nd Avenue and 53rd Avenue and generally agreed that some parking should be allowed in the areas adjacent to beach paths.

The Commission generally agreed that they were at a point that they would like to discuss the direction of their thoughts with City Council and asked that Mr. Kerr try to set up a time with the Council when they could discuss their ideas. Mr. Kerr stated that he would ask to have a meeting time set.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Cohen, Chairman.