THE TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Planning Commission

LMO REWRITE COMMITTEE MEETING

July 21, 2011 Minutes

1:00p.m. – Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers **APPROVED**

Committee Members Present:	David Ames, David Bachelder, Irvin Campbell, Chairman Tom Crews, Jim Gant, Vice Chairman Gail Quick, Walter Nester, Councilwoman Kim Likins, *Ex-Officio;* and Charles Cousins, Director of Community Development, *Ex-Officio*
Committee Members Absent:	Chris Darnell
Planning Commissioners Present:	None
Town Council Members Present:	None
Town Staff Present:	Teri Lewis, LMO Official Jill Foster, Deputy Director of Community Development Kathleen Carlin, Administrative Assistant

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Charles Cousins called the meeting to order at 1:00p.m.

2) FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

3) APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented by general consent.

4) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the July 14th meeting were approved as presented by general consent.

5) NEW BUSINESS

Review and discussion of issues related to the Town Council charter bullets:
Mr. Charles Cousins presented opening comments and then requested that Mr. Jim Gant make his presentation on the LMO Committee Working Notes.

Mr. Gant began his presentation by identifying the Sources of Input received to date: (1) Town Council Directives; (2) LMO Education; and (3) Community Input. Mr. Gant then discussed the Document Structure: (1) Problem Identified from LMO Education *(Jim Gant's Input);* (2) Open Issues for Discussion; (3) LMO Revision Objectives for each defined problem/Directive *(Shawn Colin's work);* and (4) Potential Solution Ideas *(Jill*

Foster's summaries and Chris Darnell's input). A third category is added entitled, 'Temporary Parking Lot'.

Mr. Gant and the committee discussed the *Potential Statements of Problems/Issues from LMO Review*. The committee discussed Item # 1, *LMO structure and procedures.* The committee discussed several concerns with the current organizational structure of the LMO, including its complexity and lack of clarity; Item # 2, *Zoning Districts*. The committee discussed several concerns including the number of zoning districts, each with specific uses; Item # 3, *Design Standards.* The committee discussed several concerns including a new development vs. redevelopment approach; and Item # 4, *Natural Resources*. The committee discussed concerns with wetland regulations and water quality issues. Please see the following list of issues for more details regarding the committee's discussion of Items # 1 – 4.

The committee will continue their discussion and will include Items # 3, 5 and 7 at the July 28th meeting. The committee requested that staff provide copies of the following documents: (1) Comprehensive Plan Chart for the Future brochure; (2) Beach Management Plan Strategies; and (3) Visioning Task Force Executive Summary. Staff will provide copies of these documents at the July 28th meeting.

Public Comments: Chet Williams, Esq., presented statements with regard to the State Enabling Act.

Following final comments by Chairman Crews, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00p.m.

Submitted by:	Approved by:
_____	_____
Kathleen Carlin	Tom Crews
Administrative Assistant	Chairman

Potential Issue Statements from LMO Review:

1. **LMO structure and procedures:** The current organizational structure of the LMO is not easy to follow, and procedures are not clear and often too complicated, causing increased costs and delays in approvals. The requirement to seek approval from multiple Boards also increases costs to the applicant and extends approval times.

2. **Zoning Districts:**
   A. There are too many zoning districts, each with specific uses. These specific uses are, in some cases, too narrow, restricting development of new property and redevelopment of existing non-conforming properties, and do not allow for adjustment to a variety of mixed uses (retail, office and industrial), thereby creating vacant space.
   B. Density regulations appear to be limiting the ability to attract a variety of businesses.
   C. Affordability of multi-family units are decreasing because the Town has no controls over the conversion of long term rentals (apartments) to short term rentals (condos).
   D. Central gathering spaces should be identified and encouraged in zoning districts.

3. **Design Standards:**
    A. LMO was written for new development vs. redevelopment and on a parcel-by-parcel basis vs. entire street or area approach.
    B. Design standards (buffers, heights) can also limit the useable space available on the parcel.
    C. Design standards tend to be 'one size fits all' which limits creativity and flexibility. There are no allowances for special design standards in certain areas.
    D. Goals and design standards of built environment are too restrictive. There is no flexibility to accommodate areas that are urban as well as others that are less urban, or which should have specific design goals (e.g., street definition, signs, etc. in an area like Coligny).

4. **Natural Resources:**
    A. Wetlands regulations have grown more difficult to meet due to the COE identifying <u>all</u> HHI wetlands and water bodies to be areas which then require compliance with the same LMO buffer requirements (e.g., golf course ponds, different 'function' of the wetlands, etc.) LMO does not allow creativity or flexibility in addressing water quality (only approach appears to be by using buffers).
    B. Wetland buffer standards are too strict & should allow some uses in the buffer other than vegetation.
    C. Maintaining or re-establishing view of water is in conflict with tree, setback and dune requirements.
    D. LMO currently has a 'one size fits all' approach. Goal of tree protection is clear (to protect every tree over 6 inches). Tree preservation regulations emphasize the number of trees, but do not allow for context, purpose, location, tree types, and sizes of tracts (larger tracts vs. small lots). In some cases, overgrowth, waste, and possible fire hazards have resulted.
    E. Regulations or interpretations beyond the statements in the LMO by Town Staff create complex and costly impediments to redevelopment.

5. **Dunes Protection:** Dunes protection requirements (of Town, State and Federal governments) are at times confusing.

6. **Non-conformities:** Requirements on three types of non-conformities (use, density, site features) are confusing. These regulations limit the ability for redevelopment in that they require conformance to the extent possible.

7. **Ward One issues:** The lack of sewers, title issues relating to heir's property, buffer requirements and lack of understanding of actual LMO requirements are preventing development of Ward 1 properties (may be beyond scope of LMO Rewrite Committee.)