TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Planning Commission

LMO REWRITE COMMITTEE MEETING

June 28, 2012 Minutes

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

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

1) CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Crews 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) NEW BUSINESS

a) Consolidation of the RS2 – RS6 (single family residential) zoning districts

Chairman Crews presented opening statements and then requested that Ms. Teri Lewis make her presentation. Ms. Lewis began with the staff's response to the proposed consolidation of the RS-2 – RS-6, single-family residential zoning districts. Ms. Lewis distributed copies of a zoning map of the island which indentified the locations of the single-family residential zoning districts, RS2 - RS6.

Ms. Lewis and the committee discussed the consolidation of the RS-2 and the RS-3 zoning districts into the new RS-3 zoning district. Ms. Lewis reviewed a couple of un-subdivided parcels within these districts. Staff has no concerns with consolidating the RS-2 and RS-3 residential zoning districts into the new RS-3 zoning district. The committee stated their agreement with staff.

Ms. Lewis and the committee then reviewed the proposed consolidation of RS-4, RS-5, and RS-6 into the RS-6 residential zoning district. Ms. Lewis stated that staff has a couple of concerns with the proposed consolidation. Currently there are no minimum lot sizes in these districts, so we would want to talk with the consultant to see if it would be beneficial for us to have minimum lot sizes. Also, we will want to know if any nonconformities will be created by the consolidation.

Ms. Lewis and the committee discussed the issue of minimum lot sizes. Currently there are setback requirements in these neighborhood overlay districts and maybe that would be sufficient. After discussing the issue, staff and the committee agreed that it would be better to be upfront with the minimum lot size requirement. The committee agreed with staff that we do not want to create new non-conformities.

The committee discussed concerns with changing the character of these neighborhoods (with sub-diving lots.) The committee agreed that having minimum lot sizes will hedge against the risk of changing neighborhood character. Chairman Crews presented comments in concern of other redevelopment issues such as potential changes in FEMA regulations that may influence what people can do with older homes. Staff will discuss these issues with the consultant.

b) <u>Apartment density</u>

Ms. Lewis distributed copies of a map of the island that indicated the locations where apartments are allowed and where they are proposed to be allowed. Staff and the committee discussed whether density should be increased beyond 12 units per acre in some areas to encourage apartment development. The consultant proposes allowing multi-family in a majority of zoning districts (all of the new Mixed Use Districts and in SMU, WMU, RM-4, RM-8 and RM-12). Is the allowed density of 12 units per acre sufficient to encourage apartments?

Mr. Ames presented comments regarding these locations as related to the availability of services. We should be encouraging housing that will encourage walking which means it needs to be near services. Mr. Cousins presented comments regarding redevelopment as related to infrastructure. We need to ensure if we increase density that the infrastructure can accommodate the higher density numbers.

The committee discussed concerns with density and infrastructure. What does density feel like? What about height? Ms. Lewis presented photos and descriptions of the following villas and condominiums: (1) Seascape Villas (16-units per acre 2 & 3 story); (2) Sea Side Villas (49-units per acre 3-stories over parking); (3) North Shore Place (48-units per acre 5-stories over parking); (4) Ocean Front Sea Crest (96 units 20-units per acre 4-story); and (5) Ocean Dunes Villas (40 units per acre, 4-stories). Ms. Lewis and the committee discussed the density and height of these developments and the committee stated that 16-units per acre seem reasonable for some areas. The committee stated that it is important to incent apartments in areas that already have services.

The staff and the committee discussed the zoning districts where the increased density would be allowed. The committee discussed the need to provide a net benefit for developing housing in those areas. The committee stated that apartments will provide an opportunity for young professional people to live on the island.

Ms. Lewis stated that density is tied to the zoning district. The committee discussed the locations of Sea Pines, Cordillo, and Mathews. The committee agreed that we should concentrate on apartments rather than encouraging resort accommodations in these locations.

Mr. Cousins and the committee stated that the apartments need to stay apartments (rather than

being converted to villas or condominiums down the road). Mr. Cousins discussed the challenges of dealing with multiple property owners with the conversion of apartments to condominiums. It is a challenge to deal with 100 -150 property owners when dealing with aged property. Mr. Nester and the committee discussed the legal issues involved in keeping apartments as apartments. Restrictive covenants will be involved. There should be an incentive if restricted (by covenant) to apartments. Ms. Lewis will forward the committee's recommendation for extra density (from 12-units to 16-units per acre with a limit of 2 to 3 stories) to the consultant.

At this point, Mr. Jim Collett, with the Telecommunications Task Force, presented public comments with regard to cell towers and the need for improved telecommunications on Hilton Head Island. Mr. Collett asked to be notified that when the committee is ready to review cell towers, so that industry people can participate in the public meeting. Staff will notify Mr. Collett when the committee is ready to review telecommunications and cell towers.

c) Review of existing and proposed heights in the Mitchelville WMU zoning district

Ms. Lewis and the committee reviewed a map of the island that identified the WMU zoning district. Mr. Cousins reviewed the Town-owned land in the WMU zoning district. The committee discussed what they would like to see happen in this zoning district. They discussed the historic Mitchellville area and land use. Mr. Cousins presented statements regarding the history of Mitchelville and the direction given in the past by Town Council.

The committee also discussed the impact of the airport location. The staff and the committee discussed whether the existing land uses and the height are appropriate for the area. The committee discussed the potential impact of a five-story hotel in this location. The committee discussed safety and noise as it relates to high density in this area, both now and in the future. Do we want to deal with issues of safety and noise now, or leave it to be dealt with in the future? What will a five story building look like in that location? What about the infrastructure and lack of nearby services? The committee and the staff noted that a five-story hotel is already an allowed use in this location. The committee stated that the use should not be taken away.

The committee asked if we should increase the density to 16 units per acre and lower the allowed height (due to the proximity to the airport). The committee asked what the zoning district in this location would be if it were not WMU. Ms. Lewis stated that the surrounding properties are zoned RM-4.

The committee stated the need to consider the infrastructure, the neighborhood, the airport, and related safety issues. The committee also discussed the implications of height. The committee questioned whether the land uses are appropriate for the area. Perhaps a limit of 4-stories might be better than allowing 5-stories. The staff and the committee commented on alternative zoning for the area (RS-4, RS-5 and RS-6).

The committee then stated that the height of 75-feet in this area may not be the major issue. The issues of density, infrastructure, lack of nearby services and noise may be the bigger concerns. Chairman Crews and the committee discussed the TDR issue. The committee stated that this location may be ideal for creating a greater sending zone. The committee discussed the benefits of doing this. The committee would like to discuss this issue further at a later time. The staff will forward the committee's thoughts to the consultant.

e) SMU Stoney Mixed Use District

Ms. Lewis distributed a map of the island identifying the locations of the SMU Stoney Mixed Use Zoning District. The staff and the committee discussed the use of this district and the consultant's recommendation to generally move forward the current form. The only

recommended change is to have some reduction in the buffer in areas off of Highway 278. Increased planting in the area is recommended. The density and everything else would remain the same.

Mr. Cousins presented statements regarding Town Council's efforts to buy land in this area to prevent excessive commercial development. The committee discussed the prominence of this area as 'gateway to the island'. The aesthetic experience should be important.

Mr. Cousins and the committee discussed the land owned by the town, Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs), and Purchase of Development Rights (PDRs). This area might be another sending zone for density. The current density is 10-units per acre and 20-rooms per acre. The committee stated that we should consider using TDRs as a tool to encourage redevelopment. We need to think about how far densities can be bumped up or bumped down without negatively affecting property rights. We need to identify the areas where we would like to transfer from and transfer to.

The committee discussed potential safety concerns related to traffic and curb cuts off of Highway 278. The committee and staff discussed street access and minor arterials. The committee agreed with staff that nonconformities in the area should be avoided. Ms. Lewis summarized the committee's final comments on this section as follows: (1) this area might be another sending zone for a TDR program; (2) keep limited uses on the Jarvis side of Hwy. 278; (3) look at eliminating uses that will generate more trips; (4) the uses that are allowed need to have access to a lighted intersection of a secondary road (not Highway 278). Ms. Lewis will forward the committee's recommendations to the consultant.

(f) <u>Review of existing and proposed heights in the CCW, CFB, and RD zoning districts Hotel density</u>

Ms. Lewis presented statements regarding the existing and proposed heights in the CCW, CFB, and RD zoning districts. The committee discussed whether density and height should be increased for hotels to encourage new hotels and to encourage existing hotels to redevelop. The ocean side of Central Forest Beach can go up to 75 feet – four stories over parking. The landward side can go up to three stories over parking. The committee stated that perhaps hotels in this area should be given an incentive for reinvestment. The committee and the staff discussed hotel density. Much of the existing development is two and three stories high (rather than three and four stories high). The committee also discussed the landward side of Forest Beach and suggested if a hotel was proposed to be set back further than the current required buffers, then the hotel should be able to go up to 75' in height.

The committee discussed the age of existing hotels and the need for redevelopment. The committee stated the need to encourage existing hotels to redevelop. The committee suggested allowing hotels to increase to 35 rooms per acre but stated that staff needed to determine if some similarly sized hotel footprints in Bluffton would fit on potential site on Hilton Head Island. Look into changing the hotel and motel definitions so that hotels and motels in the HR district do not have to provide amenities because there are already amenities located nearby.

Lastly, the staff and the committee discussed scheduling the next committee meeting. The committee decided to meet again on Thursday, July 19, 2012 at 1:00p.m for the purpose of having guest speakers in to discuss wetland buffers and water quality.

5) ADJOURNMENT

Following final comments, the meeting was adjourned at 2:40pm.

Submitted by:	Approved by:	July 19, 2012
_____	_____	
Kathleen Carlin Administrative Assistant	Tom Crews Chairman	