

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
Planning Commission
LMO REWRITE COMMITTEE MEETING

Approved

May 9, 2013 Minutes

8:30a.m. – Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

Committee Members Present: David Ames, David Bachelder, Irv Campbell,
Chris Darnell, Jim Gant, Walter Nester,
Kim Likins, *Ex-Officio*; and Charles Cousins, *Ex-Officio*

Committee Members Absent: Chairman Tom Crews and Vice Chairman Gail Quick

Planning Commissioners Present: Alex Brown

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

The meeting was called to order at 8:30a.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 committee **approved** the agenda as presented by general consent.

4) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Approval of the April 25, 2013 meeting minutes is deferred to May 16, 2013.

5) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Edge Conditions in the Stoney and Chaplin areas

Ms. Teri Lewis presented a brief history of the committee's previous discussion on edge conditions in the Stoney and Chaplin areas as related to setback and buffer requirements along Highway 278. At the April 25th meeting the committee had requested that staff provide an aerial map of the Stoney and Chaplin areas that shows the street buffer.

Ms. Lewis presented an in-depth overhead review of the aerial maps of Stoney and Chaplin. The staff and committee discussed what the areas look like with the placement of a street buffer. Ms. Lewis identified Town-owned property on the Stoney map. Much of the property in this area along Highway 278 is owned by the Town. At a previous meeting the committee had discussed eliminating the adjacent use buffer between similar

uses. This might allow more development opportunities for property owners.

Ms. Lewis and the committee began their review with a map of Chaplin. Staff and the committee presented comments regarding the narrow parcels in the area. Some of the older property was developed prior to placement of the 60-ft. buffer requirement along Highway 278. Ms. Lewis stated that staff will work with the consultant on developing an Administrative Adjustment process to allow additional flexibility for property owners.

The committee and staff discussed the 20-ft. adjacent use buffer in residential areas. A 20-ft. buffer may be excessive in single-family neighborhoods. Mr. Ames stated his preference for eliminating the adjacent use buffer between similar uses in commercial areas not residential neighborhoods. The Stoney and Chaplin neighborhoods have some residential and commercial uses.

Mr. Campbell asked staff about the reasons for requiring the 60-ft. buffer along Highway 278. Ms. Lewis stated that the requirement is desired because it provides screening and an undisturbed vegetative area. The 60-ft. buffer requirement is for the entire length of Highway 278. Mr. Campbell stated that the large buffer requirement seems unfair to property owners along Highway 278 who would like to develop their property. Mr. Campbell stated that a Special Exception should be available to the property owners along Highway 278 to facilitate subdividing their property.

Chet Williams, Esq., the committee and the staff discussed compliance with the 50-ft. setback along Highway 278 and the 60-ft. buffer along Highway 278. Ms. Lewis stated that the staff tries to be flexible in working with property owners in the Chaplin and Stoney areas. Staff works with these property owners on a case-by-case basis.

Staff and the committee discussed the differences between Major and Minor Arterials (based on traffic volume.) Highway 278 is a Major Arterial. The committee stated concern with developing property within the 60-foot buffer based on safety reasons.

Planning Commissioner Alex Brown presented public comments in support of decreasing the buffer/setback requirements for the property owners in Stoney and Chaplin along Highway 278 so that native islanders have increased opportunities for the development of their land. Mr. Brown stated that buffer and setback requirements need to be more flexible for residential property in this area.

A couple of committee members stated that the purpose of buffer and setback requirements is from the road. Setbacks and buffers should be constant along a particular road or waterway.

Mr. Campbell stated that he would like to see a more equitable process for working with the property owners along Highway 278 with regard to setback and buffer requirements. Ms. Lewis stated that the committee needs to give the consultant some guidance in this area. If the committee would like to see a reduction in setback and buffer requirements, would it be the same for both Chaplin and Stoney? We need to keep in mind that we are trying to simplify the LMO and make it easier to understand.

Mr. Ames presented statements regarding the historical significance of Chaplin and Stoney. Chaplin has an opportunity to become a special place with the creation of an Overlay District for Chaplin. Another committee member suggested that perhaps residential uses should have a 20-ft. buffer everywhere on the island. The Administrative Adjustment process was discussed as it relates to residential. The committee discussed the implications of a 20-ft. setback requirement island wide. The consultant will need a

great deal of input from the committee to help with Chaplin and Stoney.

The committee would like to receive some advice from the consultant in the way of a framework and structure. What are the ramifications of a 20-ft. setback requirement island wide? A couple of committee members stated that adjacent parcels should not have different setbacks. The concept would work in terms of districts. Different districts could have their own look. This is an idea for the consultant.

The committee and staff discussed the possibility of reducing the setback and buffer requirements for Minor Arterials. Mr. Cousins and the committee discussed the Chaplin and Stoney neighborhoods and the location of the sidewalk and pathway. The committee stated that there is a large difference between the areas of Stoney and Chaplin. Chaplin might be an excellent candidate for an Overlay District. The Stoney area seems to be dictated by traffic. Much of Stoney along 278 is owned by the Town.

The committee discussed the possibility of reducing the 50-ft. setback requirement to 30 or 35 feet. A reduction to 20-ft. is not a good idea for safety reasons. Mr. Campbell stated that the property owners in Stoney need to be considered as well as Chaplin. There are traffic and egress problems in Stoney for both residential and commercial property owners. Traffic is a real problem. Much of the property in the Stoney area is owned by the Town and much of it is inhospitable due to the high volume of traffic through the area. Community issues in the Stoney area will dictate the decisions that can be made by the committee. Mr. Campbell encouraged the Town to work harder with property owners in this area. Mr. Cousins presented statements regarding the Town's efforts to work with property owners. The staff works with property owners on a case-by-case basis.

An Overlay District for Chaplin would enrich the island and bring a different element to what people see when they come to Hilton Head Island. The consultant should be able to offer the committee some advice based on their experience. The committee asked staff to request that the consultant advise them on developing parameters for Administrative Adjustments.

The committee and staff commented on several other residential neighborhoods that are located on Minor Arterials. Perhaps the consultant can offer advice on these residential areas as they relate to residential setbacks and buffers. The committee stated that the consultant also needs to consider the quality of the buffer. A reduced buffer will require more vegetation.

Mr. Cousins stated that the character of Stoney and Chaplin will need to be carefully defined for the consultant. The committee discussed the idea of having small focus groups comprised of residents/commercial property owners in the Chaplin area to help develop and define the character of the area. The committee stated that they can continue to work in other areas while the Chaplin community input is being organized. The committee asked Mr. Campbell for his assistance in organizing community input from the Chaplin area. The staff will ask the consultant about developing either a separate zone for Chaplin or a Chaplin Overlay District. Ms. Lewis will forward the committee's comments on residential areas along Minor Arterials as well.

6) NEW BUSINESS

Review of the I-MX-Coligny and RD zoning districts

Ms. Lewis stated that based on time constraints this business item will be reviewed at the May 16, 2013 meeting.

7) ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15a.m.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

May 23, 2013

Kathleen Carlin
Administrative Assistant

Tom Crews
Chairman