



Community Services and Land Use Committee Beaufort County, SC

Council Chambers, Administration Building Beaufort County Government Robert Smalls
Complex 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort

Monday, November 13, 2023
3:00 PM

MINUTES

Watch the video stream available on the County's website to hear the Council's discussion of a specific topic or the complete meeting. <https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/281301>

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Howard called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Chair Alice Howard
Vice-Chair York Glover
Council Member David P. Bartholomew
Council Member Paula Brown
Council Member Logan Cunningham
Council Member Gerald Dawson
Council Member York Glover
Council Member Alice Howard
Council Member Lawrence McElynn
Council Member Joseph F. Passiment
Council Member Anna Maria Tabernik
Council Member Thomas Reitz

ABSENT

Council Member Mark Lawson

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Committee Chair Howard led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. FOIA

Committee Chair Howard noted that public notification of this meeting had been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to Amend: It was moved by Council Member Passiment, seconded by Council Member Cunningham, to amend the agenda to remove item number 12.

The Vote - The motion to amend was approved without objection.

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Dawson, seconded by Council Member Tabernik, to approve the agenda as amended.

The Vote – The motion was approved without objection.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Cunningham, seconded by Council Member Brown, to approve the minutes of September 11, 2023.

The Vote – The motion was approved without objection.

6. CITIZEN COMMENT PERIOD

Please watch the video stream available on the County's website to view the comments.

<https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/281301?ts=144>

1. Dennis Ross

7. UPDATE FROM ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATORS

Please watch the video stream available on the County's website to view the full update.

<https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/281301?ts=378>

Assistant County Administrator Antonacci-Ogden introduced Caroline Fermin, the new Office of Veterans Affairs Director.

Director Fermin provided an overview of how the Office of Veterans Affairs works to support veterans in the County, including through public engagements, like the Veterans Day Parade and Wreaths Across America, and outreach events in various parts of the County. Director Fermin highlighted the Office's assistance with end-of-life planning by creating quarterly briefings to identify and explain the benefits to which veterans are entitled.

Council Member Reitz and Director Fermin discussed the timing and location of the outreach events.

Committee Vice-Chair Glover and Director Fermin discussed how veterans gaining access to their benefits could help boost the local economy.

Assistant County Administrator Atkinson introduced Mark Davis, Deputy Director of the Planning and Zoning Department, to provide an update on the Greenspace Program and Robert Merchant, Director of the Planning and Zoning Department, to provide an update on the Lady's Island Plan.

Deputy Director Davis provided an overview of the Green Space Program's application process and the six application types. Deputy Director David also explained how complete applications are added to the Green Space Advisory Committee's quarterly meeting agenda, where the Committee can review and weigh the applications against the adopted program and make recommendations to the Community Services and Land Use Committee. Deputy Director Davis also highlighted the Out-of-County application addendum for applications with property beyond the County's geographic boundaries.

Committee Vice-Chair Glover and Deputy Director Davis discussed funding requirements for applications outside the County, including the 300% match requirement. ACA Atkinson added that the 300% match could be an in-kind match.

Council Member Tabernik asked about the Green Space Program's current funds, and ACA Atkinson commented on the amount received from each deposit.

Council Member Cunningham asked if staff could provide a breakdown of the funding received from tourists. ACA Atkinson replied that staff could do that and would provide quarterly updates.

Director Merchant provided an update on the Lady's Island Plan, including the agreement for the county to develop a staff working group and reach out to planning firms. Director Merchant also noted efforts to create a holistic plan, as there are unresolved transportation concerns with Sea Island Parkway and access to Beaufort High School.

Committee Vice-Chair Glover commented on Woods Memorial Bridge traffic issues.

8. BEAUFORT CONSERVATION DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

Please watch the video stream available on the County's website to view the full report.

<https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/281301?ts=2088>

Hilary Gallop, an Education Coordinator with the Beaufort Soil and Water Conservation District, provided an overview of the Conservation District's Board of Commissioners, functions, and education outreach programs, including eco-camp. Ms. Gallop explained the Conservation District's partnership with USDA NRCS and payouts from the conservation stewardship and environmental quality incentives programs. Ms. Gallop also explained the Conservation District's collaboration with The Nature Conservancy on assessing the needs and challenges of Beaufort County farmers.

9. DISCUSSION ON FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES STAFF HAS IDENTIFIED FOR THE COASTAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (CCDC) WORKFORCE HOUSING

Please watch the video stream available on the County's website to view the full discussion.

<https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/281301?ts=2878>

Interim County Administrator Robinson provided an overview of the Workforce Housing Workshop during the 1:30 p.m. Community Services Committee meeting. Interim County Administrator Robinson also explained the different funding resources and available fund balance. Interim County Administrator Robinson added that TIF Districts, the regional housing trust fund, and the Coastal Community Development Corporation could be utilized to develop workforce housing.

Committee Vice-Chair Glover asked about a potential partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

10. DISCUSSION REGARDING POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT MORATORIUM AND CURRENT ZONING ALONG HWY 170

Please watch the video stream available on the County's website to view the full discussion.

<https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/281301?ts=3301>

Director Merchant explained the existing zoning for the Beaufort County and Jasper County areas along Highway 170 and the limits provided by Jasper County's moratorium. Director Merchant noted that Jasper County's zoning allows for one-acre lots.

Council Member Bartholomew asked about the objective of a potential moratorium. Director Merchant discussed Hilton Head Island's past moratorium during the construction of the Cross Island Parkway and the importance of determining a clear objective. ACA Atkinson noted that County approval is already required for upzoning and that upzoning could be denied without a moratorium.

Council Member Cunningham commented that a moratorium should be established for a specific reason.

Council Member Reitz commented that a moratorium may signal Beaufort County's support for Jasper County and limits on growth.

Committee Chair Howard commented that Beaufort County's T2Rural Zoning is more stringent than what Jasper County has in place and that there might not be a strong enough reason to put a moratorium in place.

Committee Vice-Chair Glover asked about the county's relationship with Jasper County and Hardeeville, as development in other counties and municipalities can create issues in Beaufort County, like increased traffic. ACA Atkinson noted that the staff has good working relationships with all the municipalities.

11. RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF AN ORDINANCE FOR A ZONING MAP AMENDMENT/REZONING REQUEST FOR 57 ACRES (R200 004 000 0301 0000, R200 004 000 0302 0000, R200 004 000 0300 0000, R200 004 000 0063 0000) LOCATED AT 1, 2, 3, 4 BENNETT POINT DRIVE FROM PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD) TO T2 RURAL (T2R)

Please watch the video stream available on the County's website to view the full discussion.

<https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/281301?ts=4397>

Director Merchant discussed the fifty-seven acres in the northern part of Lady's Island, the original approval for 179 single-family lots, and the conservation easement on the property. Director Merchant explained the request to change the zoning to match the character and ensure compatibility with future development in the area.

Council Member Passiment and Director Merchant discussed which portions of the fifty-seven acres would be rezoned.

Motion: It was moved by Committee Vice-Chair Glover, seconded by Council Member Reitz, to recommend approval of an ordinance for a zoning map amendment/rezoning request for 57 acres (R200 004 000 0301 0000, R200 004 000 0302 0000, R200 004 000 0300 0000, R200 004 000 0063 0000) located at 1, 2, 3, 4 Bennett Point Drive from Planned Unit Development (PUD) to T2 Rural (T2R).

Discussion: County Attorney Keaveny noted that the motion language needs to articulate the reasoning for the motion.

Motion: It was moved by Committee Vice-Chair Glover, seconded by Council Member Bartholomew, to accept the recommendation presented since the application 1) is consistent with and furthers the goals, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and the purposes of this Development Code. In areas of new development, a finding of consistency with the Comprehensive Plan shall be considered to meet the standards below, unless compelling evidence demonstrates the proposed amendment would threaten the public health, safety, and welfare if the land subject to the amendment is classified to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, 2) is not in conflict with any provision of this Development Code, or the Code of Ordinances, 3) addresses a demonstrated community need, 4) is compatible with existing and proposed uses surrounding the land subject to the application, and is the appropriate zone and uses for the land, 5) would not adversely impact nearby lands, 6) would not result in adverse impacts on the natural environment—including, but not limited to, water, air, noise, storm water management, wildlife, vegetation, wetlands, and the natural functioning of the environment, and 7) would result in development that is adequately served by public facilities (e.g., streets, potable water, sewerage, stormwater management, solid waste collection and disposal, schools, parks, police, and fire and emergency medical facilities).

The Vote – The motion was approved without objection.

12. RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE INTERIM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF BEAUFORT AND THE FRIENDS OF WHITEHALL PARK

This item was removed from the agenda.

13. RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE PASSIVE PARKS DEPARTMENT PRIVATE BUSINESS USE POLICY, APPLICATION AND FEE SCHEDULE

Please watch the video stream available on the County's website to view the full discussion.

<https://beaufortcountysc.new.swagit.com/videos/281301?ts=4873>

Passive Parks Director Stefanie Nagid explained how businesses have been utilizing passive park properties for private engagements, such as eco-tours and staged photography sessions, without getting prior approval or compensating the County. Director Nagid noted that these engagements occupy space that is supposed to be available for the public and could negatively impact the conservation value of the parks. Director Nagid also explained that the existing policy has been revised to address instances where private businesses utilize passive parks.

Council Member Bartholomew and Director Nagid discussed enforcement of the proposed policy, including cooperation with municipalities and the Sheriff's Office Environmental Crimes Unit.

Council Member Tabernik asked about the timeline and how businesses will be notified. Director Nagid replied that the item would be included on the County Council's December 11 agenda and, if approved, would be in effect on December 12, 2023. Director Nagid added that there would be a press release and that the Passive Parks Department is already in touch with several businesses.

Council Member Cunningham asked about the number of people that would qualify as an event, and Director Nagid said there is no set threshold as it depends on the intent. Council Member Cunningham also asked about the turnaround time for the existing facility rental application, and Director Nagid said it is a couple of days.

Council Member Cunningham expressed concerns about the application process, the \$100 fee, and the types of activities the policy would apply to.

Director Nagid outlined how the passive park properties are purchased for conservation or cultural and historical values and the potential problems with being unable to manage how businesses are using the parks. Director Nagid also explained that if a business plans routine visits, only one application and schedule for use would have to be submitted.

Motion: It was moved by Council Member Dawson, seconded by Council Member Cunningham, to recommend approval of a resolution to adopt the Passive Parks Department Private Business Use Policy, Application, and Fee Schedule.

Discussion: Council Member Cunningham commented that there seems to be a lot of gray area in this proposal and asked for further explanation to be provided during the December 11 County Council meeting.

Council Member Dawson noted that the overwhelming concern is that passive parks are being used for profit.

The Vote - Voting Yea: Committee Chair Howard, Committee Vice-Chair Glover, Council Member Cunningham, Council Member Dawson, Council Member McElynn, Council Member Passiment, Council Member Reitz, and Council Member Tabernik. Voting Nay: Council Member Bartholomew and Council Member Brown. The motion passed by 8:2.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned: 4:38 p.m.

Ratified: February 12, 2024