

The Town of Summerville Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes
February 22, 2021

This meeting of the Town of Summerville Planning Commission was held virtually via the Zoom Cloud Meeting Application and was attended by Commission Members, Jim Reaves, Chairman; Kevin Carroll; Tom Hart; Charlie Stoudenmire; Jonathan Lee; and Elaine Segelken. Betty Profit was unable to attend. Staff in attendance included Jessi Shuler, AICP, Director of Planning; Rebecca Vance, AICP, Town Administrator; Bonnie Miley, Assistant Town Engineer; Matt Halter, Staff Engineer; and Becca Zimmerman, Planner II. The public viewed the meeting via live-stream.

Jim Reaves, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

Approval of Minutes:

The Chairman asked if there were any edits or additions to the minutes from the meeting on January 25, 2021. Hearing none, the Chairman declared the minutes accepted as presented.

Public Hearings:

There were no public hearings on the agenda.

Old Business

There were no items under Old Business.

New Business:

The first item under New Business was New Street Names. Ms. Shuler stated that only one of the needed street names were available for approval, so the street names for the Central Avenue Townhomes could wait until the March meeting to all be approved at once.

The second item under New Business was the discussion of a proposed ordinance to repeal and replace in its entirety the Unified Development Ordinance adopted October 19, 2019 and last amended on December 10, 2020. Ms. Shuler introduced the Town Administrator Rebecca Vance to lead the discussion. Ms. Vance explained that Council asked staff to provide them with recommendations for portions of the UDO that should be kept, and she asked the Commission for any ideas or suggestions. Mr. Reaves stated that he'd watched the Council meeting recording two times, and felt that Section 32-121 through 32-129 could be replaced with Chapters 2 and 3 from the UDO and Section 32-322 through 32-324 could be replaced with Chapter 8 from the UDO. Mr. Hart said that he thought Council's concern was more with how the UDO is applied to existing development, not new development. Ms. Vance stated that staff could not speak for Council, but that staff is aware of the issues with the nonconformity chapter and is looking at possible changes to make it more flexible for staff to work with property owners. Ms. Segelken noted that it was difficult to take a full repeal because the document is easy to amend and has been amended, which was the understanding when it was adopted. She emphasized that it would be better to amend the UDO rather than start over with the old ordinance because the UDO is so much easier to use and understand. Mr. Lee agreed that he has no real sense of why a repeal is the best thing to do. More discussion followed trying to understand Council's intent, and Ms. Vance encouraged the Commission members to reach out to the Council members. Mr. Hart mentioned that some detractors of the UDO state that it is a cookie-cutter document and doesn't fit certain areas of Town, such as N. Magnolia and N. Gum Streets. He questioned if there was a comparable document to the UDO that could be adopted that would do the same thing but be more amenable to existing properties. Ms. Vance stressed that the UDO is just called that because it unifies the zoning and land development codes, and that other places do the same thing, but call it something different. Mr. Carroll stated that he liked the UDO and would recommend working on the appeals/variance requirements for existing properties rather than getting rid of the whole

thing. Ms. Segelken noted that historically it has been easier to convert an existing home to commercial and cheaper, but that sooner or later, the property will get completely redeveloped. Ms. Zimmerman brought up the changes that were made to the Historic District review process in the UDO and that most people are very happy with those changes. Ms. Shuler provided some clarification on DRB exceptions in the UDO and infill setbacks, and Mr. Macholl noted the approval of the allowance for an Administrative Adjustment. Further discussion ensued about the requirements for different areas of Town and how different areas could be treated differently. Ms. Segelken asserted that the design elements in the UDO are about good design not style, which should vary based on the context of the site and the development. Ms. Shuler agreed and stated that staff had already discussed the need to provide better examples and graphics to show different styles of development. The discussion ended with an explanation of the next steps, and Ms. Shuler explained that they would be holding a public hearing on the matter at their meeting on March 15, 2021, and it would be an in-person meeting.

Miscellaneous:

Ms. Shuler stated that she had no items under Miscellaneous.

Adjourn

With no further business for the Commission, Mr. Lee made a motion to adjourn with Mr. Carroll making the second. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 5:16 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: 3/15/21

Jessi Shuler, AICP
Director of Planning

Approved: 
Jim Reaves, Chairman or Kevin Carroll/Vice Chairman