

Aiken City Council Minutes

February 25, 2003

CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION JOINT MEETING

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Clyburn, Cuning, Smith, Sprawls, and Vaughters.

Absent: Councilmember Price.

Others Present: Roger LeDuc, Bill Huggins, Gary Smith, Ed Evans, James Holland, Kay Brohl, Ed Woltz, Wilkins Byrd, Bill Reynolds, Roscoe Stanley, Miles Hall, Josh Gelinas of the Augusta Chronicle.

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 7:30 A.M.

ACTION AGENDA

Planning Commission

Mayor Cavanaugh welcomed and thanked the members in attendance. He explained the purpose of the meeting was to prioritize issues for the Planning Commission Action Agenda.

Mr. LeDuc stated there were 23 items on the Action Agenda. He asked if there were any questions concerning the Action Agenda items.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated several of the items had Zoning Ordinance implications and asked if they could possibly be put together as one item. Mr. LeDuc said it takes a lot of staff time to work through each one of them, and that is why they are separate so they can be approved as they are completed.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked if Item 9, Design Standards for new buildings would reference Item 7, Big Box Ordinance and Richard Smith asked if it could also reference Item 3 regarding the Zoning Ordinance.

Planning Commission member Miles Hall stated these could not initially be combined because it would complicate matters. He suggested to keep Big Boxes separate at first.

Councilwoman Clyburn agreed the Big Box issue should stay separate, but she had a question on Item 9, Design Standards for new buildings. Councilwoman Clyburn asked if single-family residential could be added to this item. She stated there are nice houses on Williamsburg Street and Laurens Street, and homes to be constructed there should have the same features to fit in.

Councilwoman Clyburn asked if Item 16, Planning for Open Space/Recreation and Item 23 concerning Agricultural Land could be combined.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated as long as it is understood that these are two separate ideas, then combining them should not be a problem.

Councilwoman Vaughters stated there were no regulations for open space in neighborhoods and that really concerns her.

Councilwoman Clyburn stated the Northside of Aiken does not have adequate open space for play areas.

Councilman Cuning stated this was a worthy goal, but Council has to be careful in making it a regulation, because what is good for one piece of property may not work for all.

Ed Woltz, of the Planning Commission, stated that at a Smart Growth Seminar he attended they were told it is better to have one large open space rather than a lot of little ones.

Mayor Cavanaugh suggested as we have opportunity as the City grows, we can work on acquiring more open space.

Ed Woltz stated language about open space could be in the Northside Development Plan. He also suggested that Item 10 concerning the Comprehensive Plan for areas outside the City be moved up on the Action Agenda.

Planning Commissioner Kay Brohl stated a lot of the items seem simple on the surface, but when they are started, they take longer. She suggested picking up the top 10 items on the Action Agenda and if they complete all of them, then they can move on to other items.

Miles Halls stated Item 19 regarding landmarks and Item 20 regarding establishing the boundary of Aiken with landmarks were very important, but they were near the end of the list.

Councilwoman Vaughters stated she was not in favor of Item 19 regarding landmarks. She believes Item 14 regarding the Land Development Regulations ties in with the Traffic Ordinance and it needs to have priority.

Ed Woltz stated some of the items will be accomplished as the Traffic Ordinance is completed.

Mr. LeDuc stated his understanding was to keep the top 10 items and move Item 10 regarding the Comprehensive Plan to Item 3.

Councilman Smith said some of the items on the list have been there for a long time. He suggested that there should be a point person for each item and some sort of a target date for completion.

Councilman Cuning suggested quarterly updates on the progress of the jobs being done.

Bill Reynolds stated a time table was set up for the Old Aiken Master Plan and it has worked out well and is on schedule.

Mr. LeDuc stated he would have suggestions for Council regarding how to keep up with the status of the jobs.

City Council and the Planning Commission agreed on the following order for the Action Agenda items:

1. Complete Overlay District for Whiskey Road.
2. Complete Master Plan for Old Aiken.
3. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to change the Planned Commercial provisions pursuant to Objective 2.2 of the Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan regarding development in the Whiskey Road corridor.
4. Complete the amendments necessary to the Land Development Regulations regarding the requirements of concrete curb and gutter for new subdivisions.
5. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow property in the City to be rezoned Planned Unit Development except in sensitive areas such as the Historic District or Horse District. As part of this process, the standards for the design of Planned Unit Development needs to be evaluated to make sure they are adequate.
6. Amend the Land Development Regulations to require separation of detention ponds in single-family residential projects from adjacent residential areas and require adequate vegetation screening of the ponds.
7. Complete the Big Box Ordinance.
8. Complete the changes needed for parking of commercial vehicles in residential zones.
9. Develop Design Standards for new buildings in accordance with objective

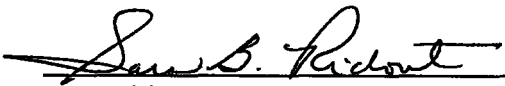
- 4.10 Encourage innovative placement of new shops that would create a more attractive streetscape; and
- 5.4 Encourage development of architectural minimum design standards to apply to all new multifamily residential and commercial property not governed by the Historic District ordinance or within the Horse/Hitchcock Woods District.

Within this area Council has also asked that they review some of the housing design standards for areas on the northside.

- 10. Expand the Comprehensive Plan to cover all areas within the utility system outside of the City. This item should be started by the Planning Commission upon completion of the Old Aiken Master Plan.
- 11. Revise regulations for inoperable vehicles especially at automobile repair shops.
- 12. Adopt tighter regulations to control curb cuts. This project to be completed by a consultant engineer.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 a.m.


Sara Ridout
City Clerk