

WORK SESSIONBOARDS AND COMMISSIONSAppointmentsOld Aiken Master PlanJohnson, Thelma

Councilwoman Clyburn stated she would like to appoint Thelma Johnson to the Old Aiken Master Plan as she had not made her appointment yet.

McKie, EugeneCommunity Development CommitteeRedd, TimothyBouknight, AndrewBuilding Code of Appeals CommitteeHarrison, JosephCommunity Development CommitteeWilliams, JosephGeneral Aviation Commission

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he would like to reappoint Eugene McKie to the Community Development Committee.

Councilwoman Clyburn stated she would like to reappoint Timothy Redd to the Building Code of Appeals Committee.

Councilwoman Price stated she would like to reappoint Andrew Bouknight to the Building Code of Appeals Committee, Joseph Harrison to the Community Development Committee, and Joseph Williams to the General Aviation Commission.

Mr. LeDuc stated these appointments would be placed on the next agenda for Council's action.

Mr. LeDuc pointed out that the staff is checking on the law regarding representation on the Accommodations Tax Committee. He pointed out since this is funding from the State from funds from the hotel tax to support the tourism industry the committee has to have certain representation.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked for a list of appointments that would be due by the end of the year.

It was also mentioned that Council needs to stagger the appointments to meet the ordinance which was adopted.

Councilmembers were also asked to give a brief statement about each person they are recommending for appointment.

Council asked that the staff place something on the web site and other advertisements for applications for volunteers for boards and commissions.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANSouthside

Mr. LeDuc stated City Council has been meeting for several weeks to review the Comprehensive Plan, which was approved by the Planning Commission. As discussed at the last meeting, only two areas need review. The first is Objective 2.2 which would allow Planned Commercial developments. It appeared that Council felt comfortable with the wording except for determining what amount of property should be set aside for open space. It has been suggested by Council to have a minimum of 25% up to 30%. Staff has included information from other cities as to what open space they require at commercial or general business developments. The other area that Council needs to review concerns Planned Unit Developments (PUD). This language has been revised, which would

suggest that in the future Council may consider them should the need arise for PUD zoning within the city.

Council then continued their study of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. LeDuc pointed out the staff had made all the changes to the proposed plan, and this was given to Council for review. He said changes had been made except for 2.2 Planned Commercial and Planned Unit Development.

Councilwoman Clyburn called attention to 1.7 regarding manufactured housing. She stated a question had come up regarding modular homes which meet HUD specifications. She said she did not see anything in the Plan to address modular homes. Differences in manufactured housing and modular housing was discussed. It was pointed out that modular housing meets HUD standards and lasts longer. Manufactured housing has lower standards. Modular homes come in sections and are put together. It is difficult to move a modular home.

Mr. Evans, Planning Director, stated modular homes meet the standards and are allowed anywhere residential is allowed, unless the subdivision has restrictions to prohibit them.

Council then proceeded to discuss 2.2 Planned Commercial. Mr. LeDuc stated one question was the open space requirement, with the current being 20%. Council's discussion was whether the percentage should be 25% or 30%. Mr. LeDuc stated the staff had done a survey of other cities regarding percentage of open space. He said the survey mostly showed that the percentage of open space is done on a case by case basis.

Councilman Cunning pointed out that there is not much zoned as Planned Commercial as the developer has to state exactly what they plan to do in the development, so most of the development is commercial areas.

Councilwoman Price suggested that Council agree to 25% open space. She sympathized with the developers and how much space they could not use and with the city in trying to preserve things important to the city as well.

Councilman Smith stated how he came up with 30% was that in the beginning a majority of the property had to be developed as residential with 40% open space. Commercial development would be on the front half of the property, which would be 410 feet deep at least, and this would be at 20% open space. The average of that is 30%. He said he felt more green space gives a better aesthetic feel on the property and reduces the intensity of the development, and he felt it would increase the value of the property.

Councilman Cunning stated his concern was that the property to be developed is outside the city and he was concerned that the property may not be annexed to the city but developed outside the city. He was concerned that the city may make it so strict they develop in the county. He said the concern about the original wording was that Whiskey Road would be developed with a 410 foot strip commercial all the way down Whiskey Road. He said his recommendation was 25% open space and he felt this would work.

Councilwoman Vaughters stated she wanted to see some kind of easement donation so it would not be an economic detriment to the property owner.

Mr. Larry Holley and Charles Holley, owners of the majority of land left on Whiskey Road within the city's service district, stated they felt the proposal would make Aiken one of the most restrictive towns. Mr. Larry Holley stated that the Planned Commercial and Planned Unit Developments should maintain as much flexibility as possible because it's like starting with a blank sheet of paper and Council gets to say what goes on the development. He stated the city is in control. He felt the wording does not give a minimum green space, but it could be whatever Council wants it to be. He felt if Council sets the green space at 25%, it would just be setting a new minimum. He said he could live with the green space at 25% and that being a set maximum. He said, however, if Council is just setting the minimum at 25%, he is very concerned. He was concerned that the percentage may be a minimum and that more will be required.

Council discussed the percentage at length. It was pointed out there could be unique circumstances where more buffer is needed. The discussion centered around how the city could explain to developers if they require different percentages for different developments.

Councilwoman Vaughters stated she interpreted the wording that 25% would be the maximum green space required. She was hoping the city could develop incentives that may encourage more green space for certain developments. She said she was not thinking of the city requiring more than 25%, but the developer could make it more if they desired.

The consensus of Council was to have the green space requirement under Planned Commercial as 25%. Also added was "Depending on site specific circumstances for areas of less than five acres the staff may adjust the open space to a minimum of 20%."

Mr. LeDuc stated the second area for further consideration was the Planned Unit Development, Objective 1.4, and whether PUDs should be allowed in the city or just newly annexed areas. He said Council had asked that the language be changed at the July 29, 2002, meeting and this language was included in the draft presented to Council.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he wanted to place the original wording presented to Council from the Planning Commission back in the Plan, which would allow PUDs in areas already in the city. He said he had thought a lot about it and felt it was shortsighted not to have a PUD available in the city for property in the city. He said a PUD is a planned unit and it could be planned the way Council desires. He said I'ON in Charleston was a good example of a PUD. He felt it should be available as a tool if needed. He said the PUD would encourage the development of more traditional neighborhoods. He felt PUD should be in the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance to be available if needed. He said if it is all right for property being annexed into the city, he felt it was all right for property already in the city to be a PUD.

Councilwoman Vaughters stated she preferred the wording drafted at the July 29, 2002, meeting. She stated she wanted the process to take 3 or 4 months if it was going to change the zoning of an area. She felt rezoning is dramatic. She said she did not want to depend on who is elected to Council to decide what would be in a development. She was concerned what might be developed next to a neighborhood. She said she wanted something more stable for neighborhoods. She stated she could never support PUD which allows anything depending on what City Council wants. She felt PUDs for areas annexed was different, as this was raw, unzoned land, whereas property in the city is land already zoned.

Council continued to discuss whether PUDs should be allowed on properties already in the city or just newly annexed areas.

City Attorney Smith pointed out that if Council wants to allow PUDs in areas in the city they would not only have to put it in the Comprehensive Plan, but they would have to amend the Zoning Ordinance. He said the wording presented at the July 29 meeting, if approved, would allow Council to consider modifying the Zoning Ordinance at any time to include PUDs. He said he felt the wording from the last meeting would suit both sides of the issue.

The majority of Council was in favor of allowing the original wording from the Planning Commission regarding PUDs in the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan would allow PUDs in areas already in the city.

Mr. LeDuc stated the original wording which came to Council was "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. The Zoning Ordinance now allows only newly annexed property to be zoned Planned Unit Development. The ordinance should be amended to allow the rezoning of property already in the city to PUD, because the category provides a developer flexibility and the opportunity for creativity and design while giving City Council complete control over the project through

a concept plan which must be approved. A proposal to rezone property to PUD would be subject to public hearing before the Planning Commission as well as City Council. Clear standards would be stated in the ordinance to make it clear when PUD zoning is appropriate and when it is not.”

Mr. LeDuc stated Objective 4.16 was also to be reviewed again. He said Barbara Nelson had made a proposal regarding greenways. He said wording had been added to include Council’s discussion on the matter.

Mayor Cavanaugh was concerned about the words “Acquire” and “should include”. His concern was where money might be obtained to establish the greenways.

After discussion Council suggested the words “Acquire conservation or scenic easements where appropriate and financially feasible to create or maintain...”

Mr. LeDuc stated Council would have first reading on the Comprehensive Plan at the August 26, 2002, meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10 P.M.

  
Sara B. Ridout  
City Clerk