

TOWN OF SEABROOK ISLAND

DSO Advisory Committee Meeting

May 16, 2019 – 2:00 PM

Town Hall, Council Chambers
2001 Seabrook Island Road



MINUTES

Present: Skip Crane (Chair), Gary Quigley (Vice Chair), Robert Driscoll, Ava Kleinman, Roger Steel, Ed Williams, Katrina Burrell, Joe Cronin (Town Administrator)

Absent: Wayne Billian, Walter Sewell

Guests: Mayor Ron Ciancio, Paul LeBlanc (PLB Planning Group)

Councilman Skip Crane called the opening meeting of the DSO Advisory Committee to order at 2:00 PM. Town Administrator Cronin confirmed that the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act were fulfilled, and the meeting agenda was properly posted.

OPENING REMARKS

Councilman Skip Crane, Town Administrator Joe Cronin and Mayor Ron Ciancio provided opening remarks about the DSO update to members of the committee.

Members of the committee were then asked to introduce themselves and their background.

ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR

Councilman Crane opened the floor to nominations for the position of Chairman. Mr. Williams nominated Councilman Crane for the position of Chairman. Mr. Driscoll seconded the nomination. The vote in favor of the motion was unanimous.

Chairman Crane recommended that a resident serve in the role as Vice Chair. Chairman Crane then nominated Mr. Quigley for the position of Vice Chair. There were no other nominations and Mr. Quigley was selected as Vice Chair by acclamation.

APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY

Chairman Crane recommended that Town Administrator Cronin serve in the role as Secretary to the committee. Chairman Crane then nominated Town Administrator Cronin for the role of Secretary. There were no other nominations and Town Administrator Cronin was appointed as Secretary by acclamation.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. Project Scope, Approach and Timeline:** Town Administrator Cronin and project consultant, Paul LeBlanc of PLB Planning Group, provided an overview of the project scope, approach and timeline. Chairman Crane asked Mr. LeBlanc to provide a quick description of what a DSO is and why the town has one. Mr. LeBlanc stated that the DSO is the document that a local government uses to administer and enforce its zoning, subdivision and land development regulations. He added that the DSO serves as a “unified development ordinance” whereby all development regulations are adopted in a single ordinance. He added that the DSO will incorporate other items, such as sign requirements, stormwater guidelines, landscaping standards and review and approval procedures. Mr. LeBlanc stated that it would take approximately 12 months to complete the review, re-write and adoption of the new DSO; however, he added that this timeline could be longer or shorter depending on how quickly the committee moves through the draft document.
- 2. Goals and Objectives of the DSO Update:** Mr. LeBlanc stated that the primary purpose of the DSO is to implement the recommendations of the town’s comprehensive plan. He added that it is also important for the DSO to be consistent with state law, as well as regional and national best practices. He stated that the most important features of the DSO should be predictability in outcomes and clear, unambiguous standards.
- 3. General Discussion:** Chairman Crane opened the floor for discussion.

Mayor Ciancio recommended that the DSO be updated to address obstacles to individuals repairing and renovating their homes, adding that the DSO should help, rather than hinder, these efforts. He stated that the DSO should include updated provisions for the enforcement of derelict properties. He also recommended that the new DSO be user friendly and easy to understand. He would like to see the permitting process streamlined, especially for routine maintenance items. He also recommended that the committee consider the impact of the new FEMA flood maps on public safety, specifically whether a higher freeboard should be warranted. He stated that the provisions related to encroachment permits for areas outside the SIPOA security gate should also be reviewed and updated as necessary.

Chairman Crane stated that the new DSO should be easy to use, understand and implement. He stated that the committee should also review and update, if warranted, the provisions related to reconstruction following a natural disaster.

Mr. Quigley stated that the DSO should add value to residents of the community. He added that the current document contains too many cross references and should be simplified.

Mr. Steel recommended that the DSO clearly differentiate between maintenance and improvements.

Mr. Driscoll stated that the current document is difficult to use, even when doing simple things. He recommended that the document be updated to encourage efficiency in the review and approval process.

Mr. Williams encouraged flexibility in the document. He also stated that the DSO should be user friendly and help, rather than hinder, its users.

Ms. Kleinman stressed the need for objective standards that are clear and understandable. She stated that the DSO needs to protect the town's critical resources, such as marshes, rivers and the Atlantic Ocean. She also recommended incorporating a process for the review and approval of "de minimus" changes.

Ms. Burrell recommended that the new DSO should clear up inconsistencies within the current ordinance. She stated that the DSO should also better define upkeep vs. upgrade.

Mr. LeBlanc thanked members of the committee for sharing their recommendations and stated that he looks forward to working with everyone over the coming months. He added that he will prepare and distribute a draft "technical audit" and "blueprint" for committee members to review in advance of the next meeting.

Town Administrator Cronin noted that he had provided members with copies of the town's current DSO, as well as the draft comprehensive plan update (which is pending council approval) and a comprehensive planning guide from the Municipal Association of South Carolina. He recommended that members review this information in advance of the next meeting.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.

Minutes Approved: August 1, 2019



Joseph M. Cronin
Town Administrator