

TOWN OF SEABROOK ISLAND

Planning Commission Regular Meeting

August 12, 2020 – 1:30 PM



Virtual Meeting Hosted via Zoom

[Live Streamed on YouTube](#)

MINUTES

Present: Ken Otstot (Chair), Stan Ullner (Vice Chair), Wayne Billian, Jim Newton, Sharon Welch, Joe Cronin (Town Administrator)

Absent: None

Guests: Katrina Burrell (SIPOA)

Chairman Otstot called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM and welcomed everyone in attendance. Town Administrator Cronin confirmed that the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act were fulfilled and that the meeting agenda was properly posted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. **Regular Meeting: March 11, 2020:** Mr. Newton made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 11, 2020, meeting as submitted. Dr. Ullner seconded the motion. The motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS ITEMS

There were no Old Business Items.

NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

1. **Text Amendment: Electronic Variable Message Signs:** Town Administrator Cronin provided a brief overview of the request, the purpose of which was to review and provide a recommendation to Town Council on a proposed amendments to Article 16 (Signs) and Subsection 16.10.40 (Arterial Streets) of the Development Standards Ordinance. Based on the guidance previously received from the Planning Commission and Town Council, he stated that the draft ordinance was prepared with three primary objectives:

- To amend the town's sign requirements to allow electronic message board signs;
- To limit the proliferation of electronic message board signs by allowing them only in locations that meet specific, objective criteria; and
- To ensure that any signs so permitted remain consistent with the general character and quality of existing signs within the town.

He then provided an overview of the key changes to the ordinance, including the following amendments:

- **Sec. 12.10 (Definitions)** would be amended to include a new definition for “Electronic Variable Message Displays.” These types of displays would be defined as “a sign or portion thereof containing a screen, panel or other area upon which alphanumeric characters, graphics or symbols are projected by illuminating devices including, but not limited to, light emitting diodes (LEDs), backlighted liquid crystal display (LCDs), plasma display panels (PDPs), fiber optics or light bulbs.”
- **Sec. 12.30 (Exempt Signs)** would be amended to clarify the definition of “Government Signs,” which are exempt from the requirements of Article 12.
- **Sec 12.60.70 (Community Signs)** would be amended to allow two types of Community Signs: Community Identification Signs, which display only the name of the community or development upon which they are located, and Community Message Board Signs, which may convey messages of a non-commercial nature at the primary entry and exit points to any approved Planned Unit Development.
- **Under Sec. 12.60.70.20**, Community Message Board Signs would be permitted to contain an electronic variable message board only if the sign meets the following conditions:
 - To ensure that signs containing an electronic display do not encroach into residential areas and to protect the safety of the traveling public, signs containing an electronic display must be located on or adjacent to an arterial street with a maximum posted speed limit of 15 miles per hour;
 - The community message board sign upon which the electronic display is affixed would need to be constructed of the same materials required for all other signs, and the electronic display would need to be enclosed by or encased within the community message board so that only the screen or panel containing the message is visible from the street;
 - The area of the electronic display may not exceed 50% of the overall sign area;
 - The electronic display must remain static all times, except for instantaneous transitions between messages at intervals of no less than 8 seconds apart;
 - The electronic display must exhibit low intensity, night dimming lighting, and all text, graphics and symbols must be red, white, yellow or amber in color on a plain black background; and

- The electronic display must be oriented so as to minimize its visibility from neighboring residences, or additional landscaping, screening or buffering may be required.
- **Sec. 12.80 (Permit Applications)** would be amended to require a site plan for all new freestanding signs.
- **Sec. 12.120.10 (Requirements for Ground Signs)** would be amended to allow more design flexibility in materials, ground clearance and illumination for signs which include an electronic display.
- **Sec. 16.10.40 (Arterial Streets)** would be amended to extend the designation of Seabrook Island Road as an “arterial street” from the roundabout at Freshfields to Long Bend Drive (behind the SIPOA gate), rather than stopping at Landfall Way (outside the SIPOA security gate).

Chairman Otstot opened the floor for discussion.

Dr. Ullner suggested removing the requirement for a sign to be located on an arterial street in order to have an electronic variable message display. This, he stated, would allow the Seabrook Island Club to install a sign near the island Island House or Beach Club. The Commission discussed Dr. Ullner’s suggestion, but no motion was offered to amend the proposed ordinance.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Newton made a motion to recommend in favor of approving the draft ordinance, as recommended by town staff. Mr. Billian seconded the motion. The motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION

1. **Procedure for Consideration of Street Name Change Requests:** Town Administrator Cronin notified members of the Planning Commission that the town had received a request to change the name of an existing street within the town. He stated that the town does not currently have a policy or procedures in place for consideration of such requests. He provided an overview of the state statute and confirmed that all requests to change a street name require review and approval by the Planning Commission following a public hearing. Chairman Otstot suggested creating an ad hoc committee to discuss this issue and make recommendations back to the full planning commission. He volunteered himself to serve on the committee also suggested that Dr. Ullner participate. A third committee member who was not a member of the Planning Commission could be added for an outside perspective.

Dr. Ullner made a motion to form a three-member ad hoc committee, to be appointed by the chair, for the purpose of discussing this issue and reporting its recommendations back to the full Planning Commission. Mr. Newton seconded the motion. The motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0.

There being no further business, Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Billian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Ullner seconded the motion. The motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:22 PM.

Minutes Approved: September 9, 2020



Joseph M. Cronin
Town Administrator