

CHATHAM COUNTY-SAVANNAH METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

MPC COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING MEETING MINUTES

**MPC HEARING ROOM
110 EAST STATE STREET**

JUNE 10, 2008

1:00 PM.

Members Present: Robert Ray, Vice-Chairman
Susan R. Myers, Treasurer
Shedrick Coleman
Russ Abolt
Stephen Lufburrow
Adam Ragsdale
Timothy Mackey

Members Not Present: Jon Todd, Chairman
D. Douglas Bean
Michael Brown
Ben Farmer
J. David Hoover
Lacy A. Manigault

MPC Staff Present: Thomas L. Thomson, P.E., AICP, Executive Director
Jim Hansen, AICP, Director Development Services
Charlotte Moore, AICP, Director of Special Projects
Sarah Ward, Preservation Planner
Amanda Bunce, Development Services Planner
Geoff Goins, Development Services Planner
Jack Butler, Development Services Planner
LaToya Bynum, Administrative Assistant
Constance Morgan, Administrative Assistant

I. Call to Order

Vice Chairman Ray called the June 10, 2008 MPC Planning Meeting to order at 1:10 P.M. and asked that everyone stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation. He explained the agenda for the benefit of those who were attending the meeting for the first time.

II. Notices, Proclamations and Acknowledgements

A. Notice(s)

None.

B. Acknowledgment(s)

None

III. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

A. April 8, 2008 MPC Planning Meeting and Briefing Minutes

Due to the lack of a quorum, no action was taken on the April 8, 2008 MPC Planning or Briefing Minutes.

IV. Old Business

None.

V. Regular Business

A. Unified Zoning Ordinance Status Report Process

Ms. Charlotte Moore updated the Board an update of on Component 3 of the Unified Zoning Ordinance Process. All the uses have been identified; there are approximately 145 uses. Definitions have also been provided for each use. She noted that staff has drafted a number of zoning districts including districts in the conservation, commercial and industrial categories along with the Historic District Revision Committee. Ms. Moore stated that districts for approximately half of the use categories have been complete; a comparison matrix has been created in order to identify existing uses and compare them to the proposed uses. This matrix will be helpful to the public when requesting information. She referred Board Members to their handouts which show the various categories and how the districts will appear.

On June 4, staff met with our consultant, Lee Einsweiler of Code Studio to discuss areas that are in transition from residential to commercial and integrating sustainable practice into the zoning ordinance. She noted that the Technical Committee will continue to meet monthly and encouraged private members to continue to participate.

Ms. Moore stated that staff has attended additional workshops recently. Courtland Hyser, Land Use Planner, attended a workshop in Chicago on the topic of housing affordability and sustainability. Ms. Moore also attended the American Planning Association National Conference where several sessions were helpful in identifying concerns that need to be addressed in the Unified Zoning Ordinance. There was a period for questions and answers.

B. Historic District Ordinance Revisions Committee Update

Ms Sarah Ward gave a brief presentation on the status of the Historic District Ordinance Revisions. She included background history information on the Historic District Ordinance, the creation of the committee, and the tools the committee used. She highlighted some of the larger recommendations that the committee will be bringing forward such as; 1) 1966 recommendations, 2) Historic District Zoning Ordinance; 3) design guidelines and standards; 4) omitted Chadbourne recommendations; 5) Historic District Height Map; 6) role of the committee; 7) committee; 8) purpose; 9) schedule; and 10) selecting areas to evaluate.

C. Johnny Mercer Boulevard Preview

Mr. Thomson introduced the Johnny Mercer Boulevard Preview Report. He stated that the preview was not ready for broad public release, but rather it was designed as a learning exercise for Geoff Goins and Jack Butler.

Geoff Goins gave a brief presentation to the Board on the Johnny Mercer Boulevard Corridor Study. He reviewed the corridor, the existing conditions and outlined a framework of the concept. Certain events on Johnny Mercer Boulevard in recent years brought into focus a deficiency on the current Zoning Ordinance. He presented to the Board the findings of staff research and the development of the Village Center –Mixed Use District.

Speaking on the Petition

Ms. Marianne Heimes, Island's Citizens for Logical Growth, voiced her concerns regarding retail in the Town Center. She asked that Board Members consider the impact on the community prior to making any changes.

D. American Planning Association Annual Conference Summary of sessions attended

Mr. Ragsdale began by thanking the MPC for affording him the opportunity to attend the conference. He found the conference beneficial especially the information provided on the role of the Planning Commissioner.

Charlotte Moore stated that she had attended several courses related to drafting zoning ordinances at the conference. She said that she also received valuable information regarding sustainability and green practices which engaged her to return and tackle the Unified Zoning Ordinance.

Mark Wilkes stated the he was able to view transportation from a planning perspective rather than a technical perspective. This was enlightening. He added that he would like to be able to rate the sessions so that the participants could understand which experience level they were geared toward.

James Hansen also thanked the MPC for allowing him the opportunity to attend the American Planning Association Conference. He stated that he attended many sessions but focused primarily on issues which concerned him such as Zoning and Signage.

Carry Smith gave a brief PowerPoint presentation on her experience as a student member of the American Planning Association Annual Conference. She touched on topics of interest such as Sustainability, Transportation and Affordable Housing.

Mr. Thomson gave a brief overview on the importance and the benefits of attending these types of conferences. He added that he met with Mr. Robert Hunter, President of the American Planning Association. Mr. Hunter stated that he would like to develop a National Committee whose mission would be to encourage Commissioners and Elected Officials to attend the National Conference or other American Planning Association activities. As a result he invited the MPC Chairman to become a member of the National Committee and participate in the process to develop a program that would encourage additional Commissioner participation. Mr. Thomson summarized the sessions that he attended.

VI. Other Business

None.

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the June 10, 2008, Comprehensive Planning Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas L. Thomson, P.E., AICP
Executive Director

Note: Minutes not official until signed