



C H A T H A M C O U N T Y - S A V A N N A H

METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: December 4, 2007

TO: Metropolitan Planning Commission

FROM: MPC Staff

SUBJECT: Annual Meeting Calendar

As you will recall, in September the MPC held a two-day Board retreat at Jekyll Island. Among the many topics discussed was a suggestion to change the formal meeting schedule of the MPC to a three week rotation. Staff recommends that the body of the whole consider an amendment to the By-Laws to effectuate such a change.

Currently, Article VI (4) of the By-Laws states that "... the Commission shall meet regularly twice each month, on the first and third Tuesday of the month at 1:30 ..." The proposed change would schedule the first MPC meeting of calendar year 2008 for Tuesday, January 8th and every third Tuesday thereafter. The effect of this change would reduce the number of formal meetings from 24 per year to 17-18 per year depending upon how the calendar falls.

Three advantages to the proposal seem immediately evident:

- Although the total number of meetings will be reduced, delays are not anticipated. As the calendar currently falls, there has been or will be six occasions in 2007 when the time frame between MPC meetings is three weeks. Most importantly, the by-laws will still provide for the scheduling of special or extra meetings if warranted. It will also be possible to conduct hearings on any continued petitions at the six regularly scheduled planning meetings as may be necessary to avoid undo delay.
- A consistent three week time frame between meetings will ease the burden experienced by MPC planners regarding the "rush" to review and prepare materials within the current two-week time frame. Unfortunately not all petitions are of the same quality and consequently staff must often "chase" petitioner's seeking additional information, maps, or neighborhood reaction. One of the

anticipated benefits of the longer review and preparation time will be a reduction in the number of cases that are continued by the MPC as commissioners seek additional information.

- A consistent three week time frame will also ease the burden placed upon the support staff covering everything from the transcription of minutes to the preparation of commissioner packets. A cost savings would also be realized by requiring the preparation of fewer packets thus saving paper and production/delivery time as well as reduced mailing costs, etc.

At the request of the Chairman, staff has broached this proposal with several builders, developers, engineers, land planners, and attorneys seeking comment or concerns. As of this date, no one has raised serious concern.

Article X of the MPC By-Laws states that "...by-laws may be amended by an affirmative vote of a simple majority of the full membership of the Commission. A By-Law change shall be presented for consideration at a regular meeting of the Commission but shall not be voted upon until the regular meeting next following the meeting at which the By-Law change was proposed." In accordance therewith, staff recommends that Article VI, Section 4 of the By-Laws be amended as follows:

...Commencing on January 89, 2008, the Commission shall meet regularly every third Tuesday thereafter twice each month, ~~on the first and third Tuesday of the month~~ at 1:30 P.M., for the purpose of conducting the general business of the Commission. In addition, the Commission shall meet every other month beginning in January, March, May, July, September, and November on ~~the second~~ a Tuesday as set forth on the adopted calendar at 1:00 P.M. for the purpose of addressing comprehensive planning issues ~~only~~ and continued petitions as may be necessary. ~~No zoning, site plans, subdivisions or other petitions shall be heard at such latter meetings.~~ Special meetings...

The remainder of the Section is not amended.