



**Planning Board Meeting Minutes  
Community Building  
223 E. Bay Street  
June 17, 2021  
6:00 P.M.**

**Members Present:** Tish Hatem, Will Hewett, Maureen Meehan, Scott Jones, Dick Sloan, Gustavo Mibelli, Donnie Joyner, and Sue Hodgins.

**Members Absent:** Christopher Jones

**Staff Present:** Thomas Lloyd, Development Services Director  
Tanya Shannon, Deputy Clerk  
Gordon Hargrove, City Manager  
Tori Deviney, Administrative Assistant

**Board of Aldermen** Karen Mosteller and John Allen  
**Liaisons:**

1. Chairman Tish Hatem called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.
2. The invocation was led by Mr. Donnie Joyner.
3. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Hatem.
4. Motion to approve the May 20, 2021, regular meeting minutes by Mr. Donnie Joyner, second by Mr. Will Hewett. ***Unanimous vote; motion carried.***
5. Motion to approve the agenda by Mr. Donnie Joyner, second by Mr. Will Hewett. ***Unanimous vote; motion carried.***

A motion was made by Mr. Donnie Joyner to go into public comment, second by Mr. Will Hewett. ***Unanimous vote; motion carried.***

**6. Public Comment:**

The Deputy Clerk read three letters submitted to the Board from residents that could not attend. The letters and memorandums from the public comment period are attached to the minutes listed in "Exhibit A" that can be read in full.

1. John Beroset, 118 N. Atlantic Ave; is alarmed by the rapid growth of short-term rentals in Southport. He fears that the current growth will negatively affect the nature of a common community. He supports the need to regulate and control the fast growth of short-term rentals in Southport.
2. Ginger Harper, 105 E. Bay St; supports the need for regulations on short-term rentals. She is worried that Southport will lose its appeal and small town charm if short-term rentals continue to grow in the area. She said the beaches are for short-term rentals not a small

town like Southport where people enjoy knowing their neighbors. She asked the Board to consider the negative impact of these rentals on the City.

3. Robert & Jeanne Potter, 315 Burrington Ave; said they have been residents of Southport for many generations. They are concerned with the amount of short-term rentals in the City and would like to see that they are restricted.
4. Becky Felton; 239 N. Caswell Ave; provided a petition to the Board from residents in the area that are in favor of the text amendment on short-term rentals. She said the increasing rate of short-term rentals is alarming and was shocked that there are (10) such rentals within a few blocks of her home. She said the lack of regulations could cause damage to the small community.
5. Kristin Goode; Oak Island Accommodations Property Manager, suggested the Board take the draft amendment back to committee and take time to reach out to members of the neighborhoods and business communities to listen and understand the arguments on all sides before making changes. She said the proposed amendment is much stricter to short-term rentals opposed to Homestays, Bed & Breakfasts', Hotels, and Motels. She disagrees with the proposed strict rules and regulations.
6. Kim Sirkin; 5086 Glen Cove Dr; is an event planner and she said the proposed amendment on short-term rentals would have a negative impact on her business. She said that vacation renters generate a lot of revenue for the City. She agrees with the permit requirements, but she said it would be unfair to restrict them.
7. Lucinda Arnold, 4173 River Rd. SE, owner of a short-term rental in Southport, said she had many questions that have not been answered. She feels the draft amendment is more restrictive than the first prepared draft. She would like to know how many complaints have been reported to the Police and what could property owners of STR's expect if the City were to annex other areas into the City limits. She feels like these restrictions will have a large impact on the local businesses.
8. Pamela Frandano, 6189 Riversound Circle; Southport Reality, manages short-term rentals as well as long-term rentals. She supports the legal permit process but does not agree with all the standards.
9. Mark Weibel; 205 E. Brown St; feels the estimate on how many STR's are in Southport are inaccurate. He said restrictions added to short-term vacation rentals will reduce the number of potential buyers and have negative impacts on property values. He does not feel like there is a problem with these rentals that are used for no more than 1/3 of the year and mostly in the summer.
10. Rebecca Kelley, 5971 Dutchman Creek Rd; owner of River Oaks Inn and several rentals in Southport. She said vacationers that come to Southport want to feel like part of the community, so they utilize the rentals and support the local economy. She questioned how and where the number of STR's in Southport were determined. She does not support the text amendment.
11. Jim Lightbourne; 316 W. West St; is in favor of the text amendment. He said he moved to Southport to live in a community where neighbors know and look out for each other. He said Southport is too small to have an abundance of short-term rentals. He said renters that change frequently bring constant nuisances that are difficult to consistently adapt to. He supports the need for regulations on short-term rentals.

12. Maria Swenson; 107 N. Atlantic Ave; is in favor of regulations on short-term rentals. She said these rentals are primarily in residential districts and not in the business district. She said they are eroding the foundation of a small community and overwhelming the residents. She implored the Board to protect and preserve the integrity and values of Southport.
13. Paul Swenson; 107 N. Atlantic Ave; stated that short-term rentals are strictly about making money without concern for the people who live in Southport full time. He said the residents of Southport have the right to peace and tranquility. He asked the Board to protect the community from being commercially overrun.
14. Royce Potter, 112 Frink Dr; supports the need for regulations on short-term rentals. He said that this is a business that does not belong in residential neighborhoods. He said he moved from Oak Island because of the STR domino effect. Residents began to leave the community because they do not want to live beside revolving doors.
15. Tracy Beaulieu; 206 W. Nash St; submitted a petition from residents in her neighborhood that was submitted into the record in support of restrictions on STR's. She wanted to note that Bed & Breakfasts' are different from STR's in the way they operate. She said the B&B's provide the required parking and do not allow pets. She said she there is a STR next door to her and it is rented out full time. She also said that many residents do not call the police like herself to report problems because they fear of retaliation from the renters.
16. Trisha Howarth, Indigo Plantation; President of NC Vacation Renters Management Association; commented that as a resident she agrees with preserving the historic community of Southport. She said it was important for people to read the NCGS Vacation Rental Act so that the laws are followed and there are no legal ramifications. She said rental agencies already adhere to strict standards and regulations.

There were no further comments.

A motion was made by Mr. Donnie Joyner to go out of Public Comment, second by Mr. Scott Jones. ***Unanimous vote; motion carried***

## 7. **Old Business:**

### **A. Zoning Map Amendment: MF/BD to R-10, N. Caswell Properties, initiated by the Board of Aldermen. (RZ-21-0112-01)**

Development Services Director Mr. Thomas Lloyd gave an overview of the zoning map amendment. The proposed amendment began at the request of the Board of Aldermen at their January meeting. After recommendation for approval by the Planning Board, the Board of Aldermen approved the first phase of the rezoning process at their June meeting for 4 properties located at 1132 N. Caswell, 1136 N. Caswell, 1201 N. Lord and 1211 N. Lord St. Staff recommended to proceed with Phase 2 and begin the process to rezone the properties located at 1133 N. Caswell, 1147 N. Caswell, and 1151 N. Caswell.

Mr. Scott Jones asked if all the property owners had responded back. Mr. Lloyd said that all three of the proposed property owners have agreed in writing. Chairman Hatem asked how many more properties were left to rezone. Mr. Lloyd said there are 5 total properties (1 property is a contiguous lot and the owner is not interested in rezoning).

Ms. Maureen Meehan read the Statement of Consistency and made a motion to recommend approval to the Board of Aldermen for the second phase of the Zoning Map Amendment MF to R-10 for properties located at 1133 N. Caswell Ave; 1147 N. Caswell Ave; and 1151 N. Caswell Ave; second by Mr. Scott Jones.  
***Unanimous vote; motion carried.***

**B. Zoning Text Amendment: An update to the UDO that would add regulations concerning Short-Term Vacation Rental and Homestays.**

The Planning Board decided to send the proposed text amendment that would add regulations to short-term vacation rentals and homestays to the UDO back to the Review Committee for more discussion at their May 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Committee did a full review of the ordinance, recommendations, and made some changes. Mr. Lloyd provided the background and read the Draft Text Amendment with the changes in its entirety.

Mr. Scott Jones questioned if the liability insurance required for vacation rentals was the same for other businesses such as hotels. Mr. Lloyd said not to his knowledge.

Ms. Sue Hodgkin commented that Airbnb's first began as Homestays where people that lived on the property rented out extra space. She said now it has become a major business opportunity. She said long before she became a member of the Planning Board and then volunteered for the review committee there has been a lot of research on how to efficiently regulate vacation rentals. Although she lives in an HOA where short-term rentals are not allowed, she sees the need to protect the residents that have lived here for a long time, especially in the older communities. Ms. Hodgkin concluded that the Review Committee and Planning Board have worked very hard to adhere to the Cities Land Use Plan for the long-term goals and core values of Southport.

Mr. Will Hewett said he was born and raised in Southport. He said it is concerning that some members of the community have become afraid because of the consistent rentals in their neighborhood. He said the facts and data from the research on the impacts of short-term vacation rentals are still coming in. He said any changes that are made can always be altered if necessary. He recommended to keep studying and researching the impacts of the rentals to see if a compromise can be made to protect the community and vacationers.

Mr. Gustavo Mibelli said there needs to be a balance between the visitors and the residents. He agrees with the proposed amendment because it does not ban short-term rentals but regulates and defines them on where and how they can operate. He noted that Southport is not a resort town, it is a small historic community, and he would like to find the balance to keep the town quaint, quiet, and safe for everyone.

Mr. Jones said he has concerns with the short-term rentals taking over the City. He said many homes that are being sold are becoming vacation rentals and invading the residential communities. He would like to see a way to prevent properties from being sold and turned into short-term rentals before they have devastated the residential neighborhoods.

Mr. Lloyd read the Statement of Consistency.

Mr. Will Hewett made a motion to approve the Statement of Consistency, that recommended approval to the Board of Aldermen of the zoning text amendment to the Unified Development Ordinance that would add regulations to short-term rentals and homestays, second by Mr. Dick Sloan. Ayes: Will Hewett, Dick Sloan, Donnie Joyner, Tish Hatem, Maureen Meehan, and Gustavo Mibelli. Nays: Scott Jones. **Motion carried; 6-1.**

**Other Business:**

None

**Announcements:**

Chairman Hatem thanked everyone  
for coming and wished everyone a Safe and Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July.



There being no further questions or comments Mr. Donnie Joyner made a motion to adjourn, and second by Mr. Will Hewett. **Unanimous vote; motion carried.**

**Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:22 P.M.**

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Chairman, Tish Hatem

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Deputy Clerk, Tanya Shannon