



**Planning Board Meeting Minutes  
Southport Community Building  
223 E. Bay Street  
November 17, 2022  
6:00 P.M.**

**Members Present:** Sue Hodgin, Will Hewett, Christopher Jones, Gustavo Mibelli, Scott Jones, Dick Sloan, Donnie Joyner, and Fred Fiss.

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Dorothy Dutton, City Clerk  
Tanya Shannon, Deputy Clerk  
Mo Meehan, City Planner  
Travis Henley, Development Services Director

**Others:** Bob Doherty, a representative from Stanley Martin Homes

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

- A. Chair Sue Hodgin called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.
- B. Mr. Donnie Joyner gave the Invocation.
- C. Chair Hodgin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Hodgin introduced Mr. Travis Henley as the new Development Services Director and said she is looking forward to working with him.

Mr. Fred Fiss was designated an In-City voting member for this meeting, acting in the seat left vacant at Ms. Maureen Meehan's resignation.

- D. Motion to approve the October 20, 2022, meeting minutes By Vice-Chair Hewett and seconded by Mr. Donnie Joyner. **Unanimous vote; Motion carried.**
- E. Motion to approve the Meeting Agenda by Mr. Dick Sloan and seconded by Vice-Chair Hewett. **Unanimous vote; Motion carried.**
- F. Public Comment:

Vice-Chair Hewett Motioned to enter Public Comment and was seconded by Mr. Dick Sloan. **Unanimous vote; Motion carried.**

- 1. Ms. Marjorie Jones, 136 Stuart Avenue, had concerns regarding the development of the proposed Oakton subdivision. She explained that there are multiple accesses in the proposal, one of those being directly across from her driveway. She said this would cause hardship to her ability to enter and back out safely from her driveway. She requested that the Board review the plan's access points and recommend removal of the access directly across from her drive.

There were no further comments or questions from the public. Mr. Scott Jones made a Motion to close the Public Comment Period, seconded by Vice-Chair Hewett.

***Unanimous vote; Motion carried.***

**G. Old Business:**

**1. Bullfrog Corner, 101 E. Moore Street**

Development Services Director Travis Henley gave an update on the project. He stated that the developer has submitted a new site plan. The Review Committee consisting of Mr. Scott Jones, Chair Sue Hodgins, and Mr. Fred Fiss will schedule a meeting for review and discussion of the most recent submission.

**2. Carr Insurance Building, 115 N. Howe Street**

Mr. Henley stated that the Review Committee, which consists of Mr. Gustavo Mibelli, Chair Sue Hodgins, and Mr. Fred Fiss, has a meeting set for November 30. Mr. Henley said that City Staff who had participated in the Technical Review for this Application would also be attending: the Fire Chief, Fire Marshal, Police Chief, and Public Services Director. The Chair asked when the Technical Review was held, and Mr. Henley responded that it was in late September. The Chair requested the Technical Review notes and any supporting information be made available for the Review Committee's review before the Committee's next meeting.

**3. City of Southport's Sunny Point Property**

Mr. Henley stated that the Board of Aldermen and Planning Board had seen The Polote Corporation presentation regarding purchasing or leasing property on the City's acreage at Sunny Point, and both boards have received information regarding the interest of the Wildlife Resources Commission and the Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point (MOTSU).

With interest now from three potential entities, he said the Board of Aldermen had refined the task before the Planning Board: since the City is no longer building its own sewer plant (the original intent for this land-tract), the Aldermen ask that the Planning Board consider and make a recommendation of whether it is in the best interest of the City to sell the tract, with its limitations, or to consider an acquisition of other land that would better serve the future needs of Southport's Public Works? Mr. Henley said that a Review Committee had been established comprised of Vice-Chair Hewett, Mr. Fiss, and Mr. Joyner, and they will be scheduling a date to meet soon.

**4. Short-term Vacation Rental Ordinance**

Mr. Henley reported that Staff has begun work on its recommended text revisions for the Board of Aldermen for the Planning Board to review UDO text amendments to UDO Article 3 Section 3.8 *Short-Term Rental Vacation Rentals* regarding registration and payment of annual registration renewal fees, in light of a recent court case regarding the unconstitutionality of the fees. Mr. Chris Jones, Mr. Sloan, and Chair Hodgins are the designated Review Committee members and will soon be scheduling a meeting to review and discuss Staff's amendment recommendations. When completed, the text amendments will be presented to the Board of Aldermen for its discussion and vote.

**5. City Development Application Submission Guidelines**

Mr. Henley said that he is eager to begin the process of setting guidelines for the review and refinement of the overall application submission process for the City of Southport. The new Development Services staff is already compiling its ideas and suggestions, he said, for helping ensure

that submissions are all held to equal standards and are properly and efficiently reviewed before being accepted and forwarded to the Planning Board. A Review Committee consisting of Mr. Chris Jones, Mr. Fred Fiss, and Chair Hodgin will be meeting with Staff to discuss and offer suggestions for standards inclusions and the full application process.

Mr. Fiss welcomed Development Services Director Henley and asked him to give the Board his background. Mr. Henley stated is a Richmond, Virginia native and a 2016 graduate of James Madison University with degrees in Public Policy and Political Science. He said he had a professor at JMU who was an alum of UNC-W's Master of Public Administration Program, and that he relocated to Wilmington to become his TA. He became Pender County's Senior Planner in 2018 and was appointed as its Planning Director in 2020.

## **H. New Business**

### **1. Major Subdivision Review: Oakton**

City Planner Maureen Meehan gave an overview of the Oakton application. She said that since the application was first submitted in 2021, the only change in the plan is Lot 23 -- at the northwestern corner of Fodale Avenue's intersection with the proposed Rosin Drive -- which does not meet the 10,000 square-foot minimum lot size requirements for the R-10 zoning. She said that it has been revised, and now all of the lots meet the minimum lot size requirements. She explained that the preliminary plat has been received and was submitted by Hanover Design on behalf of Stanley Martin Homes.

The subject property is approximately 20.51 acres in size and is located between Fodale and Stuart Avenues, west of The Hammocks subdivision and east of Leonard Street. There are 42 proposed lots with a gross density of 2.05 units per acre. She said all the proposed homes within the subdivision would be served by the City for water and sewer. The property is currently zoned R-10, with a minimum lot size of 10,000 sf. The proposed subdivision has four points of access to existing roadways: off Stuart Avenue, and Sand Dollar Way within The Hammocks subdivision to meet (proposed) Oakton Drive; all accesses provide direct connections to Fodale and Stuart avenues. In the proposed subdivision, .84 acres of open space are required, while the applicant has provided 2.97 acres that can be counted as open space, therefore exceeding the UDO's open space requirements.

Ms. Meehan explained that at the time the application was initially received, UDO Section 3.18 *Tree Protection and Landscape Preservation* had not been amended to include separate zones for a tree plan and therefore, the applicant is not subject to 3.18 Section F.2 (a) ii - *Tree Safe Zones/ Lot Preservation*. Ms. Meehan stated that Staff recommends efforts be made by the Developer to preserve more of the site's existing trees.

Mr. Fiss asked if there were any mitigation requirements for use of the lots in the wetland areas. Ms. Meehan said that they would have to get approval and permits from the Division of Environmental Quality before disturbance of any areas designated as wetlands.

Chair Hodgin asked for clarification of when this submission was first received, and Ms. Meehan stated that the Planning Board received the introduction and initial sketches in July 2021. The Chair noted that even though the Developer is not bound to the current UDO Tree Protection provisions, she hopes that the Review Committee assigned will work to encourage them to abide by the updated UDO standards.

Mr. Mibelli questioned the Developer's grading approach for the site. He said it is a complex site with multiple levels. He asked if the Tree ordinance was not revised prior to the submittal of the application, will they be allowed to clear-cut the lot? Ms. Meehan said they could clear the lots for drainage improvements but would not remove all the trees on the site. She noted that the submitted

Tree Plan shows what trees would stay and which would remain. Mr. Mibelli stated that if they have to do significant grading on the site, this will cause more trees to be removed. He said he would like to see more information on the grading system that will be utilized.

Vice-Chair Hewett questioned how the entrance at Fodale and Mitchell streets, across from the cemetery, will line up with the accesses and the intersection. He said he's interested in seeing a diagram of how that will align with the plans.

Mr. Chris Jones clarified that there had not been any changes to the UDO other than the Tree Preservation and Landscape Protection update that would allow the Developer to follow the guidelines of the previous Ordinance. Ms. Meehan said that, other than the Tree protection requirements that were updated after this project's submittal, there had not been any changes to the UDO that would affect the Developer's proposal. The Developer can abide by the regulations of the UDO prior to submission in July 2021.

Mr. Henley agreed with Ms. Meehan's explanation, stating that the City could not force the Developer to follow the updated UDO since the application had been submitted prior to the most recent Tree text amendments; they would be entitled to follow the UDO text in place prior to July 2021. However, the Board could strongly encourage and recommend the Developer adhere to the current Tree Protection and Landscape Preservation that would encourage additional preservation of existing trees.

Vice-Chair Hewett wanted to address the Stuart Avenue access road issue, clarifying it is a two-way road. He asked about the road width, and Ms. Meehan responded that there is a 60 ft ROW. Mr. Hewett would like to see the Developer consider an alternative for that access since the residential houses are very close to the ROW, stating that it would only increase traffic on this already high-traffic road.

Chair Hodgkin appointed Vice-Chair Hewett, Chris Jones, and Dick Sloan as this project's Review Committee.

## **I. Other Business**

Mr. Mibelli wanted to share some ideas and suggestions on planning for future growth with the increasing development and subdivisions, along with the Hwy 211 widening project. He said Southport is an interest-point for many people to come and enjoy the services and attractions. Mr. Mibelli said there needs to be efforts on how to plan and prepare for the overall expansion and growth. He said traffic and parking would be critical issues. He suggested finding ways the City can have visitors and vacationers to help bear the expense.

Mr. Mibelli suggested engaging with the public for ideas and suggestions and gave background on his own previous locations' experiences regarding public participation in the planning process. He said that providing safe pathways for golf carts, cyclists, and pedestrians to travel to Walmart would help decrease vehicular traffic.

Vice-Chair Hewett suggested looking into the threshold to provide public transportation, such as a shuttle to transport people to and from Southport Crossings into Southport. He noted that this would help limit the number of vehicles traveling in and out of the City to access nearby facilities.

The Chair thanked each gentleman for their comments, stating that this Board and Development Services would be looking at ways the groups can work together to create solid long-range planning for Southport.

**J. Announcements**

Chair Hodgkin wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

There being no other business or announcements, Chair Hodgkin confirmed Mr. Fiss back to City Alternate status.

Chair Hodgkin requested a Motion to adjourn. A Motion was made by Mr. Joyner to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Vice-Chair Hewett. ***Unanimous vote; Motion carried.***

Adjournment: 6:49 P.M.

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Sue Hodgkin, Chair

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Deputy Clerk, Tanya Shannon

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