

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING
OCTOBER 26, 2020**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Harvey Goldberg, Chairman
Joseph Comeaux, Susan Hill,
Donna Peterman, Roger Peterson,
Paul Sacilotto, Edward Weiner

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bradford Gamblin

OTHERS PRESENT: Lisa Hannon, Zoning Official
Joan LeBeau, Urban Design Manager
Mitchell Austin, Chief Planner
Fabiana Solano, Planning Intern

CALL TO ORDER/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Mr. Goldberg called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.
- A. Roll Call
- B. Next Scheduled Meeting
- 1. November 23, 2020

CITIZENS COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

- None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. September 28, 2020
- Mr. Weiner MOVED, Mr. Comeaux SECONDED approval of the September 28, 2020, minutes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- Mr. Goldberg explained the public hearing for ZA-02-2020 was being presented this date as a formality to allow for public comment, noting there was a procedural error when same was heard at the September 28, 2020, meeting.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- Recording Secretary Pues swore in all participants.
- A. ZA-02-2020 - An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Punta Gorda, Florida, amending Chapter 26, "Land Development Regulations", Article 8, "Standards of General Applicability", Section 8.14 "Structures and Uses Limited in Yards", of the Punta Gorda Code, by adding a new subsection (l), to provide for planters in rear yards; providing for conflict and severability; and providing an effective date.
- Mr. Weiner questioned whether the illustration denoted under the Proposed Amendment should display the planter's maximum height as 29 inches below floor elevation rather than 30 inches.

- Ms. Lisa Hannon, Zoning Official, replied same was utilized as a sample in reference to the Florida Building Code and would be corrected.
- Mr. Goldberg called three times for public comment.
- Mr. Weiner MOVED, Ms. Peterman SECONDED to close the public hearing. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- Mr. Weiner MOVED, Ms. Peterman SECONDED to approve ZA-02-2020. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEW BUSINESS

- No items.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Master Plan: City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan 2040 Update
 - Mr. Mitchell Austin, Chief Planner, provided an update on the Comprehensive Plan 2040 (2040 Plan), as delineated in the agenda material, noting the Future Land Use, Coastal Management, Housing, Transportation and Historic Elements were under revision. He pointed out some of the changes to the goals, objectives and policies for each Element, noting the proposed changes were posted to the City’s website in a format required for submittal to the State. He indicated a presentation from the consultants was scheduled on November 4, 2020, anticipating a formal public hearing regarding same by January 2021 and adoption of the 2040 Plan by March 2021.
 - Mr. Weiner suggested consistency in the use of words “will” and “shall”. He then questioned Policy 1.1.2.2 regarding planning for level of service (LOS)-related facilities and services.
 - Mr. Austin replied currently all City facilities’ standards were LOS D, noting there was a mixture of B, C and D roadways in the City’s system which provided access capacity in terms of what was existing. He explained the differences in LOS was significant.
 - Mr. Weiner opined development could cause the level to change to F, questioning if there was a way to improve the flow of traffic to move from D to C.
 - Mr. Austin replied the roadway could be widened; however, same was a temporary fix which tended to last approximately 5 years. He explained the City’s plan was to include that all the uses were relatively close together and having a critical mass of residential, commercial and institutional uses would actually limit total vehicle miles traveled. He stated US 41 was at the bottom of Level D and approaching Level E in portions of Port Charlotte, so if residents were able to limit their daily commute to close proximity of their residence, same could assist Port Charlotte with their traffic issues as well.
 - Mr. Weiner questioned Policy 1.1.12.10 with regard to tree locations if donated.

- Mr. Austin explained same was a policy to establish a Street Tree Program, noting each particular location would be evaluated for feasibility.
- Mr. Weiner drew attention to Policy 1.1.14.1, expressing confusion regarding density, questioning whether the medium density category was missing.
- Mr. Austin replied the current Comprehensive Plan included low, medium and high density, mobile home and various mixed-use future land use categories which might permit some level of residential. He stated medium density was a suburban pattern in Punta Gorda Isles, Burnt Store Isles and Burnt Store Meadows, noting upon further examination, the allocation of medium density residential no longer existed in those three areas except for a handful of parcels. He stated in order to simplify the future land use categories medium residential was eliminated; thus, density would either be low (single family) or high (multi-family). He concluded the higher residential density permitted in the mixed-use classifications had nothing to do with residential lands because they were mixed-use categories.
- Mr. Weiner questioned what category addressed a 35 unit per acre building not combined with retail or business.
- Mr. Austin responded for a 35 unit per acre development, one would look towards the Downtown future land use category which permitted such residential densities, adding the Land Development Regulations would determine whether the property must be mixed use. He clarified the area was mixed use, pointing out downtown was intended to be mixed use across its totality, noting there were many ways to address it, including on a parcel-by-parcel basis.
- Mr. Weiner questioned whether the term “moderate” income was needed in Policy 4.1.1.5.
- Mr. Austin responded low and moderate incomes were defined as a percentage of area median income, noting the language in the current Comprehensive Plan was based on the Florida Standard; thus, low was anything below 50% and moderate was 50% to 80%. He stated it was necessary to be specific since many municipalities defined affordable housing differently in their Comprehensive Plan.
- Mr. Weiner voiced concern if affordable housing was defined as moderate income, same being placed in certain locations would result in objections being raised.
- Mr. Austin noted that could be a concern even with luxury development.
- Mr. Goldberg pointed out same was standard terminology and interpretations were subjective.

- Mr. Weiner questioned wording in Policy 4.1.7.5. which indicated “Punta Gorda shall develop more assisted living as part of our larger continuing care retirement community.” He inquired if the City was the developer.
 - Mr. Austin acknowledged the verbiage was misleading as that was not the intent, adding same would be revised.
 - Mr. Weiner then questioned Transportation Element Policy 7.1.1.8 which referenced high visibility crosswalks and stop signs at pedestrian activated signals at Retta Esplanade and US 41 Southbound, inquiring why same was different than Northbound.
 - Mr. Austin explained two years ago the City requested the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) consider safety at the intersections of West Retta Esplanade at both US 41 Southbound and Northbound, noting FDOT conducted a Network Signal Warrant Analysis and the report indicated a traffic signal was warranted at the intersection of West Esplanade and US 41 Northbound but not warranted at US 41 Southbound. He noted the City wanted to recognize that from the State level there was a policy difference between the two at present, opining at some point in the near future when a signal was installed at West Retta Esplanade and US 41 Northbound, same would increase the number of trips on West Retta Esplanade and result in a signal being warranted for US 41 Southbound.
 - Mr. Weiner drew attention to Policy 7.3.4.4 which stated impacts of development approvals occur concurrently with development approvals.
 - Mr. Austin replied the language was in reference to the collection of impact fees, advising the language was accepted by the Department of Economic Opportunity.
- B. City of Punta Gorda: Park & Rec Master Plan Status Report
- Ms. Fabiana Solano, Planning Intern, drew attention to the Punta Gorda’s Place to Play Parks & Recreations Master Plan (PRMP) status report. She reported the general survey data would help shape the PRMP, noting the survey ran from June 2020 to September 2020 and generated 354 responses. She explained the survey was shared on multiple online platforms as well as in the City Manager’s Weekly Report. She provided a brief overview of the general questions which addressed frequency of park use (many used weekly), amenities (few used City boat ramp facilities with other water based amenities meeting expectations except kayak launches) and maintenance (most respondents felt parks were clean and well maintained) as well as open-ended questions which allowed respondents to elaborate on ideas or opinions. She stated most respondents felt no additional parks were needed while a few suggested parks were needed in areas such as Burnt Store Isles, downtown and on Aqui Esta Boulevard, noting suggestions for park

improvements included parking, additional seating, kayak launches, increased bike access and cooled water stations.

- Mr. Goldberg noted there were already several parks on Aqui Esta Drive, opining there was not enough space for additional parks or public space unless the City desired to purchase private property and develop it.
- Ms. Solano concluded with a review of demographics of the respondents, concluding the timeline had been extended to June 2021 to ensure all input was considered. She announced a public workshop might be scheduled for January or February 2021 to obtain feedback from seasonal residents.
- Mr. Weiner opined if the City planned to encourage the influx of families with new developments, more playgrounds should be considered, suggesting the Master Plan should address amenities for families.

STAFF COMMENTS

- None.

COMMITTEE/BOARD COMMENTS

- None.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

- None.

ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting Adjourned: 2:55 p.m.

Harvey Goldberg, Chairman

Leah Pues, Recording Secretary