

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING  
AUGUST 24, 2020**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Harvey Goldberg, Chairman  
Joseph Comeaux, Bradford Gamblin,  
Donna Peterman, Roger Peterson,  
Paul Sacilotto, Edward Weiner

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

**CALL TO ORDER/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Mr. Goldberg called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.
- A. Roll Call
- B. Next Scheduled Meeting
- 1. September 28, 2020

**CITIZENS COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY**

- Mr. Bob Fritz commented the City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan 2040 (Plan) noted the proposed residential density, particularly in the City Center, was significantly greater than what was currently allowed, opining the proposed density would result in an increased building height. He pointed out parking was not addressed even though there was a transportation element in the Plan, speaking in favor of requiring two parking spaces per unit.
- Mr. Craig Ivey noted residents were concerned regarding noise in Gilchrist Park throughout the day and night, the speed limit on West Retta Esplanade, parking issues in the Historic District and liveboards, requesting parking issues faced by residents be addressed.
- Ms. Lisa Hannon, Zoning Official, read the following public comments received via email into the record: Ms. Sandy Brandt spoke in favor of restrictions for on-street overnight parking in the Historic District; Mr. Jim and Ms. Cathy Getz spoke in favor of adopting parking restrictions within the Historic District.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. July 27, 2020
- Ms. Peterman MOVED, Mr. Peterson SECONDED approval of the July 27, 2020, minutes.  
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

## NEW BUSINESS

- A. Residential Parking Permits in the Historic District
- Ms. Fabiana Solano, Planning Intern, provided a presentation on the proposed overnight parking pass program, as delineated in the agenda material, explaining the need for the program and its development, reviewing the first proposed solution, which included a prohibition against overnight on-street parking between 1:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. with exemptions for homeowners, renters, guests or government/emergency vehicles. She explained the permits would be no charge to residents and permits would be available for short-term guests or renters, noting penalties would be as follows: first offense, written warning; second offense, \$25; subsequent offenses: \$100. She explained staff determined virtual parking permits could be a low-cost solution. She stated staff recommended the following permit categories: Residential Parking Permits (property owners); Temporary Parking Permits (renters or guests); Boater Parking Permits (dinghy-dock permit holders). She stated a parking pass application would be required for all parking permit categories, noting enforcement would be complaint driven only and would include a tracking system to monitor whether a warning or citation had been issued. She explained the virtual parking pass system would be online and stored within a database accessible to staff, adding a sticker parking pass would require manual verification but the application would still be online. She then reviewed an alternative solution which would require parking permits for dinghy dock users only, noting overnight right-of-way parking restrictions were similar to the Special Residential Overlay restrictions. She drew attention to the project timeline, offering to answer any questions.
  - Mr. Gamblin questioned whether the City could include provisions in the ordinance to allow the removal of abandoned or suspicious vehicles.
  - Mr. Mitchell Austin, Chief Planner, explained staff was working with the Legal Division to research all the parking regulations throughout the City, including towing provisions. He stated the section of the Punta Gorda Code which addressed towing could be discussed at a future meeting.
  - A brief discussion ensued regarding the area addressed by the parking program and the allowance of new construction without on-site parking.
  - Mr. Comeaux expressed concern enforcement would be inconsistent if same were complaint-driven.
  - Mr. Peterson noted certain communities within the City had enforceable parking regulations while the Historic District did not, opining there should not be a double standard in the City.

- Ms. Peterman suggested recommending City Council move forward with the parking ordinance.
- Mr. Goldberg agreed, adding the recommendation should include details as to what should be considered.
- Mr. Sacilotto suggested operations be carefully planned before moving forward in an effort to avoid unintended consequences.
- Mr. Goldberg opined a process which would allow residents to determine whether a vehicle was in violation of Punta Gorda Code was desirable rather than requiring residents to call about vehicles in the early hours of the morning.
- Ms. Peterman stated a survey found 80% of Historic District Homeowners Association members supported a parking ordinance.
- Mr. Comeaux MOVED, Ms. Peterson SECONDED to recommend urgent action be taken to prepare a revision to the Punta Gorda Code which would create an enforceable parking regulation within the Historic District. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- A. City of Punta Gorda: Park & Recreation Master Plan Update 2020
- Ms. Solano presented the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (P&R Plan) update, as delineated in the agenda material, explaining a general survey was being conducted to collect data to shape the P&R Plan. She stated the survey would be open until the last week in September 2020. She provided a detailed review of the efforts to engage the public for feedback, concluding by reviewing the timeline for the update.
  - A brief discussion ensued regarding completion of a section of the Harborwalk.
  - Ms. Peterman requested the idea of creating a Parks and Recreation Department be elaborated and emphasized, expressing concern there was no proposed staff or funds for same in the recommendations.
  - Ms. Fabiana stated staff intended to highlight same in the Plan.
  - A brief discussion ensued regarding the need for a Parks and Recreation Department staff and budget, with members agreeing that suggestion should move forward to City Council.
  - Mr. Comeaux opined "Place to Play" suggested there was a singular park, suggesting revising same to "Places to Play" or "A Place to Play".
  - Mr. Sacilotto expressed concern parking was not sufficient for construction of a kayak launching facility at Ponce de Leon Park. He then recommended locations such as the Peace River Wildlife Center and the Visual Arts Center be integrated into the park system.
  - Mr. Goldberg expressed safety concerns regarding bicyclists speeding on the Harborwalk in Gilchrist Park.

- Mr. Peterson suggested establishing a speed limit for bicyclists.
  - Mr. Gamblin noted that a Park & Recreation Department could make use of volunteers and did not need to be a large cost to the City. He reiterated City Council should consider establishing a Parks and Recreation Department.
  - Discussion ensued regarding the recommendation for the establishment of either a Parks and Recreation Department or function, with a focus on its composition and the need for a budget.
  - Ms. LeBeau confirmed there was not currently a centralized Parks and Recreation role in the City, noting multiple City departments performed different Parks and Recreation functions.
  - Mr. Comeaux summarized the Commission desired a centralized management function.
- B. Master Plan: City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan 2040 Update
- Mr. Mitchell Austin, Chief Planner, provided a detailed 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 outlined each element's updates and new policies, concluding with a detailed explanation of current and proposed Future Land Use categories and the history of density in the Future Land Use Element.
  - Mr. Goldberg questioned whether the high-density residential area indicated on the map of proposed Future Land Use categories included infrastructure, such as parking, to support that level of density.
  - Mr. Austin replied the current high-density residential areas of the City required two parking spaces per unit with some exceptions within traditional neighborhoods, explaining the Punta Gorda Code, not the Comprehensive Plan, established parking requirements. He explained the 2040 Plan broadly detailed level and type of development anticipated for a certain area. He confirmed there were no height restrictions codified in the City's 2040 Plan, noting municipalities' zoning codes typically established same.
  - Discussion ensued regarding the relation of Comprehensive Plans to zoning codes.
  - Mr. Austin explained Comprehensive Plans served as planning documents to guide development regardless of a municipality's zoning code; however, the City would pursue adopting form-based codes which would address concerns such as building height once the 2040 Plan update was adopted. He then continued reviewing the history of density in the City. He explained the traditional density pattern did not equate to high-rise development at the residential densities under discussion, drawing attention to examples of existing high-density development which were in scale with surrounding

development. He stated demand was high for smaller units, particularly in the rental market downtown. He indicated staff was in the process of calibrating density to account for the traditional development pattern as well as ensuring there was a gradation of development, reviewing staff's considerations for the proposed categories. He concluded with a review of proposed changes to the overlay districts, noting the Waterfront Overlay was being considered for elimination.

- Mr. Weiner suggested removal of the mobile home residential category.
- Discussion ensued regarding the definition and types of manufactured homes and mobile homes as well as their regulations and restrictions, with Mr. Austin explaining eliminating mobile homes from the Punta Gorda Code could be challenging since there were existing mobile homes and possible annexations of same in the future.
- Ms. Peterman questioned the process leading to the review of the Land Development Regulations (LDRs).
- Mr. Austin replied the first draft of the 2040 Plan updates from the consultant was expected between September and October 2020. He reviewed the process for presentation of the draft and adoption of the Comprehensive Plan amendment incorporating the update, concluding the revised LDRs could be adopted by the end of 2021.
- Discussion ensued regarding the development of the City limits and the assumptions generated from the cost-benefit analysis previously performed regarding potential annexations of certain areas.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

- None.

**COMMITTEE/BOARD COMMENTS**

- None.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

- None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

- Meeting Adjourned: 4:15 p.m.

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Harvey Goldberg, Chairman

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Leah Pues, Recording Secretary