

**CITY OF PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 28, 2022, 2:00 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Peterman, Chair  
Comeaux, Gamblin, Goldberg, Johnson, Kellythorne, Sacilotto

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mitchell Austin, Principal Planner; Julie Ryan, Senior Project Manager; Bob Sifrit; Frank Conte; Judy Beaumont; Kelly Gaylord; Bob Fritz; Barbara Rendell; Patti Allen; Carlton Hughes; TJ Thornberry

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Goldberg called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Mr. Goldberg announced he served the maximum amount of terms allowed as Chair.

Mr. Comeaux **NOMINATED** Ms. Peterman.

As there were no other nominations, Ms. Peterman was appointed Chair by acclamation. Recording Secretary Pues opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair.

Mr. Goldberg **NOMINATED** Mr. Comeaux.

As there were no other nominations, Mr. Comeaux was appointed Vice Chair by acclamation.

**NOTE: Ms. Peterman commenced as Chair for the remainder of the meeting.**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Bob Sifrit read a letter which expressed concerns within the Historic District, including the lack of off-street parking as development increased, requesting same be addressed prior to implementing the new Land Development Regulations (LDRs).

Mr. Frank Conte indicated a change might be needed to Chapter 26, Section 10.3., Parking Specifications, as there were recent developments that did not include means for on-site parking; additionally, he pointed out the public hearings required under Historic Overlay District, Section 3.14(g), were not being held.

Ms. Judi Beaumont spoke on concerns regarding historic structures quickly diminishing in the City, suggesting the City establish a program which facilitated funding for historic preservation.

Ms. Kelly Gaylord requested a modification to the LDRs that would allow a minimum blank space on new developments for murals, noting the murals were an important aspect of heritage tourism in the City.

Mr. Bob Fritz indicated parking was scarcely addressed in the proposed LDRs, expressing concern regarding the potential for developers to build commercial and/or residential facilities without sufficient parking. He opined two parking spaces per living unit would attract residents, adding public transportation was not readily available in the City.

Ms. Barbara Rendell concurred with issues that arose from the lack of available parking.

Ms. Patti Allen suggested the height of buildings be reconsidered to assist with parking concerns, explaining building height could be counted after the level for public parking.

Mr. Carlton Hughes indicated he was involved in many high profile projects in the City, noting concerns with the Community Benefits Program included the potential for certain parcels' development to require points to be financially feasible.

Mr. TJ Thornberry expressed concerns with limitations on creativity due to mandated architectural designs in the Form Based Code (FBC). He next stated rules from the Federal Emergency Management Agency relating to parking and historic homes needed to be considered, adding elevation requirements for homes that were constructed in the previous year would not be permitted under the new FBC.

1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1.a December 27, 2021 Meeting Minutes

**Exhibits:**

*Cover Page*

*12-27-2021 Minutes*

Mr. Sacilotto **MOVED** to approve the December 27, 2021, minutes, **SECONDED** by Mr. Gamblin.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

2) LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

3) QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

4) GENERAL BUSINESS

4.a Land Development Regulations - Form Based Codes - Greater Downtown Area  
Article 3 - Zoning Regulating Districts and Article 7 - Architectural Provisions

**Exhibits:**

*Cover Page*

*Proposed Land Development Regulations Considerations*

*ARTICLE 3 - Zoning Regulating Districts*

*ARTICLE 3 - Specific to Building Types*

*ARTICLE 3 - Other Standards*

*ARTICLE 7 - Architectural Provisions*

*Excerpt City Council - Form Based Code - 09-08-2021 Minutes*

*Excerpt Planning Commission - Form Based Code - 09-27-2021 Minutes*

*Community Benefits Presentation*

*Form Based Code - How to Use*

*Form Based Code - 1st Draft Presentation*

Mr. Mitchell Austin, Principal Planner, drew members' attention to the Form Based Code – 1<sup>st</sup> Draft Presentation (Presentation), noting modifications to additional articles in the LDRs would be based on the direction of Article 3 and Article 7. He began with an explanation of the proposed revisions and amendments to Article 3 – Regulating Districts (slides 2-7), requesting members' feedback regarding same.

Mr. Comeaux questioned whether there were any changes other than the names of the regulating districts.

Mr. Austin responded there were underlying changes, such as the insertion of Neighborhood Transition which was intended to provide a better platform for development of residential lots while allowing some level of commercial development. He then indicated another modification to the existing Historic Overlay District included adding a local register of historic landmarks.

Ms. Peterman verified there were approximately 350 historic structures in the City based on a survey completed in 2012, explaining the local register would consider the architecture of structures or their link to historic figures rather than just the age of structures.

Mr. Austin then summarized the proposed building types (slide 8), noting parking requirements for same were located in Article 10, which needed revision. He verified there was a process in the LDRs that allowed property owners to submit a special request for construction of an unpermitted building type, adding same would require a hearing by the Commission and approval by City Council. He next briefly reviewed part two of future minor revisions and amendments to other articles (slide 9), which included Section 3.2.(g), Parking and Loading, and Section 3.2.(i), Review Process.

Mr. Goldberg inquired whether the draft relating to parking regulations would include specifications for duplexes.

Ms. Kellythorne questioned why certain locations did not have driveways even though they were required in the parking regulations.

Mr. Austin responded City Council implemented an administrative policy following a development boom and Hurricane Charley in 2005, explaining same permitted new development without a parking waiver. He indicated parking waivers could be considered once again, noting staff continued to pursue policies unless otherwise directed.

Discussion ensued regarding the specifications of the current administrative policy and the previous parking waiver program, with Ms. Peterman expressing concern that developers could continue developing properties without parking until Article 10 was addressed.

Mr. Comeaux questioned how to reverse the administrative policy.

Mr. Austin replied staff could revert to the Code as written, which required a developer to petition for a parking waiver.

Ms. Kellythorne suggested revisiting the administrative policies that were implemented following Hurricane Charley, particularly since LDRs were being reviewed.

Mr. Goldberg recommended corrections be made to administrative policies as discovered during revisions to the FBC.

Mr. Austin then continued reviewing the Presentation, summarizing the intent and limitations of Community Benefits Program as well as the basis of and categories for same (slides 10-12).

Mr. Gamblin inquired if there would be a category for aviation airports.

Mr. Austin responded the City had not adopted an airport protection overlay district, adding no portion of the area with the proposed FBCs was located in such a district.

Mr. Sacilotto recalled additional parking was a community benefit, opining developers should be given additional points if charging stations were included with the parking; additionally, he indicated it might be beneficial for the City to incentivize the installation of energy efficient fenestration and solar panels.

Discussion continued regarding the details of the proposed Community Benefits Program, with Mr. Goldberg speaking in favor of the provisions relating to additional height for medical and hospital use buildings.

Mr. Austin then reviewed the proposed point system of the Community Benefits Program (slides 13-17), then summarized a portion of the Community Benefits Presentation which was given to City Council and specified how the program worked. He next provided an explanation of the provisions and criteria for development based on the Program, concluding with an overview of the anticipated timeframes for the entire process as well as for final adoption.

Ms. Julie Ryan, Senior Project Manager, reiterated the discussions this date focused on Article 3 and Article 7, providing a detailed timeline of the adoption process for the LDRs in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. She indicated the revision process would be completed within a minimum of 6 months.

Mr. Sacilotto suggested the specifications for architectural standards be denoted in a manual rather than in the Code, adding the manual could then be referenced in the Code.

Mr. Austin stated enforceability would be difficult if the specifications were not in the LDRs.

Ms. Peterman indicated a comprehensive explanation should be provided to the public upfront regarding the revisions to the LDRs, opining same would potentially avoid misinformation on what the City was trying to accomplish.

Members spoke positively on the work completed by staff thus far.

Mr. Sacilotto suggested a diagram be provided to developers to assist with the FBC process.

Mr. Austin then briefly reviewed the proposed revisions to Article 7 - Architectural Provisions, which included elevated building standards, frontage standards and architectural style standards (slides 18-22). He recalled Ms. Gaylord's comment regarding Article 7 not including a provision to allow a minimum blank space on new developments for murals, noting same needed to be evaluated to provide reasonable accommodations for potential mural locations.

Ms. Peterman added murals could be an incentive for developers as part of the Community Benefit Program.

Mr. Sacilotto pointed out the required heights varied amongst the building types, suggesting same be more consistent.

Mr. Austin agreed same could be made more consistent.

## **STAFF COMMENTS**

None.

## **MEMBER COMMENTS**

None.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

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Chair

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Recording Secretary