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CITY OF FORT PIERCE PLANNING BOARD

Planning Board Minutes

OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE FORT PIERCE CITY PLANNING BOARD HELD ON MONDAY, **JANUARY 13, 2025**, IN FORT PIERCE CITY HALL, COMMISSION CHAMBERS, 100 NORTH US HIGHWAY 1, FORT PIERCE, FLORIDA.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL**

The new Planning Board member, Christopher Widing, introduced himself to the Board.

Present: Alexander Edwards; Christopher Widing; Nichelle Clemons; Justine Carter; Clayton Johnson; Anton Kreisl, Chairman

Absent: Gloria Baxevanis

Staff Present: Kev Freeman, Planning Director
Kerry Driver, Planner
Alicia Rosenthal, Planning and Development Organizer

4. **CONSIDERATION OF ABSENCES**

Ms. Baxevanis was excused.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. Minutes from the December 9, 2024 meeting

Motion was made by Nichelle Clemons, and seconded by Alexander Edwards to approve the minutes from the December 9, 2024 meeting.

AYE: Nichelle Clemons, Justine Carter, Clayton Johnson, Alexander Edwards, Christopher Widing, Chairman Anton Kreisl

Passed

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Annexation - S. Market Ave - Parcel ID: 2434-601-0062-000-6

Ms. Driver gave an overview of the requested voluntary annexation of one (1) parcel at or near the intersection of S. Market Ave. and Oleander Avenue. The subject property has a St. Lucie County Future Land Use designation of Industrial (IND) and a St. Lucie County Zoning classification of Industrial, Light (IL). The proposed City Future Land Use designation is Industrial (I) and Zoning classification of Light Industrial (I-1). The site area is approximately 2.60 acres and the current value of the property is \$411,400.

Dennis Murphy, Applicant Representative, stated they plan to make the best use of the property within the city regulations.

Motion was made by Nichelle Clemons, and seconded by Justine Carter to forward a recommendation of approval of the annexation of Parcel ID: 2434-601-0062-000-6 to the City Commission.

AYE: Justine Carter, Clayton Johnson, Alexander Edwards, Christopher Widing, Nichelle Clemons, Chairman Anton Kreisl

Passed

b. Zoning Text Amendment - Port of Fort Pierce Overlay Zoning District

Mr. Freeman provided the background of the Port of Fort Pierce Overlay Text Amendment. He explained the overlay district will take precedence over the current zoning. He highlighted that the Port of Fort Pierce is one of the 15 deep water seaports in Florida, which has immense economic value. Mr. Freeman highlighted that the illustrative Port of Fort Pierce Master Plan shows one of the potential scenarios of development in the port. It is important to know that what is being done today does not affect the implementation of the uses of the port as it stands. The city is enabling the development of the Master Plan and also broadening it to maintain the property rights of the property owners in the area.

Mr. Freeman stated several initiatives are underway near the Port, including major transportation improvements such as North Causeway Reconstruction, implementation of the SUNTrail Greenway, Fisherman's Wharf redevelopment and the Kings Landing development. He said that staff had been working on moving the port forward for four years. Mr. Freeman stated future development within the Port of Fort Pierce Overlay District will be processed either through a minor site plan or by the conditional use procedure. He noted the current Zoning and Future Land Use of the properties will not be amended at this time and the overlay will provide the framework for allowed uses and for the application/approval process.

Mr. Freeman stated that based on discussions with the property owners, ownership and connectivity between properties on both sides of N. 2nd Street, the whole track down the west side of the port has been included to be part of the overlay district. Mr. Freeman explained that four (4) lots have boundary discrepancies of what is actually recorded and will require a subdivision application to be submitted by St. Lucie County. Mr. Freeman showed the current Future Land Use and Zoning. He said to better organize the overlay district and for discussions with the property owners, the overlay was split into two sections, north port

and south port. The north port and south port areas will be similar in the ultimate development patterns. Mr. Freeman reviewed the use table changes, and he stated Conditional Uses will require additional approval.

Johua Revord, Director of Port, Inland Beaches for St. Lucie County, commented that future development needs to focus on how to take advantage of the deep water access. If everything in the use table is by right it limits the ability of the Port Authority to engage in those elements. Different types of lodging mixed with heavy, intense industrial uses could ultimately impact how the port is developed later on. If there is no opportunity for Conditional Use on higher industrial uses and everything is by right, the port authority has their hands tied. Mr. Revord answered questions from the Board on the lodging concerns and how he sees the port differently than how it looks today. Mr. Revord stated the county will be developing Harbour Pointe Park.

Ken Pruitt, Representing Safe Harbor Marinas, Harbortown, spoke in favor of the overlay district. He stated Harbortown, located in the North Port portion of the port, is undergoing a 10 million dollar renovation, and he said there is no lodging in the foreseeable future. Mr. Pruitt noted the north portion of the port is primarily already developed. He said the overlay district will provide protection for the city and the county.

Paul Sinnott, St. Lucie Village resident, asked the city and county to protect Harbour Pointe Park for public use, recreation, open space and passive use.

Harold Smyth, from Causeway Cove Marina, mentioned that lodging in the port is needed for yacht maintenance crews coming in from all over the country and for yacht owners' guests that are not staying on a boat. He mentioned that one boat can take 10,000 gallons of fuel, and he suggested looking at the capacity for fuel storage. The port makes a better seaplane base than the shuffleboard courts. He wanted to know if high and dry boat storage is included under 'Other Water - Dependent Use'. Mr. Smyth applauded the Port Overlay District, and he highlighted the overlay can support both the ecological and economic value of the port.

Carmela Bell, President of Destin Beach, Inc., stated she is speaking on behalf of the properties owned in the South Port area by Destin Beach, which is the largest landowner in the south port area. She stated she appreciated Mr. Revord's comment about the land being put to the highest and best use. She suggested two of the Conditional Use categories, greater than 30,000 gallons of fuel storage and a heliport be put in the permitted use category. She also suggested adding a seaplane base and manufacturing as a conditional use.

Kris Einstein, Downtown Business Owner, said the port is a much better place for a seaplane than downtown Fort Pierce.

Mr. Widing stated getting an overlay done is wise and is a long process. He is very supportive of the overlay district.

Ms. Clemons asked Mr. Freeman the overall feeling of the community on the heliport and seaplane. Mr. Freeman said he had heard the heliport should be a permitted use. He stated he has concerns about unintended consequences of development in other areas of the port. Ms. Clemons asked if a seaport could be added to the use table.

Mr. Kreisl said he liked that the Planning Board and City Commission could work with the property owner on how the conditional uses are implemented.

Ms. Carter asked how the city is going to balance industrial use with lodging and retail use

regarding the overall placement of certain facilities. Mr. Freeman explained that without a master plan designating the area for certain uses, there is no way to do that unless you make everything a Conditional Use. The city does not want to take away property owners' rights. Ms. Carter stated she has some concerns about freedom of use and property rights and how to deal with issues that arise. Mr. Freeman compared the freedom of permitted uses with straight zoning. He said initiative has to be taken to move the port forward, and he highlighted that whatever is proposed in the master plan can still happen.

Chair Kreisl said getting the city out of the way may be the path forward, but the broad uses could limit what others could build on their property and also knowing what their neighbors could build on their property. He concluded by saying, we have to start somewhere.

Mr. Widing said he is very positive about an overlay district being created. The overlay district helps frame everything that is trying to be done in a proper and professional way. It is a collective move on the use table to make things more understandable for everybody.

Motion was made by Nichelle Clemons, and seconded by Christopher Widing to forward the proposed Port of Fort Pierce Overlay Zoning District Text Amendment to the City Commission with a recommendation of approval with the following addition to the use table:

1. Add Seaports as a Conditional Use

AYE: Clayton Johnson, Alexander Edwards, Christopher Widing, Nichelle Clemons,
Chairman Anton Kreisl

NAY: Justine Carter

Passed

c. **Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment - Fort Pierce Utilities Authority - Water Supply Facilities Work Plan**

Mr. Freeman said the Proposed Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment is required to adopt the Fort Pierce Utilities Authority (FPUA) Water Supply Facilities Work Plan by reference. The purpose of the Fort Pierce Utilities Authority (FPUA) Water Supply Facilities Work Plan (Work Plan) is to identify and plan for the water supply sources and facilities needed to serve existing and new development within the local government's jurisdiction. The Florida Statutes require local governments to prepare and adopt Work Plans into their comprehensive plans within 18 months after the South Florida Water Management District (District) approves a regional water supply plan or its update.

Mr. Freeman stated, the residents of the City of Fort Pierce obtain their water from the FPUA, which is responsible for ensuring enough capacity is available for existing and future customers. The Work Plan will reference the initiatives to ensure adequate water supply for the City of Fort Pierce.

Mr. Freeman explained that once the City adopts, by reference, the current 2024-2034 FPUA Ten-Year Water Supply Facilities Work Plan, it will be sent to the state for their review and ultimate adoption.

No one spoke for or against the Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment.

Motion was made by Justine Carter, and seconded by Alexander Edwards to forward the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment to the City Commission with a recommendation for approval.

AYE: Clayton Johnson, Alexander Edwards, Christopher Widing, Nichelle Clemons,
Justine Carter, Chairman Anton Kreisl

Passed

7. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Freeman said 2025 will be an interesting year. He said there was discussion at the January 13, 2025, City Commission day meeting about Kings Landing movement with the hotel. He said staff has been negotiating with the developer on reconfiguring the site components and incorporating as much parking as they can into the development. The project will come back to the Planning Board as a Major Amendment to the Site Plan and will also go to the Historic Preservation Board.

Mr. Freeman said at the end of last year, staff met with the Property Appraiser's office because they were hearing difficulties with the plat process and obtaining a building permit. An amendment to the process will be on the next City Commission agenda.

Mr. Freeman said landscaping is a big issue and the city has a very qualified member of the Planning Board to help out. Staff will be bringing some code changes to provide a better look at landscaping and make it more flexible and beneficial for the city, as far as what is seen at the sites.

Mr. Freeman noted the department is getting a lot of inquiries about having development discussions.

Mr. Freeman said he met with Chair Kreisl about better describing the city limits on annexations coming forward to the Planning Board.

Mr. Freeman said staff is meeting internally to hopefully move forward with the City Commission on an annexation agreement or boundary limitation. This will give the Planning department a strategy on parameters that will be used to further judge if the annexation is in the best interest of the city. The purpose is to cure the enclaves in the city, which will make servicing the areas more efficient and, to look at the impact of service levels in the city with annexations moving westward.

Mr. Freeman said staff is moving forward with a Law Enforcement Impact Fee discussion with the City Commission in February 2025. Currently, there is no Law Enforcement Impact Fee.

In conclusion, Mr. Freeman said he is talking with the parking committee regarding code ideas for downtown.

9. BOARD COMMENTS

Chair Kreisl said he is happy Kings Landing is moving forward and parking is being addressed.

Mr. Widing asked for an explanation of the dates on the Water Supply Plan.

10. ADJOURNMENT