Minutes
Regular Meeting of the Florence County Planning Commission
Tuesday, May 23, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.
County Complex, Room 803
180 N. Irby St., Florence, South Carolina 29501

The Florence County Planning Department staff posted the agenda for the meeting on the information boards at the main entrance and the back entrance of the County Complex and on the information board in the lobby of the Planning and Building Inspection Departments office.

The following are summary minutes. The official minutes of this meeting are recorded and can be provided on a CD or DVD by request through the Freedom of Information Act.

The agenda was also mailed to the media.

I. Call to Order:

Chairman Lane called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Attendance:

Commissioners Present: Jody Lane, Chairman
Cheryl Floyd, Vice-Chairman
Allie Brooks
Dwight Johnson
Doris Lockhart
Ted Greene
Karen Epps
Jeffrey Tanner

Commissioners Absent: Linda Borgman
Mark Fountain

Staff Present: J. Shawn Brashear, Interim Planning Director
Edward C. Zayas, Jr., Planning Manager
Derrick Singletary, Senior Planner
Lisa Becoat, Secretary
Public Attendance: See sign-in sheet on file with the Florence County Planning Department.

III. Review and Motion of Minutes

- Meeting of March 28, 2017

Motion to approve as presented – Commissioner Allie Brooks / Second – Commissioner Dwight Johnson / Unanimously approved 8 to 0.

IV. Public Hearings

None.

V. Request for Plat/Plan Approval:

Chairman Lane PC #2017-07 was pulled so we will move forward with:

PC#2017-08 Amendment requested by Gary W. Brown to previously approved Planned Development (PD) for property located at 781 St. Andrews Rd., as shown on Florence County Tax Map No.00074-01-012.

Mr. J. Shawn Brashear, presented the staff report to the Commission. He additionally indicated that there had been no inquiries regarding the request; and that the proposed change to the PD had not been published to the neighborhood.

(Copy of staff report available at the Florence County Planning Department)

There were considerable questions and discussion by the Commission.

Mr. J. Shawn Brashear informed the Commission that the regulation had been reviewed and that it was not a requirement for the amended PD plan to be posted for review to the community for information and/or input.

There were considerable comments, questions and discussion by the Commission.

Chairman Lane opened the discussion to the public and inquired and asked if there was anyone in favor of the Plat/Plan amendment and would like to speak.

The following constituent Mr. Gary Brown, architect for the project, stated that the PD is a little different than originally presented. He indicated that the development is a ministry and that Mr. Peter Rau was available to speak more about what it is and what they do.
The following constituent Mr. Peter Rau stated that he is on the Leadership Board for OM Ships International here in Florence, SC. OM Ships International is a nonprofit 501(c) (3) that came to Florence in 2006. They have been functioning throughout the world since 1970. They have a nine (9) deck Ocean Liner that goes to port cities of developing worlds to bring humanitarian efforts and to share the Love of God to those communities. In 2006 the offices moved to the present property at 781 Saint Andrews. The facilities are shared with a church Community Bible Fellowship. They were the original owners of the property and deeded the property to OM Ships, also known as, GBA Ships Florence, and they still function there each Sunday, in the main office building which was their Church Building. From the original plans, that were proposed, the use is consistent within that, there are the office structures, the warehouse structure and the lodging facilities that are used for short term staff. OM Ships is a volunteer based ministry and the volunteer base has grown over the last five years. In 2011-2012 they had roughly 5,000 thousand volunteer hours that were committed by the community to the organization. Last year they logged in over 23,000 thousand community volunteer hours. These volunteer hours are put in from community members here and from schools and church groups all over the United States and internationally who come to be a part of the organization and Florence County while they are here with us. The need has now arisen to house more individuals on site for their short time onboard with the organization. They are currently renting four (4) apartments across the street at the apartment complex and would like to bring those beds on site to maintain and facilitate their groups better. At the meeting tonight, I have heard the Commissions questions and concerns about the RV parking. It would only be a short stay, up to about 3 to 4-weeks. Some of the snowbirds that would like to come down, may stay for about 3-4 weeks prior to moving on to their next assignment. There is a number of RV’ers in the retirement community that go from non-profit to non-profit throughout the United States to serve and we would hope to be able to facilitate them during their time with us.

There were considerable comments, questions, and discussion from the Commission.

Mr. Peter Rau indicated that OM Ships over the years has strived to make sure they were good neighbors and prior to going to Gary with a request for a change to the Planned Unit Development they hand walked and spoke with each of the neighbors that were in direct connection with the property and also spoke with the HOA community behind the development and all the comments were favorable. We have no documentation to that but received no negative comments. There is really not a lot of change to the development, but merely a reassignment of some of the use of the facilities. The use itself continues to go forward. The warehouse traffic is Monday thru Friday 9 to 5. Deliveries are not taken after 5 p.m. and there are no deliveries on the weekends, the facilities are shut down. Since we received no negative comments from the direct neighbors, which is why we went to the next step of the development.

There were considerable comments, questions, and discussion from the Commission.

Mr. Peter Rau stated that he was unaware when Community Bible Fellowship built the original building but in 2006 OM Ships’ International took over ownership of the property from Community Bible Fellowship. There is a long term agreement that they will still worship there and they have signage on the property that directs people to the main office where they worship on Wednesday nights and Sunday morning.
Mr. Gary Brown stated that if you look at the original Planned Development, you can see the townhouses and the original elements. It’s simply rearranging them on the property. The only thing that was missing was the RV pads.

Mr. Peter Rau indicated that one of the original development plans had two RV pads over to the left of the property by the church building. That was on the original plans.

Mr. Gary Brown further stated the red building to the front has been moved back so there is a buffer zone. The original Civil Engineers’ passed away so that is another reason the development had to be rethought. Some of the elements are essentially the same, except for the duplex’s which will house small groups of people.

There were considerable discussion and comments by the Commission.

Vice-Chairman Cheryl Floyd made a motion that the amended Plat/Plan for 781 St. Andrews be tabled until the next meeting to give Staff time to duly post the property and to notify adjacent properties. / Second – Commissioner Allie Brooks / Unanimously approved 8 to 0.

Shawn Brashear explained that posting the property which was not required by law may open County up to future litigation of projects which were not posted and were not required to be posted. But may lead to questions that you posted that project in 2017 for OM Ships but you didn’t post this one. Which may lead to questions that we were not properly notified and why not? As the motion has been made, we will inquire from the County Attorney if we can post the Plat/Plan. Possible we can work with the requester’s/owners and have them do their own posting and have them bring the records to the Commission which indicate that they have been in contact with the Home Owners Association and the community. Either way we will confer with the County Attorney to ensure that we can do this.

There were further comments from and by the Commission.

Chairman Lane called for a motion that would defer the amended Plat/Plan for 781 St. Andrews to give Staff the opportunity to inquire and research the signage issue and bring the request back before the Commission.

Vice-Chairman Cheryl Floyd made the motion / Second – Commissioner Ted Greene / Unanimously approved 8 to 0

Chairman Lane summarized to the public the motion and what research the Planning Commission has requested.

VI. **Other Business**

**Comprehensive Plan five year review**

Mr. Edward C. Zayas, Jr., presented the staff report and information to the Commission for the Comprehensive Plan. Staff recommends approval of the five year review.
There were considerable comments, questions and discussion by the Commission.

Commissioner Allie Brooks made a Motion that the Comprehensive Plan Five year review be tabled until the next meeting to allow all Commission members the opportunity to review the hard copy of the document due to issues with CD’s that were mailed out. / Second – Commissioner Dwight Johnson and Ted Greene / Unanimously approved 8 to 0.

VII. Director’s Report:

Mr. Brashear’s comments were as follows:

- **Summary Plat Reports for (March and April 2017)**
- **Building Reports for (March and April 2017)**

We have attached the summary plats and the building reports; staff is available to answer any questions.

VIII. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn – Vice-Chairman Cheryl Floyd / Second – Commissioner Allie Brooks, Dwight Johnson and Ted Greene / Unanimously approved 8 to 0.

Meeting adjourned at 1838 p.m.

_______________________________________________________
Lisa M. Becoat
Secretary

Approved by:

_______________________________________________________
J. Shawn Brashear
Interim Planning Director

*These minutes reflect only actions taken and do not represent a true verbatim transcript of the meeting.*