

**TOWN OF SWANSBORO
PLANNING BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
JULY 19, 2021**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm. Board members in attendance were Scott Chadwick, Christina Ramsey, Michael Favata, and Jeff Conaway. Ed McHale was on a leave of absence and was excused. Brad Buckley was absent with no staff contact or reason provided. It was noted that his vote would be affirmative on all items. The board had one vacancy.

New Business

Commercial Maintenance Code

Maintenance Codes for other municipalities were provided previously for review. At the June regular meeting, the Board requested to discuss and draft a Commercial Maintenance Code as an amendment to the Town Code. Subsequently, the Town Attorney discovered that our Town Code contains provisions for commercial property maintenance. It was his opinion that the existing language was sufficient.

Mr. Chadwick referred to Sections 151.09, 151.10, and 151.99 of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) that dealt with allowed cleanup timeframes and penalties. He inquired specifically about the Swansboro Yacht Club and asked whether penalties were being assessed and why the cleanup appeared to be more than the 10-30 days the ordinance provided for. Town Manager Chris Seaberg informed that there were multiple nuisance violations and some involved legal action which added to the delay.

Mr. Favata inquired if there were other properties in town with similar violations. Manager Seaberg was not aware of any.

Mrs. Ramsey asked if language should be added for properties that experienced hurricane damage. Mr. Chadwick read Section 151.09 offering that it probably covered allowances for such damage but asked Manager Seaberg to seek legal opinion if the language was sufficient.

Clear-cutting Definition

At their June 28, 2021, regular meeting, the Board of Commissioners directed staff to work with the Planning Board to develop a definition for clear-cutting as related to the recently adopted amendments regarding land improvement permits and penalty.

Staff provided the following recommended amendments (highlighted):

§ 152.016 DEFINITIONS OF BASIC TERMS.

CLEAR-CUTTING. The alteration and/or improvement of a site when it results in the removal of regulated trees in excess of fifteen (15) per acre and causes the loss of forestland.

PROTECTED/REGULATED TREE. A tree measuring 18 inches at circumference-at-breast height.

There was some discussion on whether a percentage would be better versus an actual number of trees per acre.

On a motion by Mr. Conaway, seconded by Mrs. Ramsey the proposed amendments as written were recommended for adoption. The vote was unanimous.

Board Comments/Staff Comments

Mr. Conaway was hearing comments that the Town was over regulating properties. He felt the Town was trying to protect properties offering that more education was needed on the efforts to protect trees and the goals given through the Strategic Plan to support the CAMA Land Use Plan. Mrs. Ramsey noted that the Town Newsletter (if it were still produced) would be a great source for such education. Mr. Chadwick shared that the Board of Commissioners had gave direction to staff to utilize social media outlets versus a printed newsletter several years ago. He supported the printed version as well, noting that not everyone used social media.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.