

**Town of Swansboro
Planning Board
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 7, 2021**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm. Board members in attendance were Michael Favata, Christina Ramsey, Scott Chadwick, Jeff Conaway, and Ed McHale. The board had 2 vacancies.

Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Conaway, seconded by Mrs. Ramsey the November 10, 2021, Special Meeting minutes were adopted with unanimously approval.

Business

Church, School and Public Building Signage

Planner, Jennifer Ansell reviewed that an amendment was proposed to remove Section 152.271, Additional Signs as Special Use, from the Unified Development Ordinance. It was not clear why the requirement to obtain a special use permit exists specifically for church, school and public building signs as these are typically non-intrusive sign types. Additionally, the amendment would remove the reference to banners, special events signs, etc. as they are addressed under Sections 152.268 and 152.269 of the ordinances. The amendment also added language under Section 152.270 to require a sign permit for church, school and public building (non-governmental) signage, and to establish sign size requirements.

In response to an inquiry from the board, this amendment was a result of a request made to erect a sign on the Middle School gym annex in dedication and recognition of Claude Crews.

On a motion by Mr. Chadwick seconded by Mrs. Ramsey, with unanimous approval, the amendment to Section 152.270, Signs Requiring a Permit and Fee, and Section 152.271, Additional Signs as Special Use, of the Unified Development Ordinance was recommended for approval to the Board of Commissioners and was consistent with the current Comprehensive Plan.

Staff Comments

Mr. Chadwick shared that Mr. Conway had found some areas in the state that regulated political signs on the aspect of how many could be displayed. It was requested that those details be provided for review by the Planner and Attorney to see if Swansboro could enact such regulation. Mrs. Ansell shared that the regulation on the # of signs could be regulated for private property, but the state Right-of-way was regulated by North Carolina General Statue. Additionally, asserting higher fines for certain signage was not permitted because that would be regulation of content which is not allowed.

Mrs. Ansell reviewed that she had provided the board with a article from the UNC School of Government related to Permit Choice Rule for Development Regulations. In short if an applicant submits a permit, and there is a rule change before the permit is issued, the applicant has a choice on which rule they wish to fall under.

Mrs. Ansell shared that the next regular meeting was around the New Year's holiday and inquired if the Board wish to hold the meeting or schedule a special meeting. The board consensus was to cancel the regular meeting and hold a special meeting on January 11, 2022.

Planning Board Program of Work Update

Mrs Ansell reviewed that the Board of Commissioners discussed having a planning retreat as part of the planning process, one of the items that came up was Land Use Plan implementation and they desired moving forward on some of the rezoning options and land use designations, however, she suggested holding off until after their retreats to see if any direction comes out of those meetings.

Chairman/Board Thoughts/Staff Comments

Mr. Conaway commented that he had enjoyed his appointment to the Planning Board and Historic Preservation Commission. He thanked the board members for their support and shared that he was looking forward to fulfilling his election term to the Board of Commissioners.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Conaway, seconded by Mrs. Ramsey, the meeting adjourned at 5:41 pm.