

KURE BEACH PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING ♦ January 3, 2012

A regular meeting of the Kure Beach Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Commission was held on Tuesday, January 3, 2012. A quorum of the commission was present.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Member Timothy Bullard
Member Dennis Clouse
Member Alan Votta
Member Joseph Whitley

Emilie Swearingen, Liaison Commissioner

MEMBERS ABSENT

Chairman Craig Galbraith

STAFF PRESENT

John Batson, Building Inspector
Josie Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant

Attorney Holt Moore was not in attendance

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Member Votta called the meeting to order at 7: 00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION: Member Bullard moved to adopt the agenda

SECOND: Member Clouse

VOTE: Unanimous

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: Member Clouse moved to approve the minutes of December 6, 2011

SECOND: Member Bullard

VOTE: Unanimous

IV. PERSONS TO ADDRESS COMMISSION:

None

V. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Alternative Energy

It was mentioned that Chairman Galbraith had intended to bring a draft to the meeting for the members to consider regarding this issue. In his absence, it was agreed that the members would not go forward with further discussion. This matter would be tabled until the next meeting.

MOTION: Member Bullard moved to table discussion regarding alternative energy until the next meeting
SECOND: Member Clouse
VOTE: Unanimous

B. Potential B-1 expansion – K Avenue

- The Commission is not aware if Chairman Galbraith is on the Council agenda for January 17th to get input from the Council. The agenda will not be published until a week from Friday and it will be checked to see if Chairman Galbraith appears on it.
- A letter from property owner Frank Alexander that was submitted to Mayor Lambeth regarding the K Ave. expansion was reviewed.
- There was further discussion regarding seeing what the interest and concerns are before visiting other communities.
- Member Clouse shared information he found online regarding architectural standards for the Town of Beaufort. They seem to be parallel with our identity issues. Beaufort may be a nice sister community to observe and work with.
- Emilie Swearingen suggested that Swansboro is a small town and may also be a good example. The Council has not had any discussion or any feedback to offer the Commission. Last year, they were trying to put together a five- year plan for financial planning. Council is having their annual retreat this month and would like input of what P&Z Commission goals for the fiscal year, did you accomplish that, if not, why? The Council needs to revisit the land use plan and the K Avenue issue to see what the best thing to do for the Town. There is talk about the look and to keep a small town fishing village look. Some Council Members think businesses shouldn't be told what to do and not to do. It is her opinion that Council does not have a clear definition of what the form-based plan is. There is a need to educate Council especially new members on what exactly form-based means. Emilie stated that there are three new members on the Council and they are not aware of what is in the Sawyer study
- The plan is not to limit what businesses can or cannot do, but offer options as mixed use.
- Member Clouse stated the Sawyer report explains form-based zoning and explains what can be done in certain areas as recommendations. The form-based zoning is to determine the feel and look of the Town. Everyone would have a similar look whether a Star Bucks or McDonalds.
- Emilie Swearingen thinks the public doesn't understand what the potential idea is and they see something else. The P&Z Commission needs to put together something they agree on and bring it to the Council.
- Member Clouse suggested holding future workshops with renderings and other visualizations to show what could be considered or recommended and to provide guidance without changing the character of the community. This can be supported by Town resources or private consulting. We can go to Beaufort to get a set of pictures, renderings and cross road images and then have a workshop and bring it to Council and the public. The public will have a better picture of what could be proposed before deciding what they want and don't want.
- Member Bullard stated it is not going to be big development, just small individual lots. There is just so much that can be done. There is not a large amount of acreage available. The Town can try to relax the parking requirements.
- Member Votta suggested that there are various visions of what a fishing village should look like. It would be nice to get a 3-d rendering to see what one could look like. A mixed use will not affect the value of a house next door. A market analysis and feasibility study could be done. This type of mixed use planning could offer a better profit to small business and afford a higher and better use of some properties.

There was a suggestion to have the different commissions meet and see if there is common interest to pursue a mixed use plan. SLAP Committee may already be discussing parking for example. It was mentioned that all the chairs of committees meet occasionally and could coordinate recommendations. Discussion for another time.

MOTION: Member Votta moved to table discussion regarding B-1 expansion of K Ave. for the next meeting.

SECOND: Member Bullard

VOTE: Unanimous

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

a. There was discussion about term limits for committee members and having the committees recommend to Council who is to be appointed to fill open positions. In the past P&Z made those recommendations. Subsequently, Council took away that option. P&Z would like to see it reversed so they can select and/or recommend two applicants for appointment to Council. Council has the option to approve or reject recommendations. Council Woman suggested P&Z suggest their interest to change the procedure to Council.

b. Inspector John Batson discussed a proposal to join the N.C. Flood Rating Program. The rating is calculated by overseeing how we conduct business regarding flood plans, floor certificates, etc. There is a potential to reduce insurance premiums for homeowners which could be substantial in some situations. There is a big reduction in rate percentage if we implement the program in Kure Beach. Inspector Batson explained the criteria that would be considered for new construction utilizing the "base flood elevation" to bring a house up to one foot above the "base flood elevation." One concern is that the current ordinance may be in conflict when it comes to height limits of 35 ft. There could be a problem if a lot is very low. This would be for new houses and not grandfather older structures. New additions would have to comply and only the new addition would need to comply, not the whole house.

Inspector Batson is waiting for further evaluation of Kure Beach before presenting the concept and is presenting this only as information at this point.

If there is a reasonable amount of people who will save, we should probably consider this program.

VII. MEMBER ITEMS:

There was discussion regarding a driveway limitation of 36 feet. Primarily for oceanfront properties, impervious coverage area is not usually a factor.

In the Seawatch development on Fort Fisher Blvd., there are a lot of rain water runoff areas and a limited amount of parking spaces. We are trying to accomplish giving more green space and limiting the amount of parking spaces. There may be a need to add language to the current ordinance to allow driveways with pavers or change language to clarify and give more direction for code enforcement. An option would be to allow a Hatteras style driveway like the one at 313 Atlantic Ave.

Inspector Batson would like to have this discussion on next month's agenda and have members take a look at an existing driveway before then.

MOTION: Member Votta moved to discuss the issue of driveway size on the next agenda.
SECOND: Second Bullard
VOTE: Unanimous

Member Clouse would like SLAP to consider no parking in certain areas. It was suggested that enforcement would be an issue.

Emilie Swearingen requested that John Batson work with Craig Galbraith and come up with a list to present to Council with costs so it gets into the new budget.

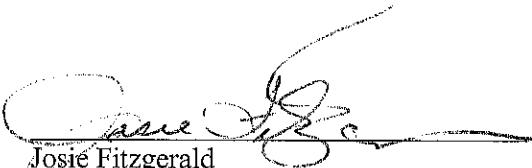
VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Member Bullard moved to adjourned the meeting
SECOND: Whitley
VOTE: Unanimous

Meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.



Craig Galbraith, Chairman



Josie Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant

KURE ESCAPE, LLC

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cc: Council
P & Z
file
mfg
11/12/11

December 9, 2011

The Honorable Mayor Dean Lambeth
Town of Kure Beach
117 Settlers Lane
Kure Beach, NC 28449

RE: Expanded Business District on K Avenue

Dear Mayor Lambeth:

I'll appreciate your sharing this letter with the Town Council, the Planning & Zoning Commission, and the Town staff.


My family and two others own the house at 109 Fourth Avenue North, located just east of K Avenue. My partners and I are concerned over a note in a recent Kure Beach email newsletter regarding the Planning & Zoning Commission's consideration of expanding the local Business District further west along K Avenue, to Seventh Avenue. As a Kure Beach homeowner, we strongly oppose this proposal.

While we can appreciate the Town's desire to generate more business and tax revenues, the charm of Kure Beach is its traditional "family-oriented, small beach" atmosphere. Additional commercial development along K Avenue will significantly degrade that atmosphere, plus harm the value of properties such ours and our neighbors'. We urge the Town to drop this very bad idea from consideration.

Over the past few years we've watched Kure Beach commit significant taxpayer resources to the oceanfront park project, which will serve no purpose other than attracting more day-trippers who clog the streets, exacerbate parking, noise and litter issues, yet spend minimal money will local merchants. Please do not further harm Kure Beach's quality of life by encouraging more commercial development on K Avenue. We get to experience enough of that "atmosphere" when we drive through Carolina Beach!

Thank you for considering our views.

Best regards,



Frank S. Alexander, Jr.