

Forest Acres Planning Commission
Tuesday, July 15, 2025
City Council Chambers
6:00 PM

Minutes

I. Call to order

- 1. Determination of a Quorum**
- 2. Statement of Notification**

A quorum was determined by the attendance of Marshall Minton, Ellis Creel, Jack Cantey, Steven Powell and Lyle Lee. Kristin Hudson was absent. Shaun Greenwood, City Administrator, Kendall Adams, Assistant City Administrator were also present along with Justin Wallace and Sean Scoopmire from White Smith Cousino. Kelly Cousino joined the meeting virtually.

II. Approval of Minutes

- 1. February 18, 2025**

Mr. Lee made a motion to approve the February 18, 2025 minutes; Mr. Bailey seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

III. New Business

- 1. *Text/Map Amendment*** - Presentation of the Unified Development Ordinance. A comprehensive Zoning Ordinance update that includes the combination of the Land Development Regulations.

To summarize

The Forest Acres Planning Commission meeting focused on reviewing and updating the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), with consultants presenting changes and addressing various zoning regulations. Discussions covered a wide range of topics, including prohibited uses, drive-through facilities, short-term rentals, sign codes, tree protection policies, and specific regulations for pickleball courts and planned development districts. The commission made recommendations for approval of the amendments, preparing for the final draft to be submitted to the city council for public hearing and first reading.

Next steps

- Shaun to update the UDO draft to allow one pickleball court on residential lots without restrictions.
- Shaun to maintain the 150-foot setback requirement for commercial pickleball courts from residential lot lines.

- Shaun to remove the open space fee in lieu provision from the UDO draft.
- Shaun to update the UDO draft to include language clarifying uses accessory to a primary use on split-zone lots.
- Shaun to update the PDD ordinance by removing hotels, drive-in restaurants, and beer/wine gardens from the prohibited uses list.
- Shaun to increase the maximum allowable height for PDDs to 75 feet if there is retail on the bottom floor or bottom floor parking.
- Shaun to update the UDO draft to allow more flexibility in sign plans for PDDs.
- Planning Commission to present the recommended changes to the City Council at the August 12th meeting.

Summary

UDO Review and Public Hearing

The Forest Acres Planning Commission meeting focused on reviewing the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) presentation, with consultants Sean Scoopmeyer and Justin Wallace discussing requested changes from a previous work session. The team is in the fine-tuning phase of the code rewrite project, with the goal of preparing for a public hearing at City Council on August 12th. The presentation covered project history, including stakeholder feedback and issues identification, and highlighted the current stage of the UDO revision process.

Updated Unified Development Ordinance

Shaun presented updates on the unified development ordinance (UDO), highlighting key changes since May. The UDO now prohibits certain uses like dance halls and smoke shops, restricts drive-through facilities to specific areas, and adjusts building area limits and grocery store sizes. Short-term rentals are capped at two adults per bedroom, and townhouse units have revised lot requirements. The sign code now prohibits pole signs citywide, and several minor changes were made to sign allowances for multi-tenant and single-tenant properties.

Regulations on Murals and Trees

The meeting focused on regulations regarding murals and painted wall signs, with Shaun clarifying that while murals would be prohibited citywide, hand-painted business names and logos within allowed sign regulations would be permitted. The discussion also covered tree protection policies, where pine trees were excluded from specimen tree protections, and low impact development (LID) changes were made to align with Richland County's best management practices, including a shift from water quality volume to peak flow measurements.

UDO Updates and Fee Adjustments

The meeting focused on discussing changes to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), including increasing the fine for tree violations to \$500 for consistency with other offenses and clarifying definitions for various terms. The group reviewed updates to definitions for smoke and vape shops, drive-through facilities, and residential units, while removing the definition of mural. They also

discussed the need to address recreational uses, outdoor athletic courts, and sexually oriented businesses in the UDO. The next step was to seek recommendations based on the presented changes and prepare for the final draft to be submitted to the council for public hearing and first reading.

Pickleball Court Regulation Discussion

The group discussed regulations around pickleball courts, with Mr. Cantey expressing confusion about why pickleball is being specifically targeted when other sports like tennis and basketball are not. They debated the noise levels and potential impact of backyard courts, with some noting that existing noise ordinances already address excessive noise complaints. The group ultimately agreed to recommend allowing single pickleball courts on residential lots without restrictions, while maintaining a 150-foot buffer requirement for commercial installations near residential areas.

Zoning and Short-Term Rental Updates

Shaun discussed several updates to zoning regulations, including a requirement for commercial uses on split zone lots to be restricted to the portion of the lot where the primary use is permitted, and the removal of drive-through windows from the office residential corridor and Covenant Crossing districts. He also outlined changes to short-term rental regulations, including an amortization period for existing rentals to comply with new requirements by January 1, 2027, and clarified that permits would need to be renewed annually. The discussion concluded with a review of the PDD ordinance, noting redlined changes that would be presented in the next meeting.

PDD Regulation Flexibility Amendments

The meeting focused on discussing amendments to the PDD (Planned Development District) regulations, with Shaun and Will proposing more flexibility for the Council to recommend and approve specific uses based on individual development plans. They agreed to remove several prohibited uses, including hotels, motels, and certain types of restaurants, while maintaining restrictions on bulk fuel storage and distribution, manufacturing, and warehousing. The group also decided to increase the maximum allowable building height from 65 to 75 feet for mixed-use developments with retail establishments on the ground floor.

Mr. Cantey made a motion to approve the UDO with amendments as discussed to City Council; Mr. Bailey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Adjournment

Mr. Cantey made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Lee seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 pm.