

**CITY OF FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA
PLANNING COMMISSION
JANUARY 12, 2021 AT 6:00 PM VIA ZOOM**

AGENDA

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of Minutes

Regular meeting on December 8, 2020.

III. Public Hearing and Matter in Position for Action

PC-2021-01 Request to amend Section 6-19.3.2 of the *Unified Development Ordinance* regarding setbacks in the CG district.

IV. Adjournment

Next meeting is scheduled for February 9, 2021.

**CITY OF FLORENCE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
VIA ZOOM REMOTE MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2020 AT 6:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Thurmond Becote, Jennifer Edwards, Betty Gregg, Dorothy Hines, Robby Hill, and Bryant Moses (via Zoom).

MEMBERS ABSENT: Drew Chaplin, Charles Howard, and Derrick Owens

STAFF PRESENT: Alfred Cassidy, Jerry Dudley, Derek Johnston, and Alane Zlotnicki. Also Danny Young, IT operator.

CALL TO ORDER: In the absence of Chairman Drew Chaplin and Vice-chairman Derrick Owens, the members of the Commission agreed to allow Bryant Moses, who volunteered, to act as Chairman for the meeting. Acting Chairman Moses called the December 8, 2020 regular meeting to order at 6:14 p.m. and thanked everyone in attendance via Zoom. He asked Thurmond Becote to open the meeting with prayer, which he did.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Acting Chairman Moses asked Commissioners if any changes needed to be made to the November 10, 2020 meeting minutes. There being none, Mr. Hill made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Becote seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

APPROVAL OF 2021 CALENDAR: Acting Chairman Moses asked for a motion to approve the calendar for 2021. Ms. Gregg moved to approve the calendar; Mr. Hill seconded the motion, which passed unanimously (6-0).

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND MATTERS IN POSITION FOR ACTION:

PC-2020-29 Request to zone NC-6.1, pending annexation, 4 parcels located at 1534, 1537, 1539, and 1543 North Sierra Range, and specifically identified as Florence County Tax Map Numbers 90096-02-005, 90096-01-008, 90096-01-017, and 90096-01-009.

Acting Chairman Moses read the introduction to PC 2020-29 and asked staff for their report. Mr. Cassidy gave the staff report as submitted to the Planning Commission.

There being no questions for staff, Acting Chairman Moses opened the public hearing and asked if there was anyone present to speak for or against the request. There being no one, he closed the public hearing and called for a motion. Mr. Hill moved that the request be approved as submitted; Mrs. Edwards seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business, Acting Chairman Moses thanked the Commissioners and asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Becote moved to adjourn, Ms. Hines seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and Acting Chairman Moses adjourned the meeting at 6:20 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Alane Zlotnicki, Senior Planner

CITY OF FLORENCE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

DATE: January 12, 2021

AGENDA ITEM: Request to amend Sections 2-6.1.1 and 6-19.3.2 of the *Unified Development Ordinance* regarding setbacks in the CG district.

DEPARTMENT/DIVISION: Department of Planning, Research & Development

I. ISSUE UNDER CONSIDERATION:

Proposed text amendments to the City of Florence *Unified Development Ordinance* Section 2-6.1.1 “General Development Standards – Non-Residential” and Section 6-19.3.2 “Nonconforming Lots; Construction and Combination” regarding the setback requirements for buildings in the Commercial General zoning district.

II. POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- 1) The purpose of the *Unified Development Ordinance* is to implement the Comprehensive Plan adopted February 14, 2011 and updated May 8, 2017, guide development in accordance with existing and future needs, and promote the public health, safety, convenience, order, appearance, prosperity, and general welfare, as well as providing for the orderly development of land within the territorial jurisdiction of the City of Florence.
- 2) The text amendments have been prepared by the Planning, Research, and Development Department in an effort to clarify the intent of the Ordinance and allow for reasonable development within the City.
- 3) The *Unified Development Ordinance* was adopted by City Council on January 15, 2018. It replaced the 2008 Zoning Ordinance. The zoning designations of parcels were reassigned with the adoption of the *Unified Development Ordinance* to generally equivalent districts. This amendment affects those parcels which were zoned Business General (B-3) under the Zoning Ordinance that were given the designation of Commercial General (CG) under the *Unified Development Ordinance*.
- 4) Below is a comparison between Section 2.5 Table III of the 2008 Zoning Ordinance for parcels in the B-3 district and Table 2-6.1.1 of the *Unified Development Ordinance* for parcels zoned Commercial General. The minimum area, width, and setback requirements for the CG district are much larger than they were for the B-3. The lot width requirement increased two to four times (dependent on use) the original; the front setback requirement is almost one and a half times larger; the side setback requirement is four to five times larger; and the rear setback is twice what it was before. The result is that many existing parcels in the CG zoning district are too small to both meet setback requirements of the *Unified Development Ordinance* and accommodate reasonable development. At least 187 lots are completely undevelopable under the updated requirements, being too small to build anything on them at all.

| District/Use | Minimum Lot Width | Minimum Lot Area | Front Setback | Side Setbacks Minimum/Total | Rear Setback | Maximum ISR |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| B-3 | 50' | 5,000 SF | 35' | 5' | 20' | 90% |
| CG –Retail | 200' | 18,000 SF w/o room for a building | 50' | 20' / 50' | 40' | 85% |
| CG –Office/Hotel | 200' | | 50' | 20' / 50' | 40' | 85% |
| CG –All other uses | 100' | | 50' | 20' / 50' | 40' | 85% |

*ISR – Impervious Surface Ratio

- 5) Currently, these smaller lots are considered existing non-conforming lots and may be administratively allowed a 10% reduction in required setbacks. However, in many cases this relief is not sufficient to accommodate reasonable development and is out of character with adjacent properties. This has resulted in a number of variance requests from the setback requirements through the Board of Zoning Appeals.
- 6) In order to enable the development of smaller Commercial General parcels in a manner consistent with existing conditions that preserves the character of the block, staff is proposing the adoption of an alternative setbacks option similar to those available in Neighborhood Conservation districts. This option allows proposed development within the CG district to follow alternative setback standards equal to or greater than the average setbacks within the district and vicinity, thereby allowing new development to match the character of the built environment (see Attachment 1).
- 7) City staff recommends approval of the text amendments as they guide development in a manner consistent with the stated purpose of the *Unified Development Ordinance* while accommodating smaller commercial parcels.

III. CURRENT STATUS/PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

This issue is before the Planning Commission for public hearing and recommendation to City Council. It has not been considered, nor has any previous action been taken, by the Planning Commission.

IV. ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Proposed amendments to Section 2-6.1.1 “General Development Standards – Non-Residential” of the *Unified Development Ordinance*
- 2) Proposed amendments to Section 6-19.3.2 “Nonconforming Lots” of the *Unified Development Ordinance*

**Attachment 1: Proposed Amendments to Section 2-6.1.1 of the City of Florence
*Unified Development Ordinance***

Additions are in red.

Section 2-6.1.1 General Development Standards – Non-residential

D. CG Setbacks.

1. Generally. New development and redevelopment may use alternative setbacks according to the conditions on the street and within the block with respect to the setbacks of other buildings. The Director shall approve alternative setbacks if the following standards are met:

- a. Front setbacks may be reduced to the average front setback along the same side of the same street segment in the same zoning district provided that the lot proposed for modification is not included in the calculation;
- b. Side setbacks may be adjusted to a distance that is equal to the average actual side setbacks of all other developed lots within 600 feet along the same side of the same street segment.
- c. The rear setback may be reduced on any lot if it is demonstrated that the proposed rear building setback is equal to not more than 10 percent less than the average actual setback of other developed lots within 600 feet along the same side of the same street segment.

Attachment 2: Proposed Amendments to Section 6-19.3.2 of the City of Florence *Unified Development Ordinance*

Additions are in red.

Sec. 6-19.3.2 Nonconforming Lots; Construction and Combination

A. Nonconforming Lots.

- 1. *Construction on Nonconforming Lots.* A nonconforming lot that does not meet district requirements with respect to area, lot width, or frontage may be built upon if:
 - a. The lot is a lot of record;
 - b. The use is permitted in the district in which the lot is located;

c. The lot has sufficient frontage on a public street to provide access that is appropriate for the proposed use;

d. All yards or height standards are complied with, except that the Director may authorize a reduction of required yards of up to 10 percent, provided that the Director finds that the reduction does not allow a building that would be larger than permitted on a conforming lot. Yard reductions that are greater than 10 percent shall make application for a variance.

2. *Alternative setbacks.* In certain zoning districts, alternative setbacks as provided for in Section 2-5.2.2 “Alternative Setback Standards” and Section 2-6.1.1 “General Development Standards – Non-residential” may also be applicable.