



Town of Hilton Head Island  
Planning Commission  
LMO Rewrite Committee Meeting  
October 29, 2012  
2:00 p.m.  
Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

## **AGENDA**

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As a Courtesy to Others Please Turn Off All Cell Phones and Pagers during the Workshop.

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Freedom of Information Act Compliance**  
Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.
- 3. Approval of the Agenda**
- 4. Approval of the Minutes – October 24, 2012 Meeting**
- 5. New Business**
  - a) Discussion of regulation of open space, common areas and edges in PUDs
  - b) Discussion of future meeting dates
- 6. Adjournment**

Please note that a quorum of Town Council may result if four (4) or more of Town Council members attend this workshop.

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND  
Planning Commission  
**LMO REWRITE COMMITTEE WORKSHOP MEETING**

October 24, 2012 Minutes

11:00a.m. – Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

**DRAFT**

Committee Members Present: Chairman Tom Crews, Vice Chairman Gail Quick, David Ames, David Bachelder, Irvin Campbell, Jim Gant, Walter Nester, Councilwoman Kim Likins, *Ex-Officio* and Charles Cousins, *Ex-Officio*

Committee Members Absent: Chris Darnell

Planning Commissioners Present: Tom Lennox

Town Council Members Present: None

Town Staff Present: Teri Lewis, LMO Official  
Jill Foster, Deputy Director of Community Development  
Kathleen Carlin, Administrative Assistant

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**1) CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Crews called the meeting to order at 11:00a.m.

**2) FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**

Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

**3) APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The committee approved the agenda as presented by general consent.

**5) NEW BUSINESS**

Discussion of maximum height in the proposed HR (Hotel & Resort) zoning district

Chairman Crews presented opening statements with regard to today's discussion of maximum height in the proposed HR (Hotel & Resort) zoning district. The Chairman thanked the public in attendance at today's meeting and invited their participation in the discussion of this important issue.

The committee began with a basic review of how height is measured. Height is determined by the base flood elevation (14-feet above mean sea level). The committee discussed the current height limitation of 75-feet. What was the reasoning behind the 75-ft. limit? The intent was that buildings should not be developed beyond the canopies of trees.

As part of the discussion, Mr. Ames stated that the height of trees is irrelevant when considering the height of buildings. Tree height is not a zoning classification - the zoning classification is 75-feet. Vice Chairman Quick agreed with these comments. Vice Chairman Quick discussed the important connection between the island's history and its core values with the experience and quality of life of its residents and visitors. The issue being considered today is larger than the committee may be able to address.

Vice Chairman Quick discussed her business experience and her marketing research regarding the development and redevelopment of hotel and resorts. According to the findings of solid research, the guests/visitors of hotels and resorts are not interested in staying at the largest hotel or the tallest hotel. Solid research suggests that hotel guests rate Customer Service as their # 1 consideration. They rate amenities as their #2 considerations and telecommunication uses as the # 3 consideration. Vice Chairman Quick asked, "Who are we marketing to?" The main issue is not the largest or the tallest hotel. Vice Chairman Quick stated she believes that the LMO Rewrite Committee is not the place to determine if there will be a change to the development/redevelopment process. If an applicant wishes to develop over a height of 75-feet, the applicant should be required to go through the process to determine if such a proposal should be considered. An applicant's proposal should be based on hard facts and sound research analysis.

Mr. Gant presented statements regarding the task that the committee has been given by Town Council. Vice Chairman Quick stated that the island's core values are different from the changes being made to the LMO. The island's core values should remain because adhering to these values is what makes Hilton Head Island so unique and special. Anything that changes the core values of Hilton Head Island should be avoided.

Mr. Gant and the committee briefly discussed other topics such as tree management and forest management. Mr. Cousins, Teri Lewis, and Councilperson Likins discussed the issue of a variance for height requirements. Ms. Lewis stated that height requirements are different based on the zone. Ms. Lewis discussed the difficulty of an applicant meeting the six criteria required for approval of a variance.

Councilperson Likins and other committee members discussed the committee's role in changing or not changing height requirements for buildings. Vice Chairman Quick stated that these are dramatic changes and the committee needs to protect the core values of Hilton Head Island. Chairman Crews discussed the charge given to the committee by Town Council. The LMO Rewrite Committee will not be making any changes to island character.

Vice Chairman Quick presented statements regarding the origin of the LMO Rewrite Committee. The origin began with the Mayor's Task Force. Vice Chairman Quick presented statements regarding the need for sound research and fact finding particularly with the issue of height requirements for buildings.

Mr. Nester presented statements regarding the need for investors to know in advance what they can and cannot do in terms of development and redevelopment. Why are the owners of hotels redeveloping? Chairman Crews then invited public comments and comments from the following citizens were received:

(1) Chester C. Williams, Esq., presented statements regarding the process for encouraging development/redevelopment on the island. If done correctly, both objectives (encouraging redevelopment while maintaining the island's core values) can be accomplished. Mr. Williams, Mr. Gant and Vice Chairman Quick discussed a couple of issues related to redevelopment.

(2) Mike Thomas, a resident and owner of a local design business, discussed his business experience and professional association with a high-end hospitality project on the island. Mr. Thomas discussed his concerns with several issues including density, parking, height, and buffers. Mr. Thomas stated his concerns with the existing approach to site development. The approach to site development is way too limited now. Mr. Thomas shared his ideas with regard to the high-end hospitality project on the island. Mr. Thomas presented statements regarding an 'arrival experience' including allowing landscaping, drainage, and retention features in the buffer.

Mr. Thomas encouraged the committee to consider allowing some creativity and flexibility in the development process. The Town has safeguards in place (for example, the Design Review Board) for needed review and approval.

Mr. Irv Campbell discussed the need to be innovative and creative in the development and redevelopment process. We should be encouraging great ideas. Councilperson Likins discussed the need for strong partnerships. Mr. David Ames discussed the need for performance standards.

Mr. Mike Notoramasto, citizen and local land owner, discussed his concerns with land development on the island and Town-owned land. He stated the need for fairness and transparency in land deals and development/redevelopment plans.

Mr. Peter Kristian, Manager, Property Owners Association, Hilton Head Plantation, presented statements with regard to the environment and tree management. Mr. Kristian encouraged changing the LMO to allow individual PUDs (Planned Unit Developments) to control and manage their own trees. PUDs should be trusted to make good decisions on tree management. With regard to the committee's discussion on increasing the 75-ft. height limitation, Mr. Kristian encouraged the committee to pick a number and make their recommendation.

Mr. Tom Lennox, resident, and Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission, presented statements regarding the Comprehensive Plan Committee and the Planning Commission's work in preparing the 2013 Targets of Action for consideration by Town Council. The goals focused on the importance of both Economic Development and protection of the Hilton Head Island brand.

Chairman Crews presented statements regarding the importance of Performance Standards versus Prescriptive Standards.

Mr. Nester presented statements in agreement with those provided earlier by Mr. Peter Kristian regarding a need for balance and the need for a set number for building height limitation to be provided to the consultant for their input. The committee should forward a recommended number based on only the new (HR) zoning district. Vice Chairman Quick asked what the recommended number will be based on. Where is the data to support the recommended number? Where is the research to support the committee's recommendation to change the height limitation?

Chester C. Williams, Esq., discussed his concerns with the existing code. Mr. Williams also presented statements regarding density per acre. The committee discussed the issue of density per acre. Mr. David Ames presented statements with regard to maintaining the height limit of 75-feet at this time. This issue should be turned over to the consultant for their review and recommendation. The consultant should consider performance standards and

make a recommendation to the committee. Chairman Crews stated the importance of sharing today's discussion with the consultant.

Mr. Nester recommended that the consultant consider this information. The consultant should make a recommendation to the committee. Perhaps the committee should not pre-load a number to the consultant. Mr. Ames recommended that the committee pre-load a number to the consultant.

At this point, Mr. Ames asked Chairman Crews if he could make a motion regarding the issue of increasing the height limit beyond 75-feet. Chairman Crews agreed that he could make a motion.

Mr. Ames made a **motion** that the committee should recommend a building height limit of 75-feet, but instruct the consultant to investigate ways to allow height to be increased in other ways such as design and performance standards, bonuses or incentives. Vice Chairman Quick **seconded** the motion. The committee discussed the motion.

Mr. Gant recommended that the committee make it more broad based on the input that has been received by the public. Mr. Bachelder presented statements regarding the issue of increasing the height limit and the need to retain control. Development should be site specific. Mr. Bachelder and the committee discussed several issues including 35-rooms per acre, buffer and setback requirements.

Mr. Nester stated again that the committee should not pre-load the number to the consultant. Mr. Nester and the committee discussed several issues including the 75-foot height limit and Special Exceptions.

Mr. Charles Cousins presented statements regarding a bonus incentive. For example, if the applicant does A, B, and C, he will get a bonus or incentive of some type. Mr. Gant presented comments regarding point-based standards.

Citizen and architect, Mr. Bill Lasik, presented statements regarding a set formula for hotel development. The formula includes such things as limits in walking distance, amenities, range in height, etc. The performance concept – flexibility and creativity – should be encouraged in the LMO. There are too many constraints right now with regard to development. Chairman Crews stated that the committee needs help from the consultant in crafting this language. We need to hear from the consultant.

Following final comments by the committee, the committee voted on the motion, and the vote **passed** unanimously with a vote of 9-0-0.

Based on time constraints, Chairman Crews recommended that the committee meet again to discuss (B) Discussion of regulation of open space, common areas and edges in PUDs. The committee decided to meet again on Monday, October 29, 2012 at 2:00p.m. in Council Chambers.

**6) ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05pm.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

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Kathleen Carlin  
Administrative Assistant

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Tom Crews  
Vice Chairman

DRAFT