



Town of Hilton Head Island  
**Planning Commission LMO Committee**

Monday, October 21, 2019 at 9:30 a.m.  
Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**Present from the Committee:** Chair Leslie McGowan, Vice Chair Todd Theodore, Michael Scanlon

**Absent from the Committee:** Palmer E. Simmons

**Present from the Planning Commission:** Peter Kristian

**Present from Town Council:** David Ames, Tamara Becker, Tom Lennox, Mayor John McCann

**Present from Town Staff:** Nicole Dixon, Development Review Administrator; Teri Lewis, Deputy Director of Community Development; Teresa Haley, Senior Administrative Assistant

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### **1. Call to Order**

Chair McGowan called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

**2. FOIA Compliance** – Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

### **3. Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Scanlon moved to approve. Vice Chairman Theodore seconded. The motion passed 3-0-0.

**4. Appearance by Citizens on Items Unrelated to Today's Agenda** – None

### **5. Old Business**

**a.** Consider possible amendments to the LMO related to the RD (Resort Development) zoning district, specifically changes to Interval Occupancy and building height

Ms. Lewis presented the item described in the Committee's packet. Patsy Brison approached the LMO Committee and the Planning Commission in late 2018 to request changes to the LMO. The amendments propose the following changes to the RD zoning district:

- Delete 1 bedroom units from Interval Occupancy.
- Change how the density for Hotel and Interval Occupancy uses is calculated from units to gross floor area (GFA).
- Reduce the maximum building height of Non-Single-Family Development on all properties to 60 feet above mean sea level with no more than five stories (including habitable and parking levels) for all buildings on each property.
- Require that building height not exceed the tree height on the same or adjacent properties.

Staff has reviewed the proposed changes and recommends that they not be pursued for the following reasons:

- These changes would be a disincentive for redevelopment and would create nonconformities.
- Additionally the Town has long encouraged full service hotels which have many amenities. These amenities, which require square footage, allow people to stay at the hotel rather than leaving and adding to the traffic on the roads.

Chair McGowan asked Ms. Brison to make her presentation to the Committee. Following the presentation, the Committee discussed their concerns with reducing the maximum building height of non-single-family development; placing a maximum on the number of stories a building can have; eliminating one bedroom units; changing how the density for certain uses are calculated; and requiring building height be based on tree height. The Committee expressed concerns about discouraging redevelopment on the Island; negatively impacting the tourism industry; and creating nonconformities.

Chair McGowan asked for public comments and the following were received: consider a viewshed analysis as utilized in Montana; limit the maximum building height to five stories to benefit the residential community; support for more landscaping to help soften building height and mass; concerns that existing regulations would allow more large buildings within the RD zoning district; consider amending setback standards to improve the relationship between a building and pedestrian scale; the Island brand, infrastructure, and quality of life is overburdened; consider comments from residents being negatively impacted by the LMO rewrite in 2014.

Following the public comment, The Committee agreed that the ordinance proposed by Ms. Brison was unfavorable. The Committee further agreed that setback standards should be looked studied in the future. There appears to be minimal vegetation between recent developments and the pedestrian scale. Building height and mass need to be softened more with landscaping.

Mr. Scanlon moved that the LMO Committee reject the ordinance as proposed, stating the following reasons: that the Island is a resort community and should not eliminate one (1) bedroom units; the current height limitations are reasonable and have been adhered to; the Island relies heavily upon tourism, so there needs to be a balance of the residential and the resort communities, and the existing ordinance meets that balance fairly closely. Further recommending, that setback standards be reviewed for future developments similar to those discussed today. Vice Chairman Theodore seconded. The motion passed with 3-0-0.

Chair McGowan thanked Ms. Brison for her presentation and the public for their comments.

## 6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

**Submitted by:** Teresa Haley, Secretary

**Approved:** October 30, 2019