

**Town of Bethany Beach
Planning Commission Minutes
June 19, 2010**

The Bethany Beach Planning Commission held a meeting on Saturday, June 19, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. in the Bethany Beach Town Hall, 214 Garfield Parkway, Bethany Beach, DE 19930.

The following members were present: Lew Killmer, who presided; Chuck Peterson; Kathleen Mink; Faith Denault; and Fulton Loppatto.

The following members were excused: John Gaughan

Also present: Jeff Mascornick, Intern; Susan Frederick, Building Inspector; Patricia Titus of The Coastal Point; Lindsey Shallcross, Administrative Secretary; and interested members of the public.

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

OPENING OF MEETING

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Denault made a motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Peterson, the motion was unanimously approved.

Discussion/Approval of the Planning Commission Minutes of May 22, 2010

Mr. Loppatto made a motion to approve the minutes dated May 22, 2010. Ms. Denault seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Announcements/Comments/Updates

Non-Residential Design Review Update (Killmer/Denault)

There was no meeting so there was no report.

Comments/Updates Regarding the May Town Council Meeting (Killmer)

Mr. Killmer reported the following:

- The Cultural and Historic Affairs Committee will be hosting an event to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Loop Canal on July 8th at 5:00 p.m.
- Beginning on June 30, 2010, the Town will be taking over the responsibility of collecting the resident's recyclables since the contract with Delaware Solid Waste Authority expires on July 1, 2010. The recycling schedule will be changed to pick-ups on Wednesday instead of Friday.

- The Annual Town Council Election will be held on Saturday, September 11, 2010, between the hours of 12:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.
- Four candidates are currently filed: Jack Gordon, Lew Killmer, Tony McClenny and Chuck Peterson.
- Lonny Moore was appointed to serve as an Election Officer.
- Dr. Larry Fishell, Lew Killmer and Sherwin Weinstock were appointed to serve on the Ad Hoc Survey Committee.
- Harvey Leighty was approved to be reappointed as the Assistant Alderman for a two-year term.
- A contract submitted by Deschamps Mat Systems, Inc. for the purchase of Mobi-Mat Recreational Path Kits for Beach Crossovers was approved for the amount of \$89,988. A supplement to the Budget for the purchase of Mobi-Mat Recreational Path Kits was approved.
- Council approved a request to honor Medal of Honor Recipient, Henry Clay Drexler. This has been turned over to the Cultural and Historic Affairs Committee to make a recommendation to the Town Council on how to honor him.
- The Town purchased a plaque to be placed on the Church/Neff property to honor those who served in the military outside the continental United States.

Comments/Q&A and Discussion for Planning Commissioner Members (All)

Mr. Loppatto asked about the Office of Strategic Planning meeting at 6:00 p.m. which will take place on Monday night, June 21st.

Mr. Killmer encouraged the Planning Commission members to attend this meeting.

At the end of the meeting, Mr. Killmer mentioned that the Cooper/Addy Subdivision applicants had recently met with the Town to review a set of alternate plans. The Town has sent the latest proposal to the Town engineer for his review and recommendation regarding the latest proposal.

PUBLIC COMMENT/QUESTIONS FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION

There were no public comments/questions for the Planning Commission at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

Continue to Update the 2005 Bethany Beach Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Killmer stated that he received two documents: Mr. Peterson created a Strategic Plan document for Downtown Businesses and Mr. Loppatto developed a document on Green

Bethany Environment. Rosemary Hardiman, Chair of the Communications Committee, also submitted a document composed of suggestions for the Comprehensive Plan.

Document of Comp. Plan Ideas from the Communications Committee

The Commission reviewed the document submitted by Ms. Hardiman on behalf of the Communications Committee. A summary of their suggestions are the following:

- 1.) *Preserving Bethany Beach's Uniqueness*
- 2.) *Communications Technology/Infrastructure*
 - *Keep up to date on technological advances and consider their effect on the Town;*
 - *Promote the availability of an open access to IT services throughout the Town.*
 - *As development occurs, encourage inclusion of infrastructure to provide public access to the World Wide Web (Internet).*
- 3.) *Page 46, of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, Beach Strand*
- 4.) *Accountability for the Recommendations in the Plan.*

Mr. Killmer addressed that it is also very difficult to provide affordable housing in Bethany Beach and an effort should be encouraged for possibly providing affordable housing in the future.

The Commission contemplated the idea of issuing surveys to Town residents. It was discussed how there are both negative and positive outcomes from creating and distributing surveys.

Mr. Loppatto questioned how many people read the Comprehensive Development Plan.

Mr. Killmer addressed that there is a core group of individuals that read the Comprehensive Development Plan and request more information. However, a point can be reached when too much information is provided, information over load.

Green Bethany Environment Document

The Commission reviewed the Green Bethany Environment document that was generated by Mr. Loppatto.

Mr. Loppatto explained that this document is meant “to conserve and sustain natural areas and resources for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations. To encourage, promote, and educate citizens and visitors in achieving a Green Bethany Beach”.

Mr. Killmer made a suggestion to develop ordinances that involve the Town conserving and protecting natural areas.

Mr. Loppatto acknowledged that public safety needs to be implemented without damaging natural resources.

A discussion ensued on the concept of gradually replacing current vehicles with environmental-friendly vehicles.

Mr. Loppatto suggested having a non-car day in the Town, where people use alternate ways to transport.

Mr. Loppatto also emphasized the potential benefits would be of hiring a part-time Information Technology (IT) employee to establish a Green Promotion and Education Campaign for the Town Website, Twitter, etc. The Commission members agreed that this would be a helpful tool in promoting an environmentally healthier atmosphere.

Ms. Frederick acknowledged that there isn't a recycling center within Town limits. All businesses will be required to recycle by the year of 2012.

The Commission discussed adding a link regarding information on beach replenishment to the Town website.

Mr. Mascornick noted that it would be helpful to establish a committee that focuses on all of the ideas being discussed, adding that a committee could work out all of the percentages and pertinent statistics.

Mr. Killmer suggested that the Commission collaborate all of their ideas, and he will e-mail them with the next draft of the Green Bethany Environment document.

Possible Status Reports of Individual Planning Commission Members Regarding Strategic Plan Assignments

The Commission reviewed the Strategic Plan document that was drafted by Mr. Peterson.

The document includes the following information:

In order to have a downtown business district that is vibrant and active, we need to create an organization that has the Town and businesses working toward the same vision of what downtown should be. This would involve getting downtown in top physical shape, drawing more people into the business areas and creating the customer demand that makes businesses want to come to Bethany Beach. Some initial steps would include:

- 1.) **Business Roundtable**- *establish a group with the Town and Local Businesses to improve communications. This group should have input on all issues affecting the downtown area in order to meet shared expectations for growth and improvement.*
- 2.) **Chamber of Commerce**- *work more closely with the Chamber to improve Bethany Beach membership. Improve the number and quality of events that draw business to the area. Move closer to the Ocean City, MD model of something happening every weekend of the year.*
- 3.) **Interactive Site**- *create a site like "iDewey.com" that lists all the businesses and activities in Town. This is an interactive site that is updated each week. It would*

include current sales, food specials and special events that occur each week. Once established, businesses can update their won site as often as they want. People looking for what to do in Bethany Beach can find out everything that is happening in the Town at one location.

- 4.) **Main Street (National Trust for Historic Preservation)**- *establish a group to look at what aspects of this approach could be useful for Bethany. They have a great deal of experience that has proven to draw varied interests together to create impressive results such as the efforts in Rehoboth Beach. They provide technical support and grant to develop healthier downtown business districts.*

Mr. Killmer acknowledged that these are good ideas, and that they now need to be put in a format that can be properly added to the updated Comprehensive Plan.

The Commission established that creating a website like “ibethanybeach.com” to post all activities that are taking place in the Town would be a great method for meeting some of the suggestions outlined in the Strategic Plan Document, but there is a need to be cautious to insure that all businesses are included with no one business being favored over another.

Mr. Killmer explained that he and Vice-Mayor, Ms. Carol Olmstead, are currently working with Ms. Carrie Subidy from the Bethany Beach Chamber of Commerce regarding ways for the Town to work more closely with the business community.

The Commission discussed ways to encourage the businesses in the Town to meet with the Planning Commission to build plans and goals for the future of the Town.

Ms. Frederick stated that if the Town could successfully extend the “shoulder seasons” businesses would open earlier and remain open longer.

SUMMARIZE ACTION ITEMS

- A. Establish the positive and negative aspects and cost of developing a Wi-Fi system from the East to West side of Town
- B. Develop information to add to the Town Website regarding the issue of flooding and beach replenishment.

ADJOURN

Mr. Peterson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Denault seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Lindsey Shallcross, Admin. Secretary