



March 19, 2025
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF SOUTHPORT
BOARD OF ALDERMEN
113 W. MOORE STREET
11:00 A.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Richard Alt
Mayor Pro-Tem Rebecca Kelley
Aldermen Marc Spencer, Robert Carroll, Frank Lai, Lowe Davis, Karen Mosteller

STAFF: Noah Saldo, Interim City Manager
Tori Deviney, Deputy City Clerk
ChyAnn Ketchum, Public Information Officer
Maureen Meehan, Planning Services Director

Call to Order

Mayor Alt called the special meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

1. North Howe Street Overlay District

Planning Services Director Meehan advised the Board that the redlined language in the proposal was struck by Brunswick County planning staff and the underlined language was asked for by county staff. Responding to a query by Alderman Carroll, Director Meehan indicated the proposed deletions/additions/changes are what the county planning staff believes the County Planning Board would consider.

With the assistance of Director Meehan, the Board reviewed the following proposed language of the North Howe Street Overlay District:

A. Purpose and Intent

1. The purpose of the ~~Southport~~ Howe Street Entryway Corridor Overlay district is to preserve the unique characteristics of the corridor by ensuring a seamless transition into the municipal zoning districts of the City. In doing so, utilizing similar development standards to encourage a cohesive built environment that will continue to attract and retain commercial activity.
2. The intent of the Entryway Corridor Overlay is to protect and enhance the historic character of the City of Southport

Board consensus to name the Entryway Corridor *Howe Street* instead of *Southport*.

Board members discussed where the entryway corridor should begin, from the Duke Energy canal or NC 87/Robert Ruark Road intersection.

Alderman Spencer; “I’ve been saying inside the canal to the water should be our zone. That way when you cross the bridge, you’re in Southport. And, Rob Gandy is wide open and will become more used. There is going to be more than one entry corridor into Southport. What is going to be done to protect Southport?”

Director Meehan indicated an overlay up to the canal had been one of the options the City presented to county staff. County staff stated that because of the different heights and uses, they would be willing to consider the portion of Howe Street to NC 87 as the “entrance” corridor.

Recalling experiences he had in Cary and referencing the large property owned by Earl Clewis, Alderman Spencer pointed out that Mr. Clewis’ property could be developed into a five to six story tall apartment complex.

B. Applicability

1. The following standards shall apply to all new construction development within the overlay district and shall include expansion or modification of existing Commercial or Office use that increases the total enclosed floor area by at least 50% or 5,000 square feet, whichever is greater. In addition to the standards contained in this Section, all other provisions in this Ordinance and all other applicable laws shall apply. In cases where there is a conflict between provisions found elsewhere in this Ordinance and the standards of this Section, this Section shall supersede unless otherwise noted.
2. The following uses shall be exempt from the requirements of this overlay district: communication towers, religious institutions, government buildings, and public structures.

C. Dimensional Standards

1. The maximum height limit shall not exceed ~~40~~ 50 feet
2. No front or side yards are required throughout the overlay district. Where any side yard is provided, though not required, the same shall be not less than four (4) feet.
3. The minimum rear setback shall be 10 feet throughout the SPT overlay district.
4. ~~For lots one (1) acre or smaller, no structure shall have a building footprint area that exceeds 5,000 square feet.~~

Discussion centered on the 40 feet versus 50 feet maximum height limit.

Mayor Alt stated his hopes are a compromise could be reached with the County, south of NC 87 a maximum height of 40 feet and north of NC 87 a maximum height of 50 feet.

The Board discussed the possibility of a 75' building in the area between NC 87 and the canal as permitted under the current commercial low density County zoning. The

discussion focused on the Southport Fire District's ability to rescue people and combat a fire at a height of 75', additional equipment, personal and training that would be needed, the current financial limitations of the Fire District, the cost (estimated \$2.5 - \$3M) of a fire engine capable of reaching a height of 75', the up-front funding of a fire engine, the lead time to obtain a fire engine (3 years) and the insurance rates impact to the Fire District's residents. It was noted that MOTSU and the Town of Oak Island have fire engines that can reach a height of 75'.

Emphasizing the proposal as presented is a compromise on the part of the City, Alderman Mosteller pressed to keep the County struck Item C. Dimensional Standards. ~~4. For lots one (1) acre or small, no structure shall have a footprint area that exceeds 5,000 square feet.~~

Responding to Alderman Mosteller, Director Meehan provided the parameters of the County's commercial zoning allowable footprint area:

- Low Density - under 3,000 sq. ft.
- Moderate Density - 5,000 sq. ft. or under
- Mayor Density - over 5,000 sq. ft.

D. Permitted Uses

1. All uses shall be permitted in accord with the requirements of the underlying zoning district with the exception of residential uses which are further specified in the following section.

2. Residential Uses

- i. Residential uses shall only be permitted as part of a commercial or office project where fronting on Howe Street. ~~The floor area devoted to the dwelling(s) shall not exceed twice the floor area devoted to any permitted nonresidential uses(s) as part of a vertical mixed commercial-residential project.~~
- ii. ~~Each dwelling shall have a direct means of access to the exterior of the building so that no access to the dwelling is provided through the use located on the lower floor(s) of the commercial building.~~
- iii. Dwellings may be located on the ground level or as standalone structures if situated entirely behind the principal structure, with the principal structure serving as the primary street frontage. Dwellings

may be permitted as standalone structures when not fronting on Howe Street.

- iv. ~~Proposed curb cuts and driveways for required off-street parking lots that eliminate existing on-street parking spaces shall replace the number of on-street parking spaces eliminated by said curb cut(s) and driveway(s) within the parking lot being created, in addition to the number of parking spaces otherwise required by this ordinance.~~

Director Meehan pointed out that the County currently allows residential projects in commercial zoning.

E. Parking Requirements

1. For nonresidential uses, where on-street or public parking facilities are located within 500 linear feet of a proposed use, measured as a straight-line distance from the entrance of the building, the minimum off-street parking requirement may be reduced by 50%

Minimum Off-Street Parking Requirements for Change of Use or Redevelopment in the
Overlay District

A change of use or redevelopment whereby the floor area of the building or parcel is not expanded by greater than 25%

No parking required.

Change of use or development whereby the floor area of the building or parcel is expanded by greater than 25%

Additional parking required shall be based on the increase in square footage

In floor area, above the 25% threshold, of the expanded building. All other applicable requirements of this section Shall apply.

Change of use from a residential to

50% of the required parking shall be

nonresidential use.

provided. All other applicable requirements of this section shall apply.

Change of use from a nonresidential to residential use or the addition of residential uses.

Full compliance with residential off-street parking space minimum and all other requirements.

F. Sidewalk Requirements and Pedestrian Facilities

- Redevelopment structures does
1. Sidewalks shall be required for all new multi-family developments and new construction nonresidential development of a principal use.
or change of use of existing nonresidential or multi-family not require the installation of sidewalks
 2. Sidewalks shall be installed within the right-of-way and connect to adjacent facilities where applicable. Where right-of-way widths adjacent to the edge of pavement are in excess of 10 feet, sidewalks shall be separated by a minimum three (3) foot landscaped strip adjacent to the edge of pavement
 3. In all cases, sidewalks shall extend to the property line
 4. Sidewalks shall be at least five (5) feet wide and constructed of concrete at least five (5) inches thick. Sidewalks shall consist of a minimum of six (6) inches of concrete at driveway crossings or shall be adequately reinforced otherwise. All sidewalks must meet ADA requirements including where necessary to serve required cluster mailbox locations within subdivisions or multi-family development
 5. Sidewalks built adjacent to an NCDOT road facility shall be built to meet NCDOT sidewalk standards
 6. Pedestrian walkways shall form an on-site circulation system that minimize conflict between pedestrians and traffic at all points of pedestrian access to on-site parking and building entrances. Pedestrian walkways shall connect building entrances to one another and from building entrances to public sidewalk connections. Pedestrian walkways shall be provided to any pedestrian access point or any parking space that

is more than 50 feet from the building entrance or principal on-site destination. All developments containing more than one (1) building shall provide walkways between the principal entrances of the buildings.

G. Design Standards

1. ~~Single family dwellings up to four unit attached dwellings, shall be exempt from these requirements:~~
2. The primary entrance of the structure shall be ~~architecturally and~~ functionally designed on the front facade facing the primary street.
3. Except for corner lots, the front facade of the principal structure shall be parallel to the front lot line and street.
4. ~~Facade colors shall be of low reflectance earth ton, muted, subtle, or neutral colors. Building trim may feature brighter colors as an accent material. The use of high intensity, metallic, fluorescent, dayglow, or neon colors shall be prohibited.~~
5. ~~Ground mounted mechanical equipment, solid waste storage, and recycling storage shall be located to the rear or side yard and screened from view of the street.~~
6. ~~Outparcels shall be designed and integrated with the main project or principal structure.~~
- 7.4. No portion of a building facing a front or side lot line, unless a zero lot line common wall, shall be constructed of unadorned (unfaced) concrete masonry units or corrugated and/or sheet metal.
8. ~~No single facade extending unbroken more than 35 feet in a horizontal plane may be visible from a public roadway. Compliance may be obtained through one of the following:~~
 - i. ~~The use of projections or recesses. When used, each projection or recess shall have a projection (or depth) dimension of no less than 18 inches and a width of no less than 36 inches; or~~
 - ii. ~~The use of columns or other architectural detail to provide visual interest. Where used, columns should be harmonious with the general design of the structure.~~

Director Meehan pointed out that by State law a community cannot ask for design standards on residential uses.

Cautioning there could be buildings of neon colors, Alderman Mosteller suggested retaining G. Design Standards 4., facade colors. Director Meehan stated that it is legal to list colors that cannot be used.

H. Signage

1. Outdoor advertising structures shall be prohibited.
2. No freestanding sign shall exceed a height of 10 feet. All other sign requirements and sizing shall be in accordance with Section 8.2

Alderman Mosteller raised concerns about signage lighting.

~~I. Traffic~~

- ~~1. A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) conducted in accord with Section 6.16 shall be required for all projects, which can be anticipated to generate at least 500 vehicle trips per day based on the latest edition of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual.~~

The Board discussed what type of development in Southport would trigger a TIA, and when the County requires a TIA. Alderman Mosteller shared that a TIA was performed for a proposed Family Dollar at 14th Street which required installation of a stacking lane. She stated her belief that the proposed development did not return for further consideration due to the fact they would have to do a stacking lane.

Recap

- Brunswick Count will not consider the proposal until Bill 24, which is the remedy for HB 382, is decided. It is currently stalled in legislative committee.
- The proposal is not a formal application. Application would require all property owners to agree.
- Staff provide Board with the County provisions that are similar to the red struck through language.
- Staff provide County language for H. Signage.
- Board consensus, maximum height 40 feet from NC 87 south.
- Board consensus, 5,000 sq. ft. building footprint.

City staff continue working with Wes McLeod, Cape Fear Council of Government, on:

D. Permitted Uses, 2. Residential Uses

G. Design Standards

H. Signage (look at lighting of)

Overall Lighting

2. Closed Session 12:00 - 12:42 p.m.

Alderman Carroll made a motion to go into Closed Session Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (5) To establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating (i) the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease;

Alderman Kelley seconded the motion. **Unanimous vote; motion carried.**

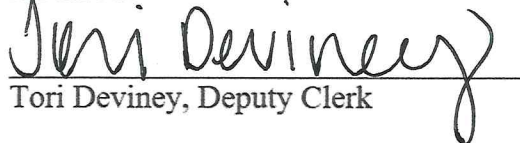
Alderman Lai made a motion to come out of Closed Session. Alderman Kelley seconded the motion. **Unanimous vote; motion carried.**

Adjourn

Alderman Mosteller made a motion to adjourn. Alderman Kelley seconded the motion. **Unanimous vote; motion carried.**


Richard Alt, Mayor

ATTEST:


Tori Deviney, Deputy Clerk

(SEAL)

