CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Planning and Zoning Special Board Meeting
April 30, 2025

The Planning and Zoning Board met in formal session Wednesday, April 30, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. in the Alcazar Room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Christina Tucker, Chairperson, and the following were present:

1. Roll Call:

Christina Tucker, Chairperson
Charles Pappas
Mike Davis
Carl Blow
Matthew Shaffer
Susan Johns

Absent: Ashleigh Barnes, Vice- Chairperson (Excused)

City Staff:
Amy Skinner, Director, Planning & Building Department
Jacob Fredriksson, Planning & Building Planner
Sarah Daugherty, Senior Planner
Richard "Buddy" Schauland, Building Official
Jessica Beach, Chief Resiliency Officer and Deputy Director, Utilities and Public Works
Ray Deschler, Flood Plain Coordinator
Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney
Elyse Weimann, Recording Secretary

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2. General Public hearings for Items Not on the Agenda

none

3. Discussion and Recommendation of the Update to the City of St. Augustine Vision Statement

3. (a) Discussion related to the proposed update of the City's Vision Statement

Mr. Fredrikson opened the discussion by providing a recap of the public workshops that had been held starting in August of 2024 as well as the special meetings that the PZB, HARB, and CRC boards participated in to gather as much input for updating the city's 2014 Vision Plan. He stressed the importance of the review and the subsequent recommendation to the City Commission.

Public hearing was opened; however, there was no response.

Board Discussion:

- Overall, the plan was well thought out
- Did not feel urban sprawl pertained to the city
- Change the wording for goals to strengthen and support the local economy
- Continued reference to livability was well stated
- The reference to previous comments was very helpful
- The biggest challenge was addressing the mobility in the city, especially during

the Nights of Lights and this should be included in the Vision Plan
- Mobility affected the quality of life for residents as well as the visitor experience
- The city was complying with statutes and would modify the language and the behavior to comport with the law.

MOTION

Ms. Tucker MOVED to RECOMMEND the updates to the Vision Plan to the City Commission. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Pappas.

VOTE ON MOTION:
AYES: Tucker, Pappas, Johns, Shaffer, Blow, Davis
NAYES: NONE
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Discussion and Recommendation Regarding an Initiative to Develop more Resilient Criteria or Building for Flood Prevention

4. (a) Discussion related to developing criteria in the land development code to incorporate more resilient types of construction and site development techniques in flood prone areas

Amy Skinner, Planning and Building Director, advised that board that the City Commission had directed them to develop more resilient criteria for building flood prevention. She said that the draft included revised examples of higher regulation standards as well as language from the environmental consultant and internal staff.

Sarah Daughtery, Senior Planner, advised the board that the staff had been collaborating to create an article for lot grading and the plan was to codify the measures previously determined such as limits for impervious surface and a lot grading packet including lot grading review for single-family development. She explained that the code would create a hierarchy for neighborhoods depending on the level of storm water, and it would house the language that would address the fill and also created a framework for internal use to determine who would be responsible for the review process. She added that some language had been included to address maintaining proper drainage on each property.

Public hearing was opened.

Ms. Tucker read a letter from the public in the record citing that any changes to the code would likely have a negative impact on the area and that building on stem walls or piers would be the best plan.

Donna Dove said the discussion pertained more to new construction instead of existing properties. She said her property was on the list to be raised, and the footprint of her home would not change even if it were elevated. She was concerned that she would not be approved given that her home was on a slab. She asked if there was a way to grandfather some of these homes into the revised code language. She said the homes on Anastasia Island were different to those in Lincolnville and felt the rules should be specific to the location.

Lauren Giber stated her home was built with crawl space causing many issues.

Tom Bartlett asked for clarification regarding the limit of thirty inches for retaining walls.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Shaffer said that the board needed to implement something regarding shoreline standards. He asked if St. Augustine was the only municipality that was in the process of amending the criteria for development in Conservation Overlay Zones. He said that it was necessary to address the issue of fill. He questioned if the plan was to strike a balance

Ms. Lopez said that other jurisdictions had criteria they abided by that was more specific to their location.

Ms. Skinner said the criteria were in the original 1990 Comprehensive Plan and were based on science at that time. She said that over time, criteria may need to be updated to keep up with the changes in the area. She said that seventy-five percent of the city had a natural shoreline, and the plan was to be consistent with other rules, thus the thirty-inch measure for flood walls was established.

Ms. Tucker wanted to have criteria people could meet without having to come to the Planning and Zoning Board or have an appeals process providing more information about how their neighbors would not be impacted and then those would come before the board.

Ms. Skinner said that appeals would come before the PZB with an engineering assessment and additional information.

Ms. Tucker felt there would be a need for a variance or appeals process as there were many different circumstances with homes and the best placement for them would be in chapter 28.

Ms. Tucker continued asking about the fill limitations and said it was understood that the intent of the limits was to steer builders to use alternative construction methods to stay within the parameters. She said that the residential lot grading did not indicate the age of the survey to be used in the plan and the minimal fill limit should be defined.

Ms. Skinner advised that the survey should show current conditions.

Mr. Blow commented that it was clear that not everyone would be happy, but this process was necessary. He pointed out that FEMA was pushing flood insurance and mandating how high the homes should be with little concern for the environment. He felt that it was important to have a variance process to address the many unique situations in the area. He said that the focus should be on actual flood zones. He noted that staff were not completely comfortable with the red-lined version received from the consultant but highlighted page six of the ordinance that said to incorporate native seagrass and native plants, he said that seagrass caused many issues when trying to dredge and seagrass was not native to this area and should be eliminated. He spoke about the section that dealt with the enhancement of seawalls specifically the one around Davis Shores as this was beyond its useful life and these projects should promote riprap as this was a good process to protect property and contributed to a living shoreline.

Ms. Lopez questioned applications that had a lot of silting with a narrow useable passageway.

Mr. Blow said that navigation should be taken into consideration in those cases and whether it would be impeded. He asked why the PZB needed to be involved in developments with an approved master stormwater plan.

Mr. Davis agreed that neighborhoods with existing master plans should be left alone. He said that the difficult part of the process was getting the proper balance between property rights versus new building standards, he favored no changes to the twenty-five foot buffer language on an existing lot and thought homes that were trying to be raised due to flood impacts should also be grandfathered in. He wanted to confirm where the thirty-inch flood wall would be measured from; existing grade varied from house to house so he felt that there should be more clarification for consistency. He mentioned a five percent increase in lot coverage as an incentive for those who were using the stem wall or pier construction. He wanted to incorporate standards for fill at the garage level. He said

that as long as there was no fill being added at the back of the property in Davis Shores, the seawall, as long as it was at the same height as other ones in the area, should not come to PZB. He was in favor of adding a separate line for retaining wall instead of a flood wall.

Ms. Johns was concerned with the language regarding the issuance of permits. She noted that most applications would be approved because most professionals would not admit harmful effects. There needed to be clarification of who would conduct any review of projects.

Mr. Pappas asked if the proposed flood elevation of a minimum seven feet was enough. He liked the idea of offering incentives to builders.

Ms. Skinner thought this was beneficial and the comments would be used to make some adjustments and then bring it back to the Board for a recommendation.

5. Discussion and Recommendation Regarding the Required Update to the City's Water Supply Plan

5. (a) Discussion related to the proposed update of the City's Water Supply Plan

Amy Skinner explained to the Board that the water supply plan was adopted in 2020. She advised that the city was required to update the plan in concert with the Water Management District (WMD) every five years and that update was due by June. She said the WMD would review the existing plan and notate any necessary updates and once that was completed, she would then include the requested updates in the city's plan and provide a red lined version for the PZB to review at the June meeting and subsequently make a recommendation to the City Commission.

Public hearing was opened.

Lauren Giber asked about the collection of rainwater in various open fields to create an additional water supply.

Public hearing was closed.

Board discussion:

- All of the potable water was from the ground
- The city had a permit for the discharge of treated wastewater
- The city had submitted a plan as required to address SB 64
- The city did not have the infrastructure at this time to process reclaimed water
- There was a spring located off of the shoreline that was active and produced thousands of gallons of fresh water

Mr. Pappas told the board that he had had discussions with others in the community and asked if the city would be amenable to providing pre-approved building plans.

Ms. Lopez advised that the city would have to proceed with caution with pre-approved plans as this could potentially bypass HARB review.

Ms. Skinner pointed out that often the delays come from the insurance process or FEMA, not the permitting process.

6. Adjournment

Having no further business, Ms. Tucker adjourned the meeting at 3:34 P.M.[1]

Christina Tucker, Chairperson

[1] Transcribed by Michele Fudo