

Town of Yemassee
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
September 5, 2023 / 3:00PM
Yemassee Municipal Complex, 101 Town Cir, Yemassee, SC 29945-3363

Present: Ethel Denmark, Joe Riley, Sharon Mansell, Jay Holloway, and Adonis Riley

Absent:

Staff Present: Matthew Garnes, Town Administrator

Media Present: Lowcountry Inside Track, Ltd.

Call to Order:

The Town of Yemassee Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 3:07 PM by Chairman Adonis Riley.

Roll Call:

All the members were present.

Determination of Quorum:

Quorum satisfied.

No Public Comment

Old Business:

Chairman Riley read the draft minutes of the August 1, 2023, Planning Commission meeting minutes and asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the minutes as presented. Ms. Sharon Mansell made a motion to approve as presented, second by Mr. Joe Riley. **All in favor, Motion Passed. Minutes approved.**

New Business:

Richard & Michelle Hagan (Use Approval): Chairman Riley read a request for a Use Approval for the issuance of a building permit for a proposed freestanding ice vending machine located at 281 U.S. Highway 17A in Hampton County and further identified by Hampton County TMS: 204-01-05-008. Chairman Riley asked Mr. Garnes to provide some background on the request. Mr. Garnes introduced Mr. Richard Hagan who was in the audience. Mr. Garnes advised the property in question is just north of the applicant's residence on U.S. Highway 17A with the parcel having one empty block building on it that the applicant would demolish if the use is approved. The parcel is zoned Mixed Use (MU) pursuant to the Town of Yemassee Zoning Ordinance and is within the boundaries of the Highway Corridor Overlay District (HCOD) and is subject to the requirements of Section 5.17 of the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Garnes acknowledged that the Mixed Use designation encompasses a wide array of uses from residential, commercial occupancies with an emphasis on having those uses in close proximity to one another to foster a sense of community. Mr. Garnes stated that the Ordinance is silent on the topic of an Ice Vending machine and there is wording within the Mixed Use chapter that appears to have been drafted as a "catch all", which permits uses not specifically mentioned if the Community Development Director (Town Administrator), or Planning Commission deem it acceptable. Mr. Garnes did not want to make the determination for

this case on the staff level and deferred to the Planning Commission. Mr. Garnes did support the requested use with the caveat being that the concerns about egress and ingress onto the property be addressed and formalized prior to permit issuance. Ms. Denmark asked Mr. Hagan if the machine would be open 24/7 to which he advised it would be. Mr. Holloway inquired as to the provisioning of utilities. Mr. Hagan advised that there is an existing water meter from LRWS on site and the building was previously connected to sewer. Dominion Energy has a service line directly in front of the location and natural gas is not desired for this project. Ms. Denmark made a motion to approve the use with the request that the egress and ingress is addressed as to not adversely affect traffic patterns on US 17A prior to permit issuance. Second by Ms. Mansell. **All in favor, Motion passed unanimously.**

Riveted, LLC. Campground (Conditional Use Approval): Chairman Riley read the request submitted by Charlotte Reeves on behalf of Riveted, LLC, for consideration of a Conditional Use approval. The applicant is seeking to develop a boutique campground, which is a Conditional Use under the existing zoning designation of Regional Commercial District. The parcel is located at 105 Le Creuset Rd in Beaufort County, and further identified by Beaufort County TMS: R710 001 000 0037 0000. Chairman Riley asked Mr. Garnes to present. Mr. Garnes began by providing background on how we got to this point with the re-zoning. This is now the final step for the applicant before she can submit plans and apply for a permit. The applicant, Ms. Reeves, detailed the amenities that are planned for the site including a saltwater pool, pickleball court and an abundance of open space. Mr. Garnes informed the Commission that the applicant and Town Staff have been in communication with Engineering from LRWS to discuss the most efficient way to provision water and sewer services to this parcel, which is not currently served. Town Ordinance requires all campgrounds to be connected to Water & Sewer. Mr. Holloway made the motion to approve the Conditional Use as presented. Second by Mr. Joe Riley. **All in favor, Motion passed unanimously.**

River Road Sewer Extension & Upgrades (Public Project Application): Chairman Riley read a request by the Town of Yemassee, on behalf of the Lowcountry Regional Water System (LRWS), for approval of a Public Project Application. The applicant is seeking to install an alternative sewer system including individual grinder pumps and a common force main to serve six (6) homes on River Road and one (1) industrial customer on River Rd in Beaufort County, the abandonment of existing septic tanks and the installation of two Remote Terminal Units (RTU's) including radio equipment to allow the two (2) existing pump stations on Guess Drive to be monitored as part of the LRWS existing SCADA system. Mr. Garnes advised the Commission that Ms. Kari Foy, Engineer for LRWS was in attendance. Mr. Garnes advised that as set forth in Chapter 6, Section 6-29 within the Code of Ordinances of the Town of Yemassee, South Carolina, the applicants are submitting a Public Project Application for an expansion or modification of utility infrastructure. The Ordinance sets a goal of ensuring that the proposed project is consistent with the spirit and intent of the Town while ensuring the Town Council, residents, and business owners have ample opportunity for feedback on the proposed project any that any questions regarding the project are answered. Mr. Garnes stated this was the first Public Project to appear in front of this body.

Mr. Garnes provided some background on the existing utility infrastructure. The water and wastewater infrastructure within the Town of Yemassee is owned and operated by the Lowcountry Regional Water System (LRWS). LRWS inherited the infrastructure from the Town of Yemassee Water Department in 2013 when the utility consortium formed. LRWS is the franchised water and wastewater provider in the Town of Yemassee and has been since its inception. The infrastructure that was in place was installed over the course of almost four decades and was not uniform and much of the original infrastructure was in place. Over time, through both municipal grants and LRWS funded projects, the system has seen significant upgrades. Town Staff routinely

communicate with management of the Lowcountry Regional Water System and discuss areas of concern as well as review potential grant opportunities to improve the infrastructure and resiliency of the network as well as improve the quality of life for residents and business owners.

An opportunity identified was identified this Spring by Town Staff to potentially fund a project within Beaufort County that would address several critical issues while minimizing the potential for groundwater contamination after a failing septic tank or old sewer lines. The Beaufort County Council created a "Good Neighbor Fund" project which was to be funded off American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding that the County government received. The formula determined earmarked the Town of Yemassee approximately \$500,000.00 for ARP qualified projects such as infrastructure with the requirement being the projects must benefit and be within Beaufort County.

The County required each municipality in the County (Hilton Head Island, Bluffton, Hardeeville, Beaufort, Port Royal & Yemassee) to submit a formal request for funding for review at the Committee level at the County first, followed by County Council. The Town of Yemassee requested and subsequently received two tranches of funding through this program including this sewer extension and the Castle Hall Sidewalk Project. The project has no local match required from the municipality and the primary requirements are that the project be completed by the date dictated by the Federal Government ARP program and that the project will be subject to periodic grant monitoring by Beaufort County, as each municipality is a subrecipient of grant funds.

LRWS currently has limited water and wastewater infrastructure within Beaufort County and is limited to the infrastructure that was inherited from the Town when its water department was transferred. Water and wastewater serve both the Beaufort Housing Authority (Yemassee Heights) development and Alpha Genesis on Castle Hall Rd. On Guess Drive, the former industrial park properties are served by both water and sewer and host the only two lift stations owned by LRWS in Beaufort County. Finally, water and sewer service serve the Vetrostone plant at 108 River Road and water serves some residential areas on River Road from the county line to Guess Drive.

As the Town of Yemassee is the subrecipient of the funds, the Town will issue RFP's / Solicitations and receive invoices and pay out invoices due. Technical review will be completed jointly with LRWS Engineering and Management staff. The Town has issued an RFP for Engineering Services for the project with sealed bids due by September 21, 2023. Ms. Foy then spoke on some of the technical aspects of the project. Mr. Jay Holloway made the motion to approve the Public Project as presented and to forward it to the Town Council for final approval. Second by Ms. Sharon Mansell. **All in favor, motion passed unanimously.**

Adjournment:

Chairman Riley asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion by Mr. Jay Holloway. Second by Mr. Joe Riley. All in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 4:08PM.