

TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT, SOUTH CAROLINA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Monday, October 1, 2018
Municipal Complex, Committee Meeting Room, 3rd Floor
100 Ann Edwards Lane, Mount Pleasant, SC 29464

MINUTES

Members Present: Kathy Landing, Chair; Bob Brimmer, Joe Bustos, and Rick Crosby (MPW)

Staff Present: Eric DeMoura, Town Administrator; Jeff Ulma, Planning Director

Ms. Landing called the meeting to order at 2:43 p.m.

Ms. Landing stated that she met with Councilman Brimmer and Mayor Haynie last month to discuss various strategies for both Human Resources and Economic Development committees. Mr. Brimmer chairs Economic Development and she chairs Human Resources. She said based on various discussions, she and Mr. Brimmer felt that if Mayor Haynie was willing to switch their roles, they would be happy to do so. She said it was officially announced on Tuesday, September 25th that she would now chair Economic Development and Mr. Brimmer would now chair Human Resources.

1. Approval of Minutes from the [September 4, 2018](#) meeting

Mr. Bustos moved for approval; seconded by Mr. Crosby. All present voted in favor.

2. Public Comments

[None]

3. Introduction of a business concierge program

Ms. Landing stated that the Town has a terrific staff that has worked very diligently for many years to welcome new businesses. She said the Town

has many wonderful new businesses. She added that what she has discovered in the first ten months on this committee is that there is a disconnect between the staff and the work they do, to include true economic development and business development. She said if a business wants come to the Town of Mount Pleasant, there are a number of steps they must take with the Town and what she has heard from some of the businesses over time is that they go through all the steps, invest quite a bit of money and get denied by Council. She said this is very frustrating for businesses. She decided to look at what other communities are doing and Charleston County Economic Development, which is a very robust group that helps recruit industry and businesses to the Charleston area, has a program called Business Concierge which is geared more heavily towards businesses that are already established to ensure that when they have something they wish to do, such as an expansion, that it is facilitated in every way possible. She would like to piggyback on this but take it slightly further. As we move forward, in concept, what she would like to see is Town Council as elected officials serving our community, proactively speaking with people who are interested in building businesses and bringing businesses to the Town. She added that she would like for Council to go out and speak with the residents to find out what they want in a certain area and do their best to collaborate and marry those forces so that by the time a business developer has a concept or design and approaches the Town for permits or design approvals, that they are aware that Council will not block their efforts. She said this does not mean that they will bring everything to Mount Pleasant, but when a business that does want to come to the Town and is a great fit for the Town, the Town will do whatever possible to welcome them. She said the intention is that this will bring great jobs and will respect the fact that our remaining land in Mount Pleasant is limited and whatever is built on that land will be for a good purpose. She said that she is certain her colleagues on this Committee have great economic development ideas but would like to let the public know that Mount Pleasant is not only open for business, but the Town will be much more proactive on the approach to this. She stated that someone from

Charleston County will attend the next Economic Development Committee meeting.

4. Discussion regarding the appropriate size of commercial buildings for Pepper Plantation

Ms. Landing stated that many realized this had already been approved at first reading at the last Town Council meeting. She said due to the mandatory evacuation, the September 11th Town Council meeting was cancelled. She said Council will be voting on second reading at the October 9th Town Council meeting if everything stays as is. She added that at first reading a request was made to increase the allowance for a particular tract at Pepper Plantation from building sizes of 4,000 square feet to 16,000 square feet. She said this came before the Planning Committee and was approved. She said it was then brought to Council and first reading was approved. She said at that point, there was suddenly a tremendous outpouring from residents who were concerned about this change and do not want Council to support it. She said the purpose of this item on today's agenda is to explore a more collaborative way. She stated that this is exactly what she mentioned in the previous agenda item, because if we had started from the beginning with the developer who owns the land and determined that they would like to build something. The residents' concerns could have been addressed at that time. The developer is having a difficult time attracting businesses to a 4,000 square foot building, so they are requesting Council to reconsider the size of the building. She said the size of 16,000 square feet appears large enough that it is causing concern to the neighborhood. She would first like to ask Tim Cook to speak since he is the individual requesting the increase in building size.

Tim Cook, Station 14, Sullivan's Island, thanked Committee members for the opportunity to speak. He said they purchased the property in 2001 and prepared a planned development in the County that was approved by the County in 2001 for the commercial and residential components called Pepper Plantation. He said these are large equestrian lots and it

was fairly successful. In 2011 they decided to annex into the Town and rezone a portion of the property for cluster development homes, which is now called Tupelo. He added that over the years, they marketed the property for the smaller building size. He said they met with staff on numerous occasions over the years with potential clients and it always came down to the issue of the use needing a building size larger than what was permitted. This would require a variance request from the Board of Zoning Appeals (BOZA), which has several criteria that must be met to be approved for a variance. He does not believe that the building size would meet that criteria. He said it is a very onerous process to go through and most businesses did not want to bother with it. He said he went through another development (Ivy Hall), to see what type of buildings are there. He said they have a Mellow Mushroom, which is 5,200 square feet, SunTrust Bank is 5,700 square feet, an appliance store at 16,000 square feet, the Refuel building is 6,400 square feet and the canopy is 6,300 making the total 12,700 square feet. He said looking at buildings in their immediate vicinity, none of them would be permitted in Tupelo. He said their original request to abandon the maximum square footage of the buildings was suggested by Town staff after they had set up numerous meetings over the years to try to build what potential users would want. He said they then requested the maximum building size indications to be removed so there would not be a maximum which would match all other zoning classifications in the Town. He said they were approved at the Planning Commission meeting, which went to the Planning Committee of Council and they suggested that there be some sort of maximum building size limitation. The building sizes that users build are based on a business model and what is able to work for their profitability. Their only goal in providing the maximum building size limitation was to avoid any BOZA encounter. He said it is certainly not to build every building that size. He said some of the property owners sent correspondence to Town Council. He said they met with the property owners and thought the discussions were positive and informative. His thought was that the major concern was the building setback and

buffers. He said they discussed increasing those. He said they are required to have a 15-foot buffer and suggested increasing it to 25 feet.

Ms. Landing asked how many buildings could fit on the acreage in question if all the buildings were 4,000 square feet.

Mr. Cook said that he has not done that analysis. He said there are several different uses that have larger building sizes allowed, such as a grocery store which is 40,000 square feet, a pharmacy is 14,000 or 15,000 square feet, a home improvement center would be 20,000 square feet. He said there are other buildings that can have larger square footage.

Ms. Landing asked how many acres.

Mr. Cook said approximately 30 acres for the institutional and commercial uses. He said there are 11 acres of institutional and the balance is commercial.

Ms. Landing asked what the zoning is on this currently.

Mr. Cook stated that there are two zoning classifications; there is institutional, which is at the north end of the property across from Theodore Road and the retail office is across from Beehive which is the entrance to Tupelo.

Ms. Landing asked if the entire property only allows 4,000 square foot buildings.

Mr. Cook said that each of the zoning classifications has what is allowable and some of the conditions are the building size. All the buildings are not limited, or the use is not limited to 4,000 square feet, but that is the maximum on a good number of the uses.

Ms. Landing asked how Mr. Cook would be able to guarantee the setbacks from 15 feet to 25 feet.

Mr. Cook stated that he spoke to Town staff and said it could likely be a condition of the approval.

Mr. Jeff Ulma, Planning Director stated that as part of a Planned Development (PD), there is the ability to craft the zoning requirements

“custom made”, which is where the square feet usage came from. He said the ability to have different buffering or setback requirements could be integrated into the PD zoning itself. He said Council would not impose this. He said working with an applicant, they could adjust and refine their application to incorporate standards or requirements that residents are comfortable with. He said it would take more time to go into this. He said the question in front of us now is the square footage of buildings and as Mr. Cook mentioned, it was originally going from what was capped to “no cap”, and now the second version has limitations on those buildings.

Ms. Landing asked if there was a schematic when it was addressed in August. She said some of the concerns that she read in the emails were concerning one ingress and one egress if commercial businesses are added to this. She asked if there would be another entrance.

Mr. Cook stated that there is a crossover north of the existing Tupelo Forest Drive which would be a secondary entrance. He said there would be a spine road to connect, which is in the master plan.

Ms. Landing asked if the property is on a frontage road and would not necessarily have to go into the neighborhood.

Mr. Cook stated that the new road would be somewhat of a frontage road and would connect into that entrance. They were required to build Tupelo Forest Drive, which was very costly and designed to have a connection in and the drainage is designed to have that connection as well. He said ultimately there will be two entrances. He said that entrance will be put in when necessitated by the development.

Ms. Landing asked if this means the neighborhood will have a second way in and out now, because this was a concern the residents had.

Mr. Cook responded in the affirmative and it would be a publicly dedicated road.

Ms. Landing said another concern was the discussion about a fence and who would maintain the fence. She said the residents thought it would make more sense to have a wall that would be more of a buffer and permanent.

Mr. Cook stated that this could be discussed; however, walls are very costly and for a 750 feet distance, it would be approximately \$250,000. He said he also discussed with one particular resident going from 15 feet to 25 feet on the setback, but they would like 50 feet. This is possible if the buffer on Highway 17 were reduced.

Ms. Landing asked if this was possible.

Mr. Ulma stated that the ordinance requires a specific buffer along the US 17 corridor. The idea was when moving out this way to continue having a buffer along the roadway, screening buildings and uses rather than pulling them to the street. He said there is a rationale as to why the larger buffer was proposed along the US 17 corridor. Mr. Ulma provided a schematic that shows the open space and the locations of the crossovers, access and the commercial/institutional piece.

Mr. Brimmer asked what the current buffer is on US 17.

Mr. Ulma stated that it is 50 feet.

Mr. Cook stated that he was suggesting changing a portion of that buffer.

Mr. Bustos asked what the cap is on the square footage.

Mr. Cook stated that it is 195,000 square feet.

Mr. Bustos asked if the height is 55 feet for commercial and 35 feet for residential.

Mr. Ulma stated that he believes it is 45 feet for commercial and 35 for residential.

Mr. Bustos stated that he understands there was a slight misunderstanding in the beginning going from 4,000 square feet to 16,000 feet, that it is quadrupling the amount of square footage given to the applicant. He said this is not true, because it all goes against a maximum cap. He said there was discussion that the Town was giving 800,000 square feet and this is not true.

Mr. Cook stated that if the buildings are larger, then there will be less buildings. He said they are simply trying to be more flexible for those who

would like to build a business, as there is no one signed up at this time for a 4,000 square foot building. He said they had a professional swimming instructor that wanted to build a 10,000 square foot facility with a pool to teach lessons, but they were not able to accommodate this.

Mr. Brimmer stated that he was concerned about the residents that live in this neighborhood in an area where houses were not originally going to be built. He said he would not want a huge building behind his house either, so the buffer appeared to be the main issue in the emails; how will the bigger buildings be screened. He said when discussing increasing the buffer size, was this only along the edge or the whole piece.

Mr. Cook stated that it would only be along the common property line.

Mr. Brimmer asked if the ten feet would remain around the rest where there are no homes.

Mr. Cook stated that the buffer would be the same as it currently is. He said most are along wetlands and wetland buffers. He said they have upland or highland buffers that are in place.

Mr. Brimmer stated that having commercial development will be good for the neighborhood and for this area, so that the residents do not have to travel into Town for errands that could be accomplished closer to their homes. He asked if there has been any discussion as to limiting building size in the portion of the parcel that is closest to the homes and perhaps allowing the larger buildings further away. He asked if this would be a compromise.

Mr. Cook stated that he discussed this with his business partner and thought it may be a difficult task to present to Town Council. He tried to keep his requests simple, but he is open to this suggestion.

Mr. Brimmer said that in this area of Town, he does not believe they would like to encourage large commercial buildings. He said they are trying to move to less density and smaller buildings and having more of a rural setting. He said smaller buildings would be appropriate if they could be marketed and sold. He asked if Mr. Cook could find a way to take that parcel and keep the smaller commercial buildings closer to the homes

and the larger buildings shifted over to the other side of the parcel. He said if this is workable, it may be a way to address the residents' concerns.

Mr. Cook stated that he would not know how to articulate this. He said this portion of the property is where a large footprint could be accommodated if there was a grocery store. He said providing 25 additional feet to have a 50-foot buffer is what the residents suggested. He said if they could take away from the Highway 17 buffer an equal distance, then it would be a win-win for everyone.

Mr. Brimmer asked if the residents supported the 25-foot buffer.

Mr. Cook responded in the negative and said the residents requested a 50-foot buffer.

Mr. Brimmer stated that he does not believe Council would support reducing the buffer on US 17 since it has been working for over a year trying to preserve the roadway buffers. He said it seems there should be a way to find some solution where big buildings are not right behind houses, but still allow the opportunity to have a larger building if the opportunity presents itself.

Mr. Cook asked if this would be to keep the current zoning within a certain distance of the property line and then have new zoning apply to the rest of the property.

Mr. Brimmer stated that if it is possible to do this. He said he is not sure what the residents think about this.

John Nunes, 1011 Banker Court, stated that the residents were not made aware, in general, of this request until after the first reading. He said the signs were put out from the Town for this request and a rumor on Facebook was circulated, so none of the residents looked into it. He said they only became aware of this at first reading. He said the consensus is the area that comes closest to US 17 used to be commercial. The home developer went back to the owner and requested more land for a buffer for their amenity center and they put new homes further down US 17 to accommodate this. He said they are already close to US 17. He said he is

not on Welsh Pony Road, but still hears traffic and sees the vehicles driving by. He said this was done a few years ago to build a section to where these homes are still being sold and the developer just left the area and turned it over to the HOA six months ago. He thought it was coincidental because this is when this request came in to increase the size of the buildings. He said their major concern is the buildings being closer to the homes. He asked if they could carve out the section that is close to US 17.

Ms. Landing stated that if we are able to bring businesses into the community, they not only provide services for the people that live in that vicinity, but also employment and it does not create additional traffic. She said the owner has the right to build something there and currently what they have is the right to build something that is limited to 4,000 square feet. She asked if he and those he has had discussions with, have thoughts in mind of what they desire to see.

Mr. Nunes stated that they have discussed having a nice local pub, but they have not gotten into any specifics.

Ms. Landing stated that 16,000 square feet is enough space to build something that they likely do not want near their homes.

Mr. Nunes stated that it could also be something they really like that they may deny by saying they do not want something that is 16,000 square feet. He stated that they also must think about the worst-case scenario, because they are not able to pick what goes in that space.

Ms. Landing stated that since Mr. Ulma has advised that the PD can be adjusted, if it were possible to accomplish what Councilman Brimmer stated earlier with the smaller businesses closer to the homes and the larger businesses further away.

Mr. Nunes stated that the entrance from US 17 to the neighborhood is very short. He said the thought of having something much larger seems aggressive. He said that he does not live on Welsh Pony Road but is very close to it. However the home developer told many of the neighbors that the neighborhood land was much further up. He said it was news to

them when this came out that the commercial land only had a 15-foot buffer and that they are also requesting larger buildings.

Mr. Brimmer stated that another approach as opposed to limiting the size on the building is just to say anything in that area can only be one story; therefore, there is no height issue and it can be better screened by trees and landscaping. He believes there are better ways to accomplish this and reach a solution.

Mr. Bustos stated that similar to Coleman Boulevard, there were lower buildings along the sidewalk and taller buildings behind them, it was screened by the first building and the perspective was that the higher building was not as noticeable. He said smaller buildings along the periphery and the larger buildings to the center would achieve the same goal.

Mr. Nunes stated that right on Tupelo Forest Drive, this is the small section from US 17, there is a retention pond that they all assumed would stay, but recently found out that it is part of the commercial land and will be filled in for development. He said right in that area is where most of the opposition is. He said many of the residents are open to keeping that area to the 4,000 square feet cap and moving the larger buildings away may be a compromise.

Ms. Landing asked if this was the land north of Tupelo Forest Drive, which is where the 30-acre tract begins. She asked about the retention pond.

Mr. Cook said that the location of that pond has handled a portion of the road drainage and was put there with the intention of moving it in the future. He said it will have to accommodate the runoff from the road and commercial development, so there will still be a retention pond, but it may not be in that same location. He said all the pipes were set up in order to accommodate future development but they did not know what the building layouts were going to be. He said as the primary landowner originally paid into the Tupelo Forest trail HOA so they paid for the upkeep as well.

Mr. Crosby asked if there was a specific request on behalf of the residents for the developer that could be addressed. He said this appears to be going around and around.

Mr. Nunes stated that because this was a last-minute meeting and there are only four or five homes affected, he does not know if they can answer, but believes that the portion of the property they indicated earlier is what they are specific about, so he believes it is heading in the right direction as far as a compromise is concerned. He said perhaps increasing the buffer.

Ed Forte, 2028 Welsh Pony Drive, stated that it does not take a visionary to see that Mount Pleasant is moving northward. He said if there is a solution, they feel they can solve two challenges. He said one has to do with the zip code, because across the street from the entrance to their development, they are allegedly Mount Pleasant. He asked why a structure is not built that will serve the community, which is a northern branch of the Mount Pleasant Post Office. He said currently, their mail is delivered by Awendaw, which is considered a rural post office. He said the mail is late and misplaced, which impacts several of the homeowners. He was just informed that the Post Master in Awendaw is not only responsible for Awendaw, but also McClellanville. He feels it would be more expedient and efficient if a northern branch of the post office could be put in their area to serve the community.

Ms. Landing stated that once Council members saw all the emails, she believes that if this is brought to full Council next week, there is a very good chance that this item would be denied. She said from an economic development viewpoint, bringing businesses and services close to where people live, as well as jobs, this is a loss. If there is an owner that has land and cannot bring much to that property, this is also a loss, because he has that land and is going to do something with it eventually. The idea is not to wait until next week, but would suggest deferring second reading if Mr. Cook is willing to do so.

Kevin Cunnane, 3032 River Vista Way, stated that what caught his attention was the usages that were listed. He said one was a pet

cremation center, which had a setback of 15 feet from a residential home. He said perhaps there is a way to adjust the uses and have more discussions to come up with something better. He said he would not want this in his backyard and would vote against it in anyone else's backyard. He thanked Mr. Cook for all the efforts he has taken and believes that more discussions need to take place to resolve this issue.

Ms. Landing stated that the Town's role is simply to respond to the request which is to increase the square footage. She stated that the Town does not have control as to what uses are put into those buildings. She said it does help to know that a bank branch uses 5,700 square feet and that 4,000 square feet is on the small side to accommodate it. She previously asked Mr. Cook what would fit into a 4,000 square foot building and was told that a drive-thru Starbucks would fit.

Mr. Bustos stated that he believes the residents suggested a 50-foot buffer. He said that the current buffer is 15 feet. He asked if the residents would agree to a 25-foot buffer on either side. He said he would like to advise the residents that a "no" to an amended 25-foot buffer could end up being an approved 15-foot buffer.

Mr. Brimmer asked Mr. Cook if he will have sufficient time between this meeting and the Tuesday Council meeting to resolve these issues or will he need an additional 30 days.

Mr. Cook stated that he would also like to meet with Town staff as well and said a 30-day delay would possibly be sufficient time.

Mr. DeMoura stated that depending on the extent of the variations, the Town may either need a new application or may need to go back to the Planning Commission. He said if this changes substantially from what was submitted initially, it cannot go to Council for final reading.

Ms. Landing stated that this will be Mr. Cook's decision.

Mr. Cook stated that it would be prudent to wait and at least find out what it will take.

John Rowland, 2023 Welsh Pony Drive, stated that it would be a great idea if Mr. Cook is able to come up with some conceptual drawings and provide the residents with an idea of where these buildings will be located or what types of clusters. He said it would not have to be exact, but it would provide the residents with an idea of what can be put into the commercial acreage. He said if they had some concept, it may help the residents be more accepting.

Ms. Landing said she is grateful to Mr. Ulma for advising them that within the PD, you are able to make some conceptual designs.

Mr. Cook stated that it is difficult to provide conceptual, especially site planning. He said until you have a user, they do not know what size the buildings will be or what the Design Review Board (DRB) will impose, as you must go through the DRB process.

Ms. Landing stated that the purpose was to vet some of the issues ahead of time so that Mr. Cook does not end up with a denial, and then be required to wait an additional year to re-apply. She said perhaps a deferral is in order to work with staff.

5. Discussion regarding the economic impact of the Medal of Honor Museum

Ms. Landing stated that this is being addressed for several reasons. She stated that the Medal of Honor Museum has been a topic of conversation for a number of years. She said it has been discussed in other Committees, such as Planning. She added that there are a number of aspects that are critical; one being a 2016 Economic Impact Analysis Report. She said the purpose of addressing this today is to begin the conversation on several items. One being the investment the Town is committing of \$1.5 million dollars, of which \$300,000 went towards the surveying and preparing for moving Patriots Point Boulevard. She said \$1.2 million has been set aside and there has been much discussion about the Town spending this funding, but what are we talking about in terms of what the Town must gain economically. She said she is shocked that this has never been brought up as a public discussion. She said this is

something that has enormous potential impact. She said we are all aware of the emotional and patriotic side of the Medal of Honor Museum and also some of the unfortunate discussion in the media regarding height and differences of opinion on design. However, what about the projected economic impact. She stated that this report was a projection done in 2016 by the Medal of Honor Foundation and based on the number of people that they already know visit the Yorktown and Patriots Point every year, as well as how many more may come because the Medal of Honor Museum would be located there.

IT IS FORECAST THAT THE MUSEUM WILL ATTRACT 288,000 GUESTS ANNUALLY, AND MANY OF THOSE WILL BE NEW OR REPEAT VISITORS TO THE PALMETTO STATE.

Their visitor spending and that of the Museum's operations **will create \$21.3 million in annual economic impact and support over 400 new South Carolina jobs and \$12.9 million in labor income** created directly and indirectly. Over \$6.6 million in tax revenue will be generated for local, state, and Federal governments.

The construction of this new attraction will also generate a ripple effect through the state's economy. This building activity will create **\$41.2 million in labor income and more than 450 construction-related South Carolina jobs, and a total tax impact of \$13.5 million in revenues.** This multi-million investment in the state's economy will generate more than just powerful emotions. It will provide a paycheck to hundreds of South Carolinians, and lower the household tax burden upon the state's residents.



Ms. Landing stated that in the report it is forecast that the museum will attract 280,000 guests annually and many will be new or repeat visitors to the Palmetto State. She said this is not just a museum that will be built on the marsh in Mount Pleasant at Patriots Point, but also part of Charleston County and the State of South Carolina. She said the construction of this new attraction will generate \$2.4 million in labor income and more than 450 construction related South Carolina jobs. Although temporary for the period of time they are constructing the museum, this is still a great deal of jobs, money and time invested. She said the total tax impact is estimated at \$13.5 million in revenues to the State. She said the visitor spending that the museum's operations are expected to create is at least \$21.3 million in annual economic impact and support over 400 new South Carolina jobs and \$12.9 million in labor income. She said these are annual figures. She said when we talk about spending an additional \$1.2 million dollars to move a road, just remember that there is an economic side. She said the MOH museum will bring in a great deal of positive attention, jobs and money both to Mount Pleasant and South Carolina. She said she would like to continue these discussions.

Pat Sullivan, 1002 Plantation Court, said that the first thing that comes to her mind is that we are talking about revenue to the State of South Carolina and the Town should be concerned about revenue for Mount Pleasant. She said much of the revenue is going to go to Patriots Point, as well, so it is strictly Mount Pleasant that we should be focusing on. She said regarding construction, what percentage of the jobs will come from outside of Mount Pleasant. She believes many of them are brought in. She said construction companies for a project such as this, for the most part are brought in from outside the Town. She said we must be very careful when looking at the amount of money that may come to the Town only and consider people working at the museum. Will their salary level allow them to live in Mount Pleasant or will they add to the traffic and come from North Charleston? She said this needs to be looked at from a broader perspective.

Ms. Landing stated that she is simply introducing the topic and hopes to have some of the experts that know more details next month. She said on the \$21.3 million in annual economic impact, many of these people will stay in Mount Pleasant hotels and eat in Mount Pleasant restaurants and shop at Mount Pleasant stores.

Kevin Cunnane, thanked Councilwoman Landing for having this discussion and knows that it is a start. He said it will definitely be an impact for Mount Pleasant. He said we have a number of hotels in Mount Pleasant and many of those people go to downtown Charleston, which generates more traffic. He said with a world-class attraction such as the Medal of Honor Museum, it is an extra day for them to stay in the Town. He said if they are here for four days, one quarter of the time they will not generate traffic. He said regarding the museum staff, he said most of the museums he has attended employ retirees with flexible hours, and the Town has the demographics to support this with a number of veterans who would be willing to work there. He is shocked that anyone would be against the Medal of Honor museum. He added that the impacts are exponential, because once it is there, it will aid the mission of Patriots Point by supporting the maintenance of the ships that are currently there. Visitors will eat at local restaurants and will increase the stature of Mount Pleasant. He said it will not have a crazy impact, because it is not being built in a historic section of Mount Pleasant, but next to a very modern bridge, modern condominiums and more new hotels and condominiums that are already contracted to be built behind it. He said it will not impact the look of the area and will actually improve the look of the area, because they are getting public access and green space. The building will have a green roof and many things added that would not be there if this becomes just another condominium or hotel. He said if the land becomes more condominiums we will have trailers outside of the new Lucy Beckham High School when it opens to accommodate those additional students. He said if we do have the museum, there will also be a benefit for the local schools, because students will be able to go to the museum all through their school years to visit the museum, as well as symposiums and meeting Medal of Honor

recipients. He said these are memorable and life-changing moments for children to view their stories. He said the Town has a choice to either detract from our schools by chasing the museum away and getting another condominium complex or help our schools by bringing the museum to the Town.

Ms. Landing stated that this has already been publicly posted; however, today, there was a public post on Lowcountry Friends of Medal of Honor, with a copy of a letter sent to all of Town Council, stating that this Friday, the Medal of Honor Foundation will be entering into a vote to possibly open this up to a country-wide search. She said this has been in the newspaper, but this has now officially been commented on in public. She said that the wording is that they may or may not vote to do the country-wide search and it is and has been the Town of Mount Pleasant and the State's to lose, because there was no doubt that it would be built here. She said those who believe this is a threat, it apparently is not, and in fact the Medal of Honor Foundation may do a Request for Proposal from communities, including Mount Pleasant and other areas throughout the country. She believes the community needs to take very seriously the fact that the museum is a jewel that needs to stay here in Mount Pleasant and act accordingly.

Mr. Bustos stated that in the Economic Impact Assessment, it indicates attracting 280,000 guests annually, and asked if this was over and above those visitors to Patriots Point or just what they feel will be visitors to the Medal of Honor museum. He said most of the people that go to Patriots Point will likely go to the museum; therefore, he does not know if this is being double counted.

Ms. Landing stated that she believes this number is very low.

Mr. Bustos stated that Ms. Landing cannot make that statement, because this is what the report indicates. He said they do not know. He said the report indicates \$21.3 million in annual economic impact and support over 400 new South Carolina jobs. He stated that most of the construction jobs are not South Carolinians and instead are people from out of state. He said some from South Carolina may work these jobs, but

we do not know how many South Carolina firms are going to be employed to accomplish this project. He said the building itself is very sophisticated and modernistic, so it is not certain if they will be hiring firms from South Carolina to accomplish the museum or not. He said we are a tourist destination and what we will receive is more traffic from those who come for the beaches, restaurants, and go downtown to Charleston. He said we are #25 in the nation for Most Desirable Towns to Live, and Charleston is #1 for tourism. He said the Town is going to get tourists and those staying in hotels and will continue to fill the hotels up. He said that the report is fluff and does not mean a great deal. He asked if the Town wants something that is going to draw more tourists to the Town, and the answer may be "yes". (*Mr. Brimmer departed the meeting at 3:51 p.m.*) He said although it indicates 280,000 people, Mr. Daniels indicated that they are going to do a targeted national search and they have not signed the contract to build a road. He said the Medal of Honor Foundation raised \$19 million and for the road, they have the \$5 million that the State of South Carolina gave them. He stated that when the Medal of Honor Museum came to Mount Pleasant and he was on Council in the early 2000's the Town gave hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Medal of Honor Museum so that it could be built on the Yorktown and believes he made the motion to send the money to them. He said he is in favor of the Medal of Honor museum and will readily admit that he does not care for the design of the building. He said when Mr. Daniels came in, he stated that if the Town does not approve what has been presented, they will take the museum elsewhere. He said they could not do so, because they are under contract to Patriots Point until 2023 and if they are going to do so, they will have to repay the State of South Carolina the \$5 million that was given to them. He stated that this is the road that was discussed earlier this morning. He said if the road is built and nothing comes of it, the taxpayers of Mount Pleasant should be repaid the \$1.5 million dollars that the Town has put towards this project. He stated that the Medal of Honor museum has been in the Town since 2004/2005 when the Town provided the funding for it. He understands the reason for building a land-side museum, because they do not know the fate of

the USS Yorktown, as it is in dire need of repair. He stated that a land side museum is a great idea but believes that the zoning rules must be followed. He believes that a building can be built for much less than \$120 million dollars and be able to capitalize, because there will be less of a sunk-cost into the building, because it is the contents and exhibits inside of the building, and the people who are memorialized that make this whole thing important. He said as a US Army Retiree, he has served with Medal of Honor recipients and most of them are not people who want something grand and glorious. He believes that something should be built that honors them and at the same time, should take the taxpayer into consideration. He said a great museum with great exhibits can be built, but it is not about the building. He said this is about the exhibits inside; however, this has turned into “a building”.

Ms. Landing stated that she thought this was an appropriate topic to address regardless of whether there was something in the news that was pending.

Ed Forte, stated that he is a Marine Corps veteran and has had the privilege to serve with two Medal of Honor recipients; General James Livingston and Major Harvey Barnum. He quoted John Adams, the 2nd President of the United States. He believes the Medal of Honor museum is not about the building, but the ordinary people that have done extraordinary things. He said as a veteran, he would consider it an honor to serve there freely as a volunteer. He also believes from an economic perspective, that its beautiful location overlooking the harbor will attract many veterans to move to Mount Pleasant. He said he sees this as an economic plus. *(Mr. Brimmer returned at 3:56 p.m.)*

Ms. Landing stated that this is the beginning of a discussion and has invited more individuals to do a presentation next month and update some of the numbers. She said that there needs to be a discussion regarding economic development as it relates to this project. She stated that it is her understanding that in order to bring an application, the Medal of Honor Foundation needed to have the Patriots Point Development Authority sign off on the application that would allow them

the lease, which was part of the process. She said if this did not happen, they would not be able to move forward, and her understanding is that this was supposed to take place this morning. She said this was known news since last week and it was delayed.

6. Adjourn

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Ashe
October 1, 2018