

MOUNT PLEASANT TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA

Tuesday, April 14, 2020, 6:00 p.m.

Video-Conference Meeting

Live Streaming Link:

https://youtu.be/Y_gFj0WB4yY

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Town of Mount Pleasant has suspended all activities to include public meetings. However, Planning related matters having timelines for processing have not been suspended by the State of South Carolina. Therefore, Town Council is proceeding with its regularly scheduled Council meeting. In addition to Planning items, Town Council is considering final reading of a general obligation bond. This is not an additional indebtedness to the Town but rather a refinancing of debt with the intent of saving money.

*** The Public Hearing for the Comprehensive Plan that was advertised for April 14, 2020 will be rescheduled for a future date and re-advertised**

**** The Building Heights Ordinances (20013, 20014) have been deferred and will be on a Council agenda at a later date**

*****The Budget Ordinance (20024) has been deferred and will be on a Council agenda at a later date**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Haynie called the Town Council meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Council members, Howard Chapman, Brenda Corley, Laura Hyatt, Kathy Landing, Tom O'Rourke Jake Rambo, Gary Santos, and Guang Ming Whitley were present.

III. PRAYER

Mr. Santos led Council in Prayer.

IV. PLEDGE

Mr. O'Rourke led Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Santos moved for approval; seconded by Mr. Chapman. All present voted in favor.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE [MARCH 10, 2020](#) TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AND THE MARCH 2020 FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

Mr. Santos moved for approval; seconded by Mr. Chapman.

Mr. Chapman moved to amend the minutes to correct a word on Page 33, 6th line down, from "provide" to "provided"; seconded by Mr. Rambo. All present voted in favor of the amendment.

All present voted in favor of the amended minutes and the March 2020 Financial Statement..

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Comments Received via Voice Mail:

Mr. **Ed Kelley** stated he represented approximately forty homeowners who are asking Town Council to stop the extension of Backshore Drive to Recreation Drive until research is completed as to who is requiring the road extension. He says it seems like no one wants it.

Ms. **Diana Rasnik** asked Council to stop the proposed extension of Backshore Drive until it can be determined in writing what is going on. She said there are already too many cars driving too fast down this road.

Ms. **Diane Tideman** called to ask that Town Council put on the agenda for the April 14 meeting discussion of the requirement for

Backshore Drive to be extended to Recreation Way and to be able to openly discuss it.

Mr. **Gary Simpson** called to say that it is his opinion that the Backshore Drive extension should be stopped. He says “we” have in writing that none of the parties want it. He thinks the extension should be stopped until we know who wants it and can have a public hearing.

Ms. **Charlotte Anderson**, a Carolina Park resident called to say she is in favor of the extension of Backshore Drive. She said many of the residents that are in favor of the extension do not comment on NextDoor for fear of retaliation.

Mr. **Peter Anderson**, a Carolina Park resident called to say he is in favor of the Backshore Drive extension. He said it would be a great amenity for the community in connecting to parks and would also give access to emergency vehicles. He said there are a number of residents in favor of this extension.

Mr. **John Piehl** called and left a very long voice mail asking Council to stop the extension of Backshore Drive. He also sent an e-mail which is included in the e-mail section below.

Comments Received via E-Mail:

Jaime and Bryan Steen - We are reaching out to express our concerns regarding the extension of Backshore Road in Carolina Park. There are many concerns with this new extension but the biggest one that we have is safety. We have witnessed time and time again the erratic driving behaviors of the student drivers trying to get off the campus as quickly as possible. We believe that the extension of Backshore Road will give them a straight shot through the neighborhood which will undoubtedly end in horrible situations.

Many people can attest to what the driving habits and experiences were like when the construction entrance off of Recreation was opened to the Lennar construction area once the students found out they could access it. There is a reason a light was put in at Carolina Park and Faison Road due to safety issues and the exact same

things are going to happen on Backshore Road except that instead of car accidents it will be much more horrific than that.

We are requesting that this situation be added to the 4/14 virtual meeting. Thank you for your time.

Lauren Cechak – We are asking for the Council to discuss the requirement for Backshore Drive to be extended to Recreation Way in the Carolina Park subdivision. I am firmly against the road being built and are asking for the council to release the developers (Carolina Park Development LLC and The Berry Company) from the requirement to build the Backshore Drive extension in order for the rest of the property to be developed. I am extremely concerned about the safety of our community and by the lack of necessity for road. We hope that this can be discussed and finalized on the Council meeting on 4/14.

Diane and Paul Tideman - We, as residents and very concerned citizens, are asking for the Town Council to discuss the requirement for Backshore Drive to be extended to Recreation Way in the Carolina Park subdivision. I, as well as almost 300 residents have signed a petition stating we are firmly against the road being built and are asking for the council to release the developers (Carolina Park Development LLC and The Berry Company) from the requirement to build the Backshore Drive extension in order for the rest of the property to be developed. We are extremely concerned about the safety of our community and by the lack of necessity for road. We hope that this can be discussed and finalized on the Town Council meeting April 14, 2020. We are asking that this issue be placed on the agenda for this Town Council meeting as it is a very urgent and time sensitive matter. Thank you for your time and consideration of our request.

Robert Capaldo - We are asking for the Council to discuss the requirement for Backshore Drive to be extended to Recreation Way in the Carolina Park subdivision. I am firmly against the road being built and are asking for the council to release the the developers (Carolina Park Development LLC and The Berry Company) from the requirement to build the Backshore Drive extension in order for the rest of the property to be developed. I am extremely concerned about the safety of our community and by the lack of necessity for

road. We hope that this can be discussed and finalized on the Council meeting on 4/14.

Steve Schwartz - I am asking for the council and transportation committee to immediately review the requirement for Backshore Drive to be extended to Recreation Way in the Carolina Park subdivision. I am firmly against the road being built and am asking for the council to release the developers (Carolina Park Development LLC and The Berry Company) from the requirement to build the Backshore Drive extension. I am extremely concerned about the safety of our community and by the lack of necessity for road. We hope that this can be discussed and finalized on the Council meeting on 4/14.

Michael Beare - I am requesting that you add a discussion of canceling the building of the Backshore Drive to Recreation Way extension. I would like for there to be a formal discussion with community input as well as a clear statement of where each of the council members stands on this issue. We have nearly 300 community members and voters who also feel strongly about this issue. Please let me know if you have any questions about the request and if there is some avenue for community participation in this meeting since it's on YouTube. Thank you for considering; I look forward to watching/participating in the meeting tomorrow evening.

Todd Reel - Please put the Backshore Drive Road Extension onto your council virtual meeting for 04/14.

Dion Welch - Carolina Park and the Town of Mount Pleasant. We are hearing the blame game by both sides and each side saying they don't want the road. The Developer is saying the Town is requiring the road extension at the end of Backshore Dr to connect to Recreation way. The Town is saying it was added to plot plans years ago. Can you please address this issue at tomorrow's council meeting to at the very least delay the construction until more information can be gathered. The road extension was very sudden and the homeowners purchased here being told and shown as the current area always being a walking trail. Below is the e-mail that was sent by the HOA explaining their side of the story:

New Development in Carolina Park

Dear Phase 5B and 5C Homeowners:

We hope everyone is staying healthy during these uncertain times. We wanted to share an update on an upcoming project in Carolina Park.

In late March, the area on Faison Road between Recreation Drive and Merrill Gardens was purchased by a Continuing Care Residential Community (CCRC) developer. The project, known as The Retreat at Carolina Park, will consist of a variety of senior housing options including Assisted Living, Memory Care, Independent Living apartment flats and cottages, all of which will be age-restricted (55+). The property's Industrial zoning allows for a wide variety of commercial and light industrial uses as well as use as a CCRC. Given the alternative uses that were allowed, we were very pleased with the compatibility of this use, while satisfying a void for senior housing in the Mount Pleasant market.

While we're excited to welcome this project to the community, the impending construction has generated a number of questions regarding a roadway extension. As part of the approval process, the town is requiring the CCRC developer to extend Backshore Drive to Recreation Way. A number of residents have expressed concerns and we have urged the mayor, town council and town administrator to reconsider the requirement. We will share more information as it becomes available, but in the meantime, we've addressed a number of the most common questions:

Q: Is Backshore Drive going to be extended. If so, who is requiring this?

A: As part of the CCRC's approval process, town staff required that the CCRC developer extend Backshore Drive to Recreation Way. Fortunately, the CCRC developer has kindly agreed to postpone construction of the road [until April 27, 2020](#) to allow the town time to re-evaluate its need.

Q: What is Carolina Park's position on the extension?

A: Carolina Park is opposed to the extension and the CCRC developer is willing to eliminate it from their plans if approved by the town.

The original plans submitted to the Town by the CCRC developer did not contemplate the extension of Backshore Drive. The Town added this requirement and the CCRC plans were later revised. From a

financial perspective, building additional roads is expensive and extending Backshore is an added expense that does not benefit or connect to the CCRC.

Carolina Park shares the concerns expressed by a number of homeowners. Although Carolina Park has no formal role in the approval process, when the road requirement came to our attention, we called a meeting with the Town and expressed our strong opposition.

Q: Why was it required?

A: The Town made the judgement that adding the connection was in keeping with its goal of interconnectivity, and ultimately in the community's interest.

Q: Was it ever Carolina Park's intent to extend Backshore Drive?

A: Because Carolina Park wasn't sure how the adjacent CCRC land would be developed, Backshore Drive and the surrounding infrastructure was designed to allow flexibility for an extension if we thought it would benefit the community. This design and platting took place [around 2012-13](#) and is evidenced by the stub portion of Backshore Drive and wide separation between the two existing ponds. Ultimately, Carolina Park decided the extension would not be in the best interest of our community, given how the adjacent residential phase developed, and is why it was not shown on the conceptual master plan.

Q: Why weren't residents notified about the CCRC project sooner?

A: Carolina Park, like many master planned community developers, does not publicly disclose pending land sale information. Commercial land transactions are speculative, complex, have very high levels of uncertainty, and we don't know whether a project will actually move forward until it closes. In addition, buyer confidentiality requirements prohibit sellers from disclosing information about a project. When commercial land is purchased, Carolina Park does not disclose buyer information until the project has closed and is nearing construction. In this case, the property closed a little over a week ago and construction will soon be underway.

In an effort to support outreach efforts made by a number of our homeowners to the town, last week Carolina Park emailed the mayor,

town council, and the town administrator to express our solidarity with resident concerns, and ask that they support town staff in reversing their decision. It's not clear what the response will be, but we will share information as it is received.

Kimberly Thomas - This road is impacting the safety of our children and our quiet neighborhood. How would you feel if someone put a road behind your new construction home?! Please add this topic to the agenda tomorrow and allow us to listen in to the discussion.

Kaili Sasiene - Please add the above issue [Backshore Drive Extension] to the agenda tonight for discussion. This would be terrible for the safety of our children. Our street is filled with young children who just want to be able to play safely in our yards. This extension would add unnecessary traffic, as well as wreck-less teenage drivers rushing to get to school in the mornings. We walk on the road and path near the pond every day to observe the wildlife. Please don't take that away from us. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Matt Sasiene - I am writing as one of your concerned constituents. I live in the Carolina Park neighborhood on the street Backshore Drive. I have taught both my daughters how to ride bikes on our beautiful dead end street. We've watched the most amazing wildlife including deer, turkeys, bald eagles etc. in their natural setting right there at the end of Backshore drive. Your position to force Carolina Park Development LLC and The Berry Company to extend Backshore drive through this area to connect to Recreation way shows an extreme lack of judgement and concern for your constituents, wildlife, and the "Mt Pleasant way of life." I am extremely concerned about the safety of our community and the necessity for this road. The properties in concern on the other side of Backshore drive can be accessed by going down Faison to Recreation way. I've spoken with over 300 residents who live in our neighborhood and share the same concern and I do. I've also spoken with Brian Keels of Carolina Park Development LLC who again shares this same concern. So my question to you council, why are you forcing this road extension to happen when the developers, and the citizens living in the neighborhood both oppose it? I trust you will add this item to the agenda and revisit the necessity very carefully.

John Piehl - In your January Town Council Retreat, you worked on the role you had to play in shaping Mount Pleasant for the next 100

years. In reading the comments from everyone I truly believe you understand what the citizens of Mount Pleasant want and appear passionate about your roll in history to guide us there. On page 9 of the minutes, you concluded as a group that “Livability, Preservation and Small Town Feel” was one of your top three priorities.

Maintaining the small town feel, focusing on preserving the beauty and enjoyment of our water resources and preserving a less hurried way of life is a legacy that you all can leave to us. I think you must admit that this road decision embodies what so many of you referred to in your retreat comments. Does adding roads achieve that goal? Or does preserving the beauty and enjoyment of what we have do it better. As a collective body the Retreat showed that you were united and speaking in one voice and ready to take your place in shaping our future. I think this is a case where you can show the citizens of Mount Pleasant that you understood your critical role in deciding the future of this town.

With the above points in mind, I urge you to heed the lessons learned in your January Retreat and stay true to what you stated as your ultimate goal for Mount Pleasant. I believe the picture below embodies the enjoyment and beauty of Mount Pleasant much more than covering this area with more asphalt just in the name of efficiency.

Steve Schwartz (2nd Comment) - My name is Steve Schwartz, a Carolina Park resident. Please cease development of the Backshore Drive extension which is currently a walkway used by Carolina Park residents. Carolina Park Development LLC was explicit in that no road would be extended. Countless homeowners paid lot premiums on that basis. I have small children and this road is an undeniable risk to their safety since our home is roughly 15 feet away from the road.

There are 306 residents petitioning against the extension of the road. CCRC is against the road, Carolina Park Development LLC is against the road, Oceanside Academy is against the road, our Homeowners Association is against the road, and 306 residents are against it as well. There was no public hearing. According to Kevin Mitchell, no traffic analysis even took place. His email includes conjecture and personal opinion.

Ceasing development would also be a good way to earn the trust of the 306 residents who vehemently oppose the road.

Jennifer Carrafiello - We are asking for the Council to discuss the requirement for Backshore Drive to be extended to Recreation Way in the Carolina Park subdivision. I am firmly against the road being built and are asking for the council to release the developers (Carolina Park Development LLC and The Berry Company) from the requirement to build the Backshore Drive extension in order for the rest of the property to be developed. I am extremely concerned about the safety of our community and by the lack of necessity for road. We hope that this can be discussed and finalized on the Council meeting on 4/14.

This road is residential and narrow... can be potentially breached by the other 200 plus homes still to be built in the posterior of the community and connects directly to a high school with over 600 students ... 300 plus can have the ability to drive ... ; a direct connection to a large volume of teen age new drivers directly into a narrow residential block with over thirty children 10 and under... plus the potential dangers posed with a football field and the high schools sporting events hosted at home inside, or any other school function for the matter!!! This road increases safety and poses further hazards as it is connected to the Soccer fields and those volumes...there is an established bike/walk path on Backshore and in the posterior of Carolina park in Lennars construction area, this leads directly to soccer fields too! These established paths promote healthy activity, connectivity, and a decrease in car use to the area therefore, increasing safety in more ways than one!!!

Safe connectivity an increase in car congestion anywhere ...won't establish that!

Kevin Mitchell had the audacity to email people "Opinions" ...I am not a zoning planner but even in the medical field you have a right to a second and third opinion and even then it is the patient and family (residents and developer) that decide on what is best for them!! ... Carolina Park Development, and The Berry Company ... do not want this road, that should be enough to tell you ... to stop this project! In Mr Mitchell's email, another of his opinion points, he writes of it being built for the convenience of an outlined area...it's that entire area plus a few hundred that absolutely do not want it; he adds most get used to

it in the future? Ridiculous statement that doesn't guarantee a safe outcome ...sounds more like bad politics than concern for safety!! ...as for his points in determining routes people would take ?!..... He can't determine what routes drivers would take or how many turns to beat a light or anything ... especially teens, who certainly don't think like adults or other experienced drivers .. who still don't make very good decisions ... point again you can't promise safety on that opinion ...that's a fact! We finally get a light on Faison and you want to offer a possible re-route option ?? Again .. you can not rationalize any drivers thinking ITS NOT SAFE and/or has the POTENTIAL TO BE UNSAFE ... THAT IS A CONTINUED FACT, not an opinion ... everything Mr Mitchell writes about are possible opinions to the outcome of the road ... none of which guarantees the safety of our residents more than NOT adding the road period! No point made at all for the road presented, outweighs the fact it WILL BRING increase congestion to our streets risking the safety of our residents! The safest fact presented, you need to stop any further building and absolutely not extend backshore to recreation way but encourage its beautiful connectivity with walking and cycling as it has been!!! Shame on you for forcing this issue at all especially in a time of crisis for all of us!!! So being a part of the meeting is essential for us at this time! Thank you!!

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Rambo moved for approval of items VIII.A through G; seconded by Mr. Santos.

Mr. Chapman stated that on item VIII.E which is the Office Professional on White Flat Road, he would like the record to show that the owner of this property agreed that he would make sure that whatever paving is done on either the location that the office building is on or the lot across the street, would be a pervious surface. He stated that the owner agreed to this at the Council meeting when first reading was addressed, as well as during the Committee meeting. He stated that he would like for this to be in the record so there is no question.

All present voted to approve all consent agenda items.

- A. Final Reading:** An Ordinance providing for the annexation of an approximately 0.43 acre tract of land located at 1531 North Lakeshore Drive. ([Ord. No. 20017](#))

This Ordinance *SIGNED, SEALED and DELIVERED* this date.

- B. Final Reading:** An Ordinance providing for an annexation of an approximately 0.46 acre tract of land located at 1528 W. Palmetto Fort Drive. ([Ord. No. 20018](#))

This Ordinance *SIGNED, SEALED and DELIVERED* this date.

- C. Final Reading:** An Ordinance to rezone from R-1, Low Density Residential District, to R-4, Medium Density Residential District an approximately 0.11 acre tract of land located at 1093 Washrich Court. ([Ord. No. 20019](#))

This Ordinance *SIGNED, SEALED and DELIVERED* this date.

- D. Final Reading:** An Ordinance to rezone from PD, Planned Development District, to OP, Office Professional District, an approximately 0.21 acre tract of land located at the corner of White Flat Road and Bowman Road. ([Ord. No. 20020](#))

This Ordinance *SIGNED, SEALED and DELIVERED* this date.

- E. Final Reading:** An Ordinance to rezone from R-1, Low Density Residential District, to OP, Office Professional District, an approximately 0.26 acre tract of land located at 1242 White Flat Road. ([Ord. No. 20021](#))

This Ordinance *SIGNED, SEALED and DELIVERED* this date.

- F. Final Reading:** An Ordinance to amend Section 156.007, Definitions of Chapter 156, Zoning Code, of the Mount Pleasant Code of Ordinances pertaining to the definition of Impervious Surface. Proposed changes include revised language clarifying the definition of Impervious Surface as it relates to administering limitations on overhangs, building eaves, and the like. ([Ord. No. 20022](#))

This Ordinance *SIGNED, SEALED and DELIVERED* this date.

- G. Final Reading:** An Ordinance to provide for the issuance and sale of an \$8,160,000 General Obligation Refunding Bond of 2020 of the Town of Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, to prescribe the purposes for which the proceeds shall be expended, to provide for the repayment thereof, and other matters relating thereto. ([Ord. No. 20023](#))

This Ordinance *SIGNED, SEALED and DELIVERED* this date.

IX. ADJOURN

There being no further business, Council adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Ashe
April 14, 2020