

**Town of South Bethany**  
**Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**September 20, 2019 10:00 a.m.**

**PC Members Present:** Linda Lewis, Scott Fischer, Joe Conway Tim Shaw, Gerry Masiello

**Council Liaison:** Dick Oliver

**Other Attendees:** Carol Stevenson, Coastal Point reporter

**Meeting called to order:** 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Linda Lewes

**1. Minutes:** August 29, 2019 minutes were adopted per motion by Joe Conway, seconded by Scott Fischer.

**2. Announcement:** Chairman Lewis stated that the public attendees would be able to ask questions at the end of each item of business (lighting and bicycle parking), rather than wait to the conclusion of the meeting as stated in the Agenda.

**Old Business:**

1. Discussion of lighting plan, Council presentation and proposed next steps.

Chairman Lewes began by outlining the steps and process for presenting the conclusions and recommendations to Council: 1) Finalize the wording of the presentation through discussion today; 2) provide a copy of the presentation at least 2 weeks prior to their working session; 3) Mr. Fischer and Mr. Conway plan to be present at the session to respond to any questions from the Council, and to bring back to the Commission any guidance provided during the meeting on next steps. Ms. Lewis cautioned that the Council may not reach a conclusion on whether to pursue the recommendations during the meeting, that this guidance may come after they've had time to discuss separately.

Mr. Fischer and Mr. Conway agreed to work quickly to respond to Committee comments from today's meeting such that the final could be sent to Council well in advance of their meeting.

Mr. Fischer walked through the presentation page by page, soliciting comments and recommendations for wording changes. Several were noted, primarily to improve the clarity of the message. No material objections or requested changes were indicated.

Members of the public who were present were given an opportunity to ask questions or offer other input. These questions included:

- a. The nature and type of new poles that are recommended to be installed. Mr. Fischer responded by reiterating that one of the Committee's goals was to avoid any additional poles to the extent possible. But noted that several streets have all utilities underground, therefore there are no existing wooden poles available to support light fixtures including in the 'priority' locations recommendations. Further it was explained that in these areas, the poles to be installed would be Delmarva Power's standard aluminum free-standing poles, similar to other free-standing poles already in the community
- b. Public input on the location of new lighting (in front of this house or that house). The Committee responded that the general location of any new lighting would be based on best meeting the goals of the Plan, and the final specific locations would be influenced by Delmarva Power. The Committee went on to say that the entire process to this point has been conducted without any personal bias, that by entertaining an individual's input on specific location of a light or pole would undermine this objectivity.

## 2. Bicycle Parking plan.

Mr. Masiello indicated that he had a discussion with a representative from Bethany Beach, and learned they are dealing with the same issues. They too are evaluating how to best meet the demand for bicycle parking against the finite amount of space within their control available.

Mr. Shaw presented the discussion he had with Mr. Joe Hinks, Code Enforcement Constable. Mr. Hinks confirmed that the 'focus of the storm' is with the bicycles being parked within the Sandpiper Village community. Mr. Shaw also indicated that his research provided the following:

- a. Use of easements along Town roads – these can only be used for utilities, signage and road work
- b. DelDot indicated that bicycle parking could be installed in the area near the fore pond (Anchorage and Rt. 1), as long as it was west of all power pole supports. It was noted that this needs to be confirmed)
- c. DNRC confirmed that bicycle parking is allowed on the east side of the dunes – but anything installed would need to be removed in preparation for a significant storm by Town personnel
- d. Any racks installed on a street would need to be such that they can be removed at the end of the season to allow for street maintenance and snow plowing
- e. The beach access pathways in Sandpiper Village are the responsibility of their HOA, not available for Town use

Ms. Lewis reviewed the process the Committee has taken to develop their conclusions and recommendations, most notably that: a) The Committee first assessed the constraints imposed by law, code and property owner rights for what specific locations for any parking options were even subject to further consideration; b) She had solicited and received numerous recommendations from the public – each of which were reviewed and commented on by each member of the Committee. She provided a summary of the consolidated document to the full Committee and made it available for the public attending to review.

Mr. Conway presented the summary presentation being prepared for the Council at their upcoming workshop. Mr. Conway summarized the Committee's observations and recommendations:

Planning Commission guiding principles:

1. Judiciously implement any recommendation to provide time to observe changes in individual's behaviors and impacts on bicycle parking & location volume and frequency patterns
2. Installation of new bicycle parking equipment should be such that they can be easily removed at the end of each season
3. Any requirement for enforcement as part of a recommendation must be practical considering limited police resources and in the avoidance of liability
4. Minimize any requirement for the allocation of Town staff resources including maintenance personnel, particularly during the season
5. Any recommendation should not unreasonably restrict street parking adjacent to homeowner's property
6. There should be an equitable application throughout the Town of any recommendations that may restrict current use of public right of ways

7. Costs of any recommendation must be justified against the magnitude of improvement (frequency of problem being addressed and likely reduction of the issue during that interval)
8. The character of the Town should be preserved as much as possible

Summary conclusions:

1. There always will be a parking shortage near the beach – both for cars and bicycles
2. The problem is not unique to South Bethany and will likely worsen
3. Materially address 'In Season, Steady State' issue as best as practical given the above principles
4. Address the 'Holiday/Surge' volume on a temporary best-efforts basis during those intervals

Summary recommendations:

1. Convert 2 parking spaces in Sandpiper Village into lined bicycle parking spaces with a suitable rack parallel with the road
2. Convert 1 parking space in each block along Ocean Drive into a lined bicycle parking space with a suitable rack parallel with the road
3. Add 1 additional bicycle rack along North 6<sup>th</sup> Street
4. Pursue the development of the new beach access ramps in an 'offset' manner (the 6-foot wood surface being skewed to one side of the 10-foot-wide access), and install a sturdier fence on the sand side (split rail) that will permit bicycle parking adjacent to the wood surface and a fence to lock the bicycles to
5. Pursue as much permanent bicycle parking structures as practical along Route 1 (notable near the forebay and other DelDot allowed areas)
6. During 'Holiday/Surge' periods install roped off bicycle corrals on the east side of the dunes at the end of North 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
7. Create signage for each bicycle parking area encouraging users to keep bicycles in the designated areas and off private property
8. Communicate to all residents (HOA and Council communication) these additional bicycle parking options and requests for responsible use – most importantly around the holiday/surge periods

Mr. Conway agreed to collect and consolidate input received from the Committee and distribute an updated presentation within the next two weeks to provide it to the Council before their workshop.

Ms. Lewis addressed the community members present and responded to their questions and concerns.

**New Business:**

1. Nomination of officers. Ms. Lewis asked for nominations for the position of Chairman. Mr. Fischer nominated Mr. Conway and Ms. Lewis seconded the nomination. There was unanimous consent from the Committee. Ms. Lewis asked for nominations for the position of Vice Chairman. Mr. Conway nominated Mr. Fischer and Mr. Shaw seconded the nomination. There was unanimous consent from the Committee. Ms. Lewis nominated Tim Shaw for the position of Secretary. Jerry Masiello seconded, and the nomination was unanimously accepted.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

**Submitted:** Scott Fischer, Secretary