



Planning Commission

Meeting Minutes – September 15, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

3:08

A meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman, Mike Tomy, and was held in-person on September 15, 2025, at 5:03 PM.

ATTENDEES

Members in attendance: Mike Tomy, Chairman, Bill Bardenwerper, Vice-Chairman, Libby Anderson, Clinton Hallman and Kim McFann.

Member absent: Benjie Morillo and Bill Suter.

Staff in attendance: Curt Freese, Community Development Director, Christopher Klement, Community Development Planner III and Nick Navia, Community Development Planner I.

MINUTES

3:51

A. August 11, 2025 Worksession Minutes

Motion: Mr. Hallman made a motion to approve the August 11, 2025 Worksession Minutes. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. August 18, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Bardenwerper said he was not physically present but did log in and listened to the entire meeting. Ms. Anderson abstained from voting since she was not present.

Motion: Mr. Hallman made a motion to approve the August 18, 2025 regular meeting minutes. Ms. McFann seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

All Planning Commission meeting minutes are recorded and can be found on the City's website at <http://www.cityofbeaufort.org/AgendaCenter>.

QUESTIONS RELATING TO MILITARY OPERATIONS

5:45

None.

A. Short-Term Rental Ordinance Changes, Section 3.6.2

The Planning Commission discussed draft changes to Section 3.6.2 Short Term Rentals, Accessory Uses Section 3.11.2, and Carriage Houses/Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) Section 4.5.3 at their September 8, 2025, work-session. The draft changes were proposed after the August regular Planning Commission meeting, in which public discussion on Accessory Dwelling Units and Short Term Rentals was held. In addition, on August 19, 2025, The City Council held a work-session to discuss a standalone Short Term Rental (STR) ordinance to be approved as part of the Municipal Code, not the Development Code. This City Council work-session was part of a series of meetings on Short Term Rentals this year.

The draft changes attached reflect the PC discussion and direction at their September 8, 2025 worksession meeting, and will be forwarded to City Council as a recommendation. Staff will coordinate the proposed changes to ADUs and STRs with the proposed standalone municipal code to regulate Short Term Rentals.

Staff is recommending the attached red line changes to Section 3.6.2. This includes the recommended revisions to prohibit all non-owner Short Term Rentals. As evidenced in the redline draft, the majority of the Development Code requirements related to Short Term Rentals will be removed and such powers will be placed in the Municipal Code with expanded requirements for licensure and operation. The remaining section of the Development Code on Short Term Rentals will include permitted zoning districts, prohibited zoning districts, prohibited neighborhoods, the non-owner prohibition, and the exemption for the renovation of vacant and dilapidated homes.

Mr. Freese reminded the PC that City Council is considering a separate ordinance to regulate Short Term Rentals in the Municipal Code. Should the recommended changes to Section 3.6.2 be approved by the Planning Commission, they will be forwarded with the draft Municipal Code Short Term Rental Requirements and heard together by the City Council.

Mr. Freese said the PC recommendation will go to City Council. Mr. Freese said the PC will make separate motions even though he will present them together since they are somewhat combined issues that have similar connection with each other.

Public Comment:

Frances Ackerman, 2407 Pigeon Point Road, said Short-Term Rentals (STRs) play a valuable role in our Community. We need to make sure we foster those that follow the rules and give a good face to our community and protect the citizens that live in the neighborhoods where the STRs are. She mentioned back when she worked with Libby Anderson when we drafted those first requirements and the first one said, “there could be no transfer of a license, but there was a waiting list”. Also, what was stated in the first requirements was the police were called, it was two strikes. She referred to the STRs incident in Mossy Oaks that had 20+ serious dangerous concerns. When we had the first requirements, the license was for the particular structure, not the lot. She asked the Planning Commission to consider these three things.

Mr. Tomy encouraged the residents go to City Council with their comments as well.

Mr. Bardenwerper asked staff if the City's draft Ordinance was published where the community can look at it. Mr. Freese stated, "No it hasn't yet". The city attorney has it for review. It probably will be heard again at the next City Council worksession.

Gregg Braswell, 2200 Wilson Drive is here on behalf of the Pigeon Point and Higginsville Neighborhood. What needs to be addressed is the grandfathering of the ownership transfer. He referred to *clustering* and Ms. Goode, who lives on Duke Street, who addressed the Planning Commission and City Council on this topic. She sits on her porch and has to look at five STRs and doesn't recognize her neighbors anymore.

Public Comment Closed.

Motion: Ms. McFann made a motion to make a recommendation to City Council that the language in Section 3.6.2.A.ii to read as follows:

Exceptions: Structures on the city's list of vacant and abandoned structures, which structures are not to be demolished, are not required to be owner-occupied lots.

After further discussion, Ms. McFann withdrew her motion.

Motion: Ms. McFann made a motion to make a recommendation to City Council that they adopt 3.6.2 as set forth in our packet that were put together for this meeting including all of the blue line changes with the following additional changes:

1. Section 3.6.2.2.a.ii we recommended should read, *Exceptions: Structures on the City's List of Vacant and Abandoned Structures, which structures are not to be demolished but will be rehabilitated, are not required to be an owner-occupied lots.*
2. Section 3.6.2.2.a in the third line down suggest the PC *omit the word premises and replace it with the word "lots"*.
3. Section 3.6.2.2.b we recommend it reads as follows: Short Term Rentals shall follow the specific ordinance provisions of the City of Beaufort Municipal Code pertaining to Short Term Rentals.

Mr. Bardenwerper seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Accessory Dwelling Unit Changes, Section 3.11.2 and Section 4.5.3

35:04

Staff is recommending changes to Section 3.11.2, and Section 4.5.3 (see red line changes). These changes also reflect the direction of the PC at the September 8, 2025, work session and are consistent with public discussion at the August Planning Commission meeting. The core change is to restrict ADU's to no more than one per lot and also define pool houses and constituting an ADU. To preserve and promote affordability, while protecting the rights of the citizens nearby, the Planning Commission is recommending allowing 2 ADU's in all zones, with a Special Exception. A Special Exception would require a public hearing before the ZOBA with the burden of proof on the Applicant, and all residents within 300' would be notified of the meeting, with signs and legal ad posted.

Public Comment:

Frances Ackerman, 2407 Pigeon Point Road, said the group she represents will be extremely gratified to have been heard on the one ADU per lot. It's very important for the reasons of safety, quality of life, property values and equity and to have all the neighborhoods represented. She talked about owner-occupied for the ADUs so the investment properties cannot build three units at one time and sell them as a house and ADUs. She referred to the ADU situation on Lafayette Street.

Motion: Ms. McFann made a motion to make a recommendation to City Council that they adopt changes to 3.11.2 and 4.5.3 as reflected in the blues lined with the following additional changes:

1. Section 3.11.2 we recommend *that a footnote #5 be added to read as follows:*
 - a. *Square footage (SF) and footprint are to be calculated as under roof.*
2. Section 4.5.3 subsection B, subsection 2, *add additional language after the words Special Exception to read following procedures set forth in Section 9.1.3 of this code.*

Mr. Hallman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Anderson asked about the calendar for 2026 next year. She said the Regular Meetings for January and February are on federal holidays. Mr. Hallman said in the past we moved the meetings that fall on holidays prior to advertising the schedule. Mr. Tomy asked staff to come up with the dates and we will discuss this at our next regular meeting.

Mr. Tomy asked for confirmation of the future worksession dates. Mr. Freese said Monday, October 6, and November 3, which is also the first Monday. PC agreed to the two remaining dates as they are.

ADJOURNMENT

1:14:29

Motion: Mr. Hallman made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Ms. McFann. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:14 pm.