CITY OF PALATKA
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
September 3, 2013

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Carl Stewart at 4:00 pm. **Other members present:** Earl Wallace, Vice-Chairman Daniel Sheffield, Lavinia Moody, George DeLoach, Joe Petrucci and Judith Gooding. **Members absent:** Anthony Harwell and Joe Pickens. **Also present**: Planning Director Thad Crowe, Recording Secretary Pam Sprouse and City Attorney Don Holmes.

Motion was made by Mr. DeLoach and seconded by Ms. Gooding to approve the minutes for August 6, 2013 meeting. All present voted affirmative, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Case 13-12: administrative request to amend the Municipal Code to revise various landscaping and tree protection standards as set forth in Zoning Code Chapter 94, Article VI and VII. (Tabled from the August Meeting)

Mr. Crowe explained that the proposed amendments were extensively reviewed over the past year. It started off with the realization that our code was deficient in a number of ways. A workshop with the City Commission was held to discuss some of the flaws. He added that the proposed ordinance amendment was compared to many other like kind communities and worked extensively with Jonathan Griffith, who has a degree in Landscape architecture. The current code exempts single family and two-family from tree preservation and there are a lot of wasted buffering requirements that mostly applies to new development of multi-family and commercial. Currently the code does not have any clear pruning standards for parking lots and buffer trees and has minimal parking lot landscape standards. The City is in need of a tree/landscape code that strategically accomplishes the goals of urban canopy restoration and buffering/screening of uncomplimentary uses (lower intensive next to higher intensive). One that maximizes limited resources and giving thought to zero scaping (for water conservation). He reviewed the proposed sliding scale for tree mitigation. He also reviewed the proposed buffering table from intensive commercial to lower impact uses or zonings. He added that if the site doesn't allow for landscaping, off-site mitigation would be allowed on nearby public rights-of-way. The tree committee will hear appeals or alternative methods of meaning ordinance intent. He said that this is a more affective, strategic and incremental approach that will help new and existing businesses come to life.

Mr. Petrucci asked why staff would remove the exemption for tree removal within ten feet of an existing or proposed building line, if there could be potential damage or keep development from happening.

Mr. Crowe advised that it is not that they can not be removed, they just have to account for the loss. When tree protection is considered, the existing trees on the site are looked at and all trees being removed. Based on what is being removed, a formula is applied and that will determine what has to be reserved or replaced. The goal is

to get people to take a look at what is on that site in terms of the value of the trees and quantify that as they will have to make up for the loss of those trees. He wanted to stress that this code revision provides for incremental progress to meet the landscape code for existing development and gave the example of Conditional Uses, as businesses come and go, we gain some improvement each time.

Mr. Wallace asked that some type of minimum standards be considered with regards to those commercial properties that annex into the City, either at the time of development or at the time of annexation. He added that there have been some previous annexations that have removed most or all of the trees while in the county and shortly thereafter annex into the city, seemingly to avoid tree protection.

Mr. Holmes advised that parameters would need to be put in place.

Mr. Crowe said that Staff would look into maintenance and standards for annexation and bring those items back under separate consideration.

Motion made by Mr. Sheffield and seconded by Ms. Moody to approve the text amendment as submitted and directed staff to forward additional direction to include an annexation and erosion provisions for consideration. All present voted affirmative. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS - None

OTHER BUSINESS

Request for recommendation to the City Commission to amend the City of Palatka Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to include Florida Recreation Development and Acquisition program (FRDAP) items for the Riverfront Park. These items include the following:

- **Phase I:** Riverfront park nature based playground construction, Boating facilities and Exercise walk.
- **Phase II:** Riverfront Park Fountain/Splashpad

Mr. Crowe explained that the CIP is a component of the Capital Improvement Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan and is required under the Florida Statutes as part of the state-mandated comprehensive planning process. The CIP is a tool that helps the City to proactively plan for future capital needs, intended to identify public facility improvements needed to accommodate future City growth and redevelopment. Staff is proposing this CIP update to meet requirements of the Florida Recreational Development and Acquisition Program (FRDAP), which is funding two riverfront park projects.

Mr. Griffith said that the first phase project includes a nature-based playground, boating facilities (such as docks, launches, restrooms, etc.), and exercise walk. The second phase project is a fountain and splashpad. FRDAP requires that such improvements be included in the CIP with a reference to FRDAP funding. He added that in order to apply for these grant funds, the items must be added to the CIP and must be considered by a recreation committee which, in the case of Palatka, means the Palatka Planning Board. He said that it needs to be documented that the items are housed in the CIP within the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Gooding asked if additional benches could be put down by the riverfront. The CRA did budget some funds for site improvements, which can include benches.

Mr. Griffith said that the City is seeking additional funding to offset the City's match costs. FRDAP is looking for recreational type facilities.

Motion made by Mr. DeLoach and seconded by Ms. Gooding to recommend approval of the CIP amendment to the City Commission.

Mr. Crowe added that the Historic Preservation board will be meeting on Thursday and one of the cases is a request for demolition of the apartments on N. 3rd Street. Additionally, he advised that the appeal of the Planning Board's decision on July 2nd for the Church request at 211 St. Johns Ave. will be heard by the City Commission on September 12th, 2013.

With no other business, meeting adjourned at 6:40.