

Charleston County Council

March 27, 2018

Observer: Kristen French

Meeting Highlights

Planning/Public Works Committee

Full [agenda](#) approved without discussion.

Finance Committee

- [Agenda](#) Items 1-5 approved without discussion.
- Item #6, State Accommodations Tax was briefly discussed and approved. This income source was a one time source from the State of South Carolina.
- Item #7, Senior Ride was briefly discussed and approved. Council members asked to clarify whether the \$30,000 appropriation per year was for a single year or for 2019-2030. Staff indicated that the request was for one year but information for funding for 11 years was included. This money is to fund a shortfall by the Senior Ride program (offers transportation for elderly, disabled, blind, etc), which is currently being run by a private company. The question was raised as to whether this program should fall under the CARTA budget.
- Item #8, Riverland Terrace Tree Survey, introduced by Council member Joe Qualey.
 - The proposal was for a study of portions of the Riverland Terrace neighborhood to assess the cost and feasibility of undergrounding power lines in order to protect oak trees from trimming by SCE&G. This study is estimated to cost \$26,000.
 - Mr. Qualey asked that a representative from SCE&G and that community members be allowed to speak. Chair Vic Rawl allowed the SCE&G representative to speak and the President of the neighborhood association, although he objected to the latter because this was not a public hearing.
 - Discussion of funding mechanisms included the differences between incorporated (city) and unincorporated (county) residences/land. SCE&G has franchise agreements with municipalities which allow for splitting the cost between the utility, the city, and the residents impacted. Unincorporated residences impacted would, under the current situation, require the County to provide funding and/or pass it along to the residents. If residents choose to to be annexed into a city, they would be covered by the existing franchise agreement. The area(s) proposed for study included incorporated and unincorporated areas. Mr. Summey shared how this impacted undergrounding around Park Circle and Montague Ave.

- Mr. Sass expressed concern about funding sources. The SCE&G representative pointed out that local governments sometimes seek out grant funding.
- Mr. Qualey moved for approval of the study, limiting the cost to the estimate of \$26,000. A 2nd to the motion was slow in coming. Mr. Summey asked to amend by including a study of unincorporated areas around Park Circle. Mr. Qualey indicated acceptance. Mr. Darby asked to further amend to include a study of the Liberty Park neighborhood area which is also bordered by Montague Ave and includes some unincorporated areas. Mr. Qualey withdrew his acceptance of Mr. Summey's amendment.
- Vote was 1 aye and 8 nays.

Public Hearing: Charleston County Community Development Department Urban Entitlement Program “Urban Entitlement PY 2018 Annual Action Plan” (one of a series of public hearings)

No comments

Charleston County Council

- [Agenda](#) Item #3 Recognitions and Resolutions were approved, and recognitions were made for all items except #3C, which was postponed to a later date.
- Public Comments: One resident asked for help in resolving an issue involving his landlocked property, which he cannot currently access. He had tried to purchase a right of way to be able to drive to his property without success, and there are trees on another person's property that prevent him from accessing the property. Mr. Pryor stated that “it is easier to ask for forgiveness than permission” and further stated “cut down the trees--that's what I would do.”
- Items 1,2, 5-17 were approved without discussion.
- Item #4 was a request by Mr. Schweers to reconsider the vote at a previous meeting on approving the negotiation of a sale of [995 Morrison Drive](#) property by some County Council members with a prospective buyer. Any negotiated agreement would have to be approved by the full council.
 - Mr. Schweers questioned the transparency of the process approved by the previous vote. He also thought that a RFP would be more transparent and perhaps result in a better price.
 - Mr. Pryor stated that opening the sale to the public might result in “outsiders” coming in to bid who aren't familiar with our local culture, and that such a purchase might result in an unwelcome development.
 - Mr. Darby objected that this sale negotiation had arisen because a friend of a council member wanted to purchase the property. He stated that this should not dictate the process of a sale.
 - Vote to reconsider passed: 5-4
 - Vote to approve the original question (allow council members to negotiate with the prospective buyer) passed: 6-3.