

Planning, Streets and Traffic Committee
Thursday, August 21, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.
City Service Center – 915 Quarrier Street – Conference Room

Members Present

Mary Beth Hoover, Chair
Jennifer Pharr, Vice Chairperson
Kathy Rubio
Bobby Haas
Becky Ceperley
John Gianola
Pam Burka

Staff Present

Dan Vriendt

1. Call to Order

2. Unfinished Business

3. New Business

Bill No. 8008 - A Bill to amend Chapter 91, Article II of the Code of the City of Charleston, as amended, by updating the floodplain regulations by amending section 91-11 relating to the intent provision, adding section 91-52(h) relating to keeping copies of construction contracts or addendums, and amending section 91-101 to include a severability clause.

Mary Beth stated that the majority of this bill was passed by PS&T approximately two months ago. It went back to FEMA and FEMA reviewed the bill and added language to the original bill.

Dan explained that, in order to be in the National Flood Insurance Program, certain floodplain rules and standards must be adopted. When the code is adopted, FEMA does a crosswalk to make sure all criteria is met.

One of the requests from FEMA was an intent provision on lines 19-23. It is not necessarily part of the code, but it states that the intent of this ordinance is to follow the National Flood Insurance Program requirements.

Another issue pertains to a state code requirement that we keep contracts on file when someone applies for a building permit. The Building Commission already has this requirement in place. This was not written into the original version of Bill No. 8008. However, FEMA has requested that this requirement be incorporated as part of the flood plain ordinance. A building permit is required in order to get the flood plain permit.

Also, there is a severability section that FEMA has requested be added to the flood plain ordinance. The severability section is necessary in the event that any part of the code is deemed unlawful that it does not make the rest of the code void. Adding the severability clause will now cause the liability section to be identified as Section 102. The City Code does contain a severability section as well. John Gianola stated that, in the event the city repealed any duplicate sections, the sections FEMA requested remain in full force and effect.

Dan is confident that the city is covered, and these requests can be accommodated easily. FEMA requested this be completed as soon as possible. The new FEMA maps went into effect in August, so FEMA is giving the city a grace period to pass the additional language.

The staff recommends approval of these very minor changes to Bill No. 8008.

Mary Beth asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing and seeing none, Mary Beth asked to entertain a motion.

MOTION AND VOTE: The motion was made by Beckey Ceperley to adopt the additional language to Bill No. 8008. The motion was seconded by John Gianola and the committee voted unanimously 7-0 to approve the changes requested by FEMA to Bill No. 8008.

4. Discussion

John Gianola mentioned that two resolutions were referred to PS&T at the last City Council Meeting. Mary Beth said those resolutions would be addressed at the regular meeting on Monday, August 28, 2023. This PS&T meeting was not a regularly scheduled meeting and had to take place due to the urgency of the deadline involved in meeting FEMA's requirements to the city's flood plain ordinance.

Becky Ceperley said that she is aware that the residents involved with the city's bike plan are interested in having a discussion. She had hoped this discussion could take place at the next meeting, but due to the length of the agenda for the August 28, 2023 PS&T meeting, she said it could be moved to the September 25, 2023 PS&T meeting. It is not a public hearing matter. They are requesting a protected bike lane from the east side to the west side, from Virginia Street down Quarrier Street. This group is asking for an actual barrier between the road and the bike lane. Part of the problem for the bikers is having to share the same lane with pedestrians. The group provided their written request to city council members.

Dan has been working with Regional Intergovernmental Council (RIC), a metropolitan planning organization. They have designs for new transportation plans and they make the determination in how federal funding is distributed among different counties and cities. RIC is very interested in this committee so they may be attending some PS&T meetings.

Becky was approached by three residents who are concerned about a speeding issue at the curve where Lola's is located on Bridge Road. This is due to the new restaurant Fernbank. They asked for speed bumps and Becky told them speed bumps were not allowed. Next, she was asked if a flashing light could be placed in that area. She said she would direct this matter with Matt Hartline.

Jennifer and Becky both had questions concerning the city sewer lines. Becky said her issue involved the smell at Fife Street. About a week ago a couple tried dining outside and said the smell was so bad they had to go inside to finish dinner. Jennifer said Black Sheep has the same issue. It occurs for about 15 minutes every morning. Dan said that issue should be addressed with the Sanitary Board or Chris Knox.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the June 15, 2023, meeting

MOTION AND VOTE: A motion was made by Becky Ceperley to approve the minutes from the June 15, 2023 PS&T meeting. The motion was seconded by John Gianola and the committee voted unanimously 7-0 to approve the minutes.

6. Adjournment

MOTION AND VOTE: A motion was made by Becky Ceperley to adjourn the August 21, 2023 PS&T meeting. The motion was seconded by John Gianola and the committee voted unanimously 7-0 to adjourn the meeting.