

DARLINGTON CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, January 21, 2020 – 9 A.M.  
Darlington City Hall, 400 Pearl St.

Attending were Planning Commission members Mr. Parnell, Ms. Page, and Mrs. Kirchen; and staff Ms. Rock, planning and economic development director.

**Call to Order:** Mrs. Kirchen called the meeting to order at 9:14 a.m.

**Approval of the Minutes for the meeting of November 19, 2019:** Ms. Page made a motion to accept the minutes of the Nov. 19, 2019, meeting as presented. Mr. Parnell made the second. The motion carried unanimously.

**Comprehensive Plan Update:** Ms. Rock said the City would move forward with procuring a contractor to write the next Comprehensive Plan (2035) in the next six months. She will have to write an RFP and get three bids for council to approve. Mrs. Kirchen said we need to talk to the racetrack and learn their needs because we can't do a plan without them. Mr. Parnell said the concern he has always heard was the need for businesses downtown but that property owners were the issue. Ms. Rock said Council enacted the Commercial Appearance Code to attempt to address the downtown issue, but it has not been adequately enforced to full effectiveness. Ms. Page suggested having the previous plan writer do this new one. Mrs. Kirchen said that, while the commission waits, we can get a list of CEOs to help. She also said we need a visioning session, so we can find out where do we want Darlington to be in 20 years. She suggested using the joint board meeting on March 19 for that purpose. Ms. Page said that was an excellent idea so we could break down the larger goals into something we can do. The Board agreed to decide how each board can affect the larger goals. Mrs. Kirchen asked Ms. Rock to get three or four top priorities from the group, such as cleaning up Darlington. Mrs. Kirchen said she felt the ultimate goal would be not to play second fiddle to Hartsville and Florence but to embrace our identity as a bedroom community. Being a bedroom community is ok because we have a service economy, and that can make this a thriving community. Mrs. Kirchen said what the commission collects can be paired with what Mayor Boyd has already gathered.

**Director's Report:** Ms. Rock presented a draft outline of an annexation plan for the City of Darlington based on the needs expressed at the last meeting. Mr. Parnell suggested adding a section to refer to annexation adjacent to the proposed recreation trail system. Ms. Rock said she would continue to develop the figures and plan and give the commission periodic updates. The commission would eventually fine tune the plan and recommend it for approval by City Council for adoption.

The next meeting will be the joint board meeting at 6 p.m. Thursday, March 19, and the next regular meeting will be 9 a.m. Tuesday, May 19, 2020.

**Adjourn:** The Commission adjourned at 9:58 a.m.