

MEETING OF THE DARLINGTON CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, March 16, 2021 – 9 A.M.
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Attending were Planning Commission members Mr. Sprott, Ms. Page, Mr. Lewis, and Mr. Wiggins; and staff Ms. Rock, planning and economic development director, City Manager Howard Garland, Mr. Gainey, streets and storm water director, and Ms. Shafer, intern; and guest, Mr. Sabin, representing the Pee Dee Council of Governments.

Call to Order: Ms. Rock called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Election of Officers: The Commission tabled the item until May.

Approval of the Minutes for the meeting of Feb. 9, 2021: Mr. Wiggins made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Sprott made the second. The motion carried unanimously.

Comprehensive Plan Update: Mr. Sabin gave an update of the 2021-2035 City of Darlington Comprehensive Plan. There are 10 elements required by state law, and he is working on completing one per month. He will provide an update on the plan at each Commission meeting through completion. Chapter 3, the Natural Resources Element, includes the maps of the floodplain, wetlands, soils, and habitat quality. Swift Creek runs through town and connects with Bellyache Creek before merging into Black Creek. Most of the areas that are undeveloped would be in the wetlands or floodplain and should remain undeveloped. There are a few isolated wetlands in the southwest part of town as well. The soil maps show that most development has occurred on stable, relatively flat soil, though the soil ranges from excessively drained to poorly drained. The City has little room for high quality wildlife habitat because most of the city is already developed except along the creek. This fits with the preserved habitat in the County that is mostly located near the Great Pee Dee River because of the floodplain and wetlands making development unreasonable. Mr. Sabin said he wants to recommend preserving and protecting the Swift Creek area and create better flow between downtown commercial district and Williamson Park. It will also be noted about the City's Pollinator Garden and Tree City USA status. Ms. Rock asked about including the natural springs that are causing sinkholes around town. Mr. Garland listed several, St. John's Elementary parking lot, 308 Washington Street, Sycamore and Pearl Street, Orange at Wells Street, and West Hampton at Sycamore. Mr. Garland said most of the commercial area is on a hill, but some neighborhoods are in low spots, in a bowl, which has caused lots of issues. Ms. Rock noted the auditorium on North Main and a house on North Ervin as having natural springs below as well. All the areas seem to be within a few blocks of the creek. Mr. Sabin said he will overlay the soil and floodplain maps with these locations to see what commonalities can be found.

The next elements to be addressed will be Cultural Resources and Community Facilities at the May meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:31 a.m.