

**LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 20, 2025 - 5:30 P.M.
DESTIN CITY HALL ANNEX CHAMBERS**

1. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE:

Chairman Wood called the Local Planning Agency Meeting to order on Thursday, March 20, 2025, at 5:30 p.m., in the Destin City Annex Chambers; with the Pledge of Allegiance immediately following.

2. ROLL CALL:

Members Present

James T. Wood, Jr.
Ken Wampler
Tammy Weidenhamer
Jay Purut
Marcie Bell
Bree Uptigrove

Members Absent

Todd Buhr

Staff Members Present

Kimberly Montgomery Deputy City Clerk
Steve o'Connor CD Deputy Director
Daniel Butler Principal Planner
Kim Kopp City Attorney (via phone)

3. AGENDA APPROVAL:

Motion by Agency member Wampler, seconded by Agency member Bell to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

➤ **Discussion: Parking Requirements for Outdoor Restaurant Seating**

Mr. o'Connor explained how the current city code does not require parking for outdoor seating areas. Parking requirements are calculated based on the indoor gross floor area (heated and cooled space). He spoke of how historically, the LPA has recommended a 1:1 parking ratio for indoor and outdoor space. However, concerns arose about the feasibility and the impacts on areas such as in the Harbor District.

- Staff presented a proposal to institute parking requirements for outdoor seating.
- Options discussed included a 1:1 ratio, a uniform 50% ratio, and differential ratios based on zoning districts.
- City Council feedback indicated a desire for differentiated ratios: 25% for the Harbor District and 50% elsewhere.
 - Multiple members expressed concern about Harbor District congestion and insufficient parking.

- Others maintained that imposing high parking requirements could hurt businesses and discourage redevelopment.
- Reference made to existing shared parking systems and public lots (e.g., Marler lot).
- It was acknowledged that requiring too much parking may incentivize demands for city-funded parking garages.

Chairman Wood made the motion to change the one-for-one to a 50% parking ratio across the board with no flexibility. Agency member Weidenhamer provided the second for discussion. In discussion Agency member Weidenhamer asked in comparison, how many parking spaces are there in Crystal Beach and the harbor district. According to Mr. o'Connor approximately 100 in Crystal Beach and about 200 in the harbor district. **Agency member Wampler made a substitute motion to recommend City Council require that outdoor seating at 25% in all areas of the city, with Agency member Uptigrove providing the second. The motion passed 4-2 with Agency members Bell and Purut dissenting.**

➤ **Residential Setback Requirements**

Currently the regulations are:

- 20-foot front yard setback in all residential districts.

Staff Proposal:

- Allow reduction to 10 feet for non-vehicular uses (e.g., porches, living areas).
- Maintain 20-foot setback where a driveway or garage is present.

Discussion Highlights:

- Support expressed for improving walkability, aesthetics, and safety.
- A 10-foot setback reduces the dominance of garage-forward "pig homes."
- Emphasis on slowing vehicular traffic and improving neighborhood character.
- Side-entry garages may still comply with 10-foot rule provided cars are fully off-street.

Outcome: LPA reaffirmed its prior recommendation to allow 10-foot setbacks for homes with no garage or driveway, and 20-foot setbacks for homes with vehicular access.

➤ **Permanent Makeup Regulation:**

- Clarified that permanent makeup is distinct from tattoo parlors.
 - Permitted within salons if applied above the neck.
 - Board discussed adding medical exceptions and provided examples of certain circumstances for breast cancer survivors or for medical restorative purposes.

➤ **Food Truck/Special Events**

- Food trucks are not permitted in residential districts unless part of a private, catered event (e.g., HOA-sponsored) and they cannot sell or vend to individual walk-up patrons since no commercial events are allowed in residential neighborhoods.
 - Parking plays a large role in this as well.
 - Discussion of a recent enforcement case in Indian Bayou that was shut down once the city was made aware of the event.

➤ **Removal of 10-Foot Separation Requirement Between Primary Structures on the Same Lot**

Previous Regulation: The LDC mandated a minimum 10-foot separation between primary structures on the same lot. This was initially implemented to address fire safety concerns when building codes were less stringent.

Update: Recognizing advancements in fire safety and building codes, the City Council, upon recommendation from the Local Planning Agency (LPA), has removed this requirement.

Implication: Developers can now design and place multiple primary structures on the same lot without adhering to the previous 10-foot separation, provided all other applicable codes and regulations are met.

➤ **Consolidation Proposal for CMU and CMU-V Zoning Districts**

- The LPA proposed merging the Commercial Mixed Use (CMU) and Calhoun Mixed Use – Village (CMU-V) zoning districts to streamline zoning classifications.

A key distinction between the two districts is the allowance of short-term rentals (STRs). STRs are permitted in CMU but not in CMU-V. Merging the districts could inadvertently permit STRs in areas where they were previously restricted. To preserve the unique characteristics and regulations of each district, the proposal to merge CMU and CMU-V has been retracted. Both zoning districts will remain separate, maintaining their distinct regulations regarding STRs.

➤ **Clarification on Building Height Regulations in CMU District**

- **Current Regulation:** The LDC's Table 7-2 indicates that non-residential structures in the CMU district can be built up to 50 feet or four stories, referencing footnote 'K'.
 - Footnote 'K' specifies that non-residential structures are limited to a maximum height of 35 feet, creating a discrepancy within the code.

❖ **Action Taken:** This inconsistency has been acknowledged, and Council has agreed that the contradiction in the LDC will be resolved to ensure clarity and consistency in building height regulations.

➤ **Echo Housing vs. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)**

Provision in the Land Development Code that Echo Housing (Elderly Cottage Housing Opportunity) is currently allowed by right, citywide with as long as it meets the zoning setbacks and height limitations. Additionally, ADUs are not permitted in the Low-Density Residential Village (LDRV) zoning district. The LPA recommended getting rid of this but Council felt that if getting rid of ECHO housing, something had to be provided to allow for relief and discussions were more to allowing ADU's in the LDRV district.

Motion by Agency member Bell to support ADU's in the LDRV Zoning district with Agency member Purut providing the second for discussion.

Mr. o'Connor provided the members with the following:

- Council expressed interest in removing Echo Housing but allowing alternative means for elder or disabled family care (such as regulated ADUs).
- LPA members previously opposed ADUs in LDRV due to concerns over short-term rentals (STRs), neighborhood character, and enforcement.
- General support for a more defined, restricted Echo Housing model was discussed.

Chairman Wood made a substitute motion to allow ECHO housing in the city. Agency member Wampler provided the second for discussion. In discussion, the members spoke of setting rules so that these would not become STR or LTR's and how it would be regulated. Mr. o'Connor explained how the lot has to support the density in order to be rented out.

The Agency members briefly discussed the following items they fell should be enacted:

- Define Echo Housing more strictly.
- Limit square footage (e.g., 600 sq. ft.).
- Include clear requirements: sleeping, sanitation, and cooking.
- Deed restricted to prevent short-term or long-term rentals.
- Limit occupancy (suggested maximum: 2 persons).
- Must be site-built structures, no RVs or trailers.

The final outcome of discussions, Chairman Wood and Ken Wampler agreed with amending the substitute motion by adding the following stipulations:

- Maximum 600 sq. ft.
- Must include sleeping, sanitation, and cooking
- Max occupancy of 2 persons
- Must be site-built structure
- Deed restricted to prevent all forms of rental

The motion passed 5-1 with Agency Wampler dissenting.

➤ **Off-Site Parking Regulations**

- Updated provision to allow off-site parking up to 0.5 miles away via walkable, ADA-compliant path.
 - Detailed discussions are planned for an upcoming meeting.

Mr. o'Connor explained that the Community Development Director and City Engineer positions have been filled.

- David Prichard has been confirmed as Community Development Director
- Robert Tomask has been confirmed as City Engineer
- Code Compliance is now under Planning Department leadership.

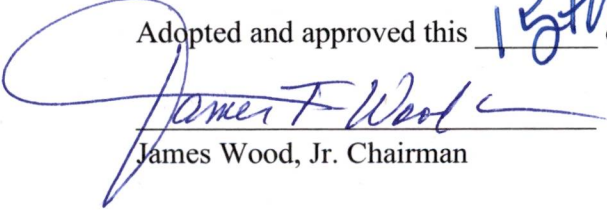
6. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

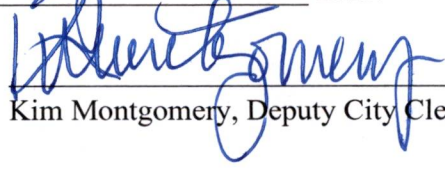
Chairman Wood opened the public for comment, but with no one present, he closed the public portion of the meeting.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

Having no further discussion at this time, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Adopted and approved this 15th day of May 2025.


James Wood, Jr. Chairman


Kim Montgomery, Deputy City Clerk