

Planning & Zoning Commission Questions

Lynn Conto

1. Tell us about yourself and why you are interested in serving on the Planning & Zoning Commission? What useful experience, knowledge, or perspective do you bring?

I am a Hotel Operations/GM (Marriott) and HR (ClubCorp) professional, as such, I have lived all over the Country, providing me with varying examples of good and bad enacted planning/zoning decisions. I've been in CB long enough to see what has worked (from my perspective) and I would like to be a part of future decisions and fair execution of our Zoning Regulations and Land Use Plan going forward. I am very organized, analytical and committed.

2. Are there any changes you might like to see or new regulatory tools you might favor?

I can't speak to regulatory changes, but I have heard it said more than once, about how difficult it is for new businesses to succeed in getting Town approval to build. I would like to ensure that businesses find a welcoming environment here.

I think there are circumstances where we adhere too strictly to the ordinances versus practicing a more common-sense approach in order to attract/assist businesses.

Along the same lines as the suggestion that potential parking solutions may be found in other similarly-sized beach towns, I think we can also seek thoughts around contentious planning and zoning ordinances. We could seek out "best practices" from our sister coastal towns and in return share with them as needed/requested. I think these relationships could prove very beneficial to CB.

3. How do you view the role of Town staff in terms of their interaction with the Planning & Zoning Commission?

The Town Staff is truly the knowledge bank for P&Z. Their roles require that they know the code, have a historical perspective, help with conditional zoning suggestions, etc.

They are essential in administering Code Enforcement, presenting a petitioner's project in an objective manner to either P&Z or Council, reviewing permit applications and approving requests that meet the established standards. Town Staff is also responsible for making recommendations to P&Z or Council.

4. What do you view as being the duties of the Planning & Zoning Commission?

P&Z duties, review::

- 1) *Permit applications that require attention and determine viability to pass on to Council*
- 2) *Initiate changes or requests for changes to the text of the Land Use Plan*
- 3) *Assist with suggestions for the creation of planning for the growth of CB and present to Council.*

5. In the process of trying to reach a conclusion on a proposed regulation, rate the following in order of importance with one (1) being the most important.
 - a. Compromising to reach consensus (4)
 - b. Listening to and understanding others points of view (1)
 - c. Articulating and ensuring others understand your point of view (2)
 - d. Being respectful of others (3)

I learn far more from listening, but I feel consensus can be elusive.

6. How long have you lived in the Town of Carolina Beach?

14 years

7. In creating Land Use Code, do you favor regulations that are strict (little to no room for interpretation) or flexible (room for interpretation)?

I think I fall in the 80/20 camp. 80% of the time, I think strict compliance to the regulations are required (low density housing vs. business districts, etc.) to ensure "promises made" to residents and business owners are kept. (A recent example would be the Pleasure Cay pickle ball court.)

The other 20% of the time, I believe we need more flexibility to consider future innovation and changes that better meet the needs/wants of the overall community. (Similar to the recent agreeance with Proximity's changing from the defined Land Use requirements of a horizontal perspective to a vertical one.)

8. What do you see as the role/purpose of a Land Use Plan/comprehensive plan?

Fundamentally, I think a land use plan should allow for efficient use of our resources to ensure that the needs of the residents are met today. While at the same time, protecting our infrastructure and other resources for tomorrow.

9. What do you see as important land-use issues confronting us? – things you'd look forward to working on?

As our town's undeveloped land becomes less and less available, I think mixed-use projects are going to become more important as they will allow us to provide numerous benefits for residents and visitors in a single project.

10. Will you have time for the work? -- meetings 2nd Thursday 6:30p.m., plus subcommittees, research and packets of information to review.

I am fortunate enough to be retired. I enjoy filling my time with activities that I find worthwhile as well as Pro Bono work in HR. I sincerely can't imagine anything more worthwhile than time spent on issues involving our town's current and future growth. I love CB!