



**REGULAR MEETING OF
THE PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD
VIRTUAL MEETING
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82908989341>
MINUTES**

**Tuesday, April 6, 2021
7:00 p.m.
City of Margate
Municipal Building**

PRESENT:

Richard Zucchini, Chair
Robert Reiner, Vice Chair
Juli Van Der Meulen, Secretary
Gail DeAngelis, Board Member
Howard Burke, Board Member (virtually)

ALSO PRESENT:

Janette M. Smith, City Attorney (virtually)
Elizabeth Taschereau, Director of Development Services
Alexia Howald, Associate Planner
Carleen Steadman, Board Clerk

The regular meeting of the Margate Planning and Zoning Board (P&Z) having been properly noticed, was called to order at 7:03 p.m. on Tuesday, April 6, 2021, in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall, 5790 Margate Boulevard, Margate, FL 33063. Board Clerk Carleen Steadman read a statement pertaining to the City's virtual public meeting pursuant to the Sunshine Law and the Governor's Executive Orders followed by roll call of the board members.

1) NEW BUSINESS

A) ID2021-132

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, APPENDIX A ZONING, AMENDING ARTICLE XVIII RVRP RECREATIONAL VEHICLE RESORT PARK DISTRICT, SECTION 18.5 DESIGN STANDARDS; PROVIDING FOR DECORATIVE FEATURES ON INDIVIDUAL RV SITES; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Development Services Department

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City Commission

Mayor Arlene R. Schwartz
Vice Mayor Antonio V. Arserio
Tommy Ruzzano
Anthony N. Caggiano
Joanne Simone

City Manager

Cale Curtis

City Attorney

Janette M. Smith, Esq.

City Clerk

Joseph J. Kavanagh

Mr. Zucchini explained the item of new business was to be tabled, as staff needed additional information. He asked if staff wanted to briefly review the Ordinance.

City Attorney Janette M. Smith clarified that the item was requested to be pulled from the agenda so that staff could check with other agencies to be sure there were no conflicts. She asked that the item not be tabled for a time certain but pulled from the agenda. She stated that the item would be brought back at an appropriate time.

Mr. Zucchini asked if it was appropriate that Director of Development Services Elizabeth Taschereau provide some explanation so that the Board was familiar with the discussion. He stated that he would like the Board to have access to the property to look around.

Ms. Smith stated that she had seen the request via email and was sure that if that was the wish of the Board it was something that could be worked out. She noted that she would prefer not talking in depth about the item until it was well vetted. She pointed out that access could not be forced upon the owner, but she was hopeful they would extend an invitation.

Mr. Zucchini asked for an overview of the item without an in-depth conversation.

Ms. Smith reiterated that her preference was to wait until it came back, in part because there may be changes and then expectations would be misaligned.

Mr. Zucchini stated that he wanted to read the Ordinance for the record.

Ms. Smith asked for what purpose, because the item was pulled from the agenda.

Ms. Taschereau commented that reading the Ordinance the way that it was currently addressed could be misleading toward the particular property and others that had the same idea.

Mr. Zucchini asked if other agencies meant South Florida Water Management. Ms. Taschereau responded that agency was being considered specifically. She noted that the Ordinance was a potential way of addressing the situation, but not the only option.

Ms. Smith left the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Mr. Zucchini stated they had had a good year and he was proud of the Board for the significant work they had done. He opened the floor for Board members to discuss items they would like to see brought up in the future.

Mr. Burke stated that traffic was an issue that always bothered him, for example at Rock Island and Royal Palm. He noted that there are also issues with the maintenance of the men's room at Rock Island Park.

Mr. Zucchini responded to the comment regarding traffic, stating he was glad Mr. Burke had brought it up. He stated there had been a Special Meeting in June 2019 with a panel discussion including County representation to discuss traffic. He noted it was an informative meeting. Mr. Zucchini explained they learned that if they are interested in changes to traffic patterns at particular intersections, it falls to the responsibility of the City to commission a traffic engineering study and then make an appeal to the County. Continuing, Mr. Zucchini stated that they had also learned heavy traffic was something they would have to live with, but there are some new traffic control devices coming on board that may give some relief. Mr. Zucchini added that he had no knowledge or comment on the restrooms referenced.

Mr. Burke asked about the exercise park next door to the Fire Station. He expressed concern that there were two (2) or three (3) people sitting there smoking cigarettes. He asked if there was anything that could be done.

Mr. Zucchini asked Mr. Burke if he was expressing an interest in having a no smoking Ordinance at parks and exercise stations. Mr. Burke said that was correct.

Ms. DeAngelis shared comment. She stated that she had been on the Board since August, so had only attended two (2) meetings, but had looked back over history of the Planning and Zoning Board and found that in 2004 there was a Code Review Board which only lasted two (2) years. She stated at the time of being established, it had been pointed out the Code would be 50 years old in 2005, and they wanted to have public discussion. Ms. DeAngelis asked why the Board was stopped after two (2) years, and whether another could be enacted now. She stated the Code had not been updated in many years, was outdated and up for interpretation. She asserted the Code was being selectively not enforced by Code Enforcement, and she would like to have some type of discussion on the matter.

Mr. Zucchini responded that he was not a historian but understood the Code Review Board had a lot of tension and drama which accompanied it, and for that reason it was disbanded. He explained that the Development Services Department was doing a Code review and rewrite, and some issues would go directly to the City Commission, while others would come to the Planning and Zoning Board. He asked Ms. Taschereau if she could expand on that.

Ms. Taschereau stated that a consultant had been hired to start a Code rewrite. She noted that many areas of the Code require specialists to address technical matters. She explained that Chapters two (2), 11, and 17 were complete and would go before the City Commission for workshop. She stated anyone from the Advisory Boards and public would be welcome to take part in that process, as well as in the discussion of other chapters as they are reviewed. Ms. Taschereau explained the consultant had specific specialists and had worked with a number of municipalities, so had new ideas and perspectives to offer.

Mr. Zucchini asked if any of the changes would come to Planning and Zoning, or if they would go directly to workshop.

Ms. Taschereau responded that they would go directly to workshop, as that was the place to get input from the Boards and the public.

Mr. Zucchini asked if any Planning and Zoning Board members would be invited to the workshops, not just to speak as the public but to participate.

Ms. Taschereau responded that she would check with the City Manager. She noted that everything being brought forward would be done so after working with the consultant and doing research on other municipalities. She stated that Chapters 31 and 35 had just started.

Mr. Zucchini stated during the work on the Comprehensive Plan, there had been some really vibrant discussions. He noted that regrettably, some of those discussions did not go forward to the City Commission that would help the Planning and Zoning have input to offer. He asked that if at all possible, there be representation in the Code workshop.

Ms. Taschereau stated she would bring that request to the City Manager.

Ms. DeAngelis stated that she agreed with Mr. Burke about the issue with traffic. She asserted that her neighborhood is like a raceway and discussed the need for current traffic studies in all of Margate to address the issues. Ms. DeAngelis noted she also had some comments on the Code of Ordinances but would reserve those for the workshop.

Ms. Van Der Meulen stated she was going to address Code Enforcement, but that was already covered. She thanked City Clerk Joseph Cavanagh for his assistance in copying and bringing the Planning and Zoning agenda materials to her house. She noted that she agrees with Ms. DeAngelis that something needed to be done about the Code of Ordinances.

Mr. Reiner explained he would like to address Margate's hidden gem, the waterways. He stated that he had an opportunity to navigate the canals over the weekend, and found hundreds of fish beds, which reflected healthy waterways. He asserted there were three (3) issue that they could discuss and get people involved in, including the water level needing to be raised. He stated there were five (5) or six (6) feet of seawalls clearly visible, and he was not sure all the factors.

Mr. Zucchini added the water level was actually below the canal wall and scouring the earth below, leaving them hanging in mid-air.

Mr. Reiner stated that with the lack of water, there is also a lack of flow. He noted that trimming the sea grass could create more flow and keep the water from becoming stagnant. He stated it was not a good look or smell and was not good for the fish or the residents.

Mr. Zucchini congratulated Mr. Reiner on his new board appointment and asked him to share more detail.

Mr. Reiner stated he had been named to the Margate Waterfront Foundation to work with residents and the City to address these problems. He noted a lot of people want to blame the problems on the City, but it is really the residents and their voices that matter. He asserted that he was very fortunate to have a voice and to sit up on the dais with a platform to be heard, but that could be true of any of the thousands of residents who want to get involved. Mr. Reiner encouraged residents to get involved in the community as much as possible. He shared a vision for all of the canals being clear and connected, bringing visitors and development into the community. He discussed becoming the Venice of Broward County.

Ms. DeAngelis commented on clearing the canals, noting that in Pompano Beach they are proposing additional canals that would not go anywhere.

Mr. Reiner stated that was the way to go. He noted that Margate has up to 27 miles of canals, and he would be going next weekend to try to get a better look at others.

Mr. Zucchini stated it would be great if Mr. Reiner could take a City Commissioner with him and take video, because there are a lot of residents in the City of Margate that cannot appreciate the canals and how expensive they are.

Mr. Reiner responded that was the plan. He noted he was honored to sit on the Planning and Zoning Board and discuss how great the City could be.

Mr. Zucchini stated that maybe along with Mr. Reiner's comments the Public Works Department could be approached to ask how far into the realignment of the drainage pipes that feed into the canals the City is, to request a presentation on the harvester that goes in and collects the vegetation growing, and to ask how to go about putting together a voice to approach South Florida Water Management about raising the water levels. Discussion ensued regarding inciting action on the water level issue.

Mr. Zucchini thanked the Board for their professionalism in handling difficult issues over the past year. He noted that he had comments on a few issues. Mr. Zucchini discussed triggers to upgrade the plazas. He stated the plazas are a front-face of the City as you drive up and down 441, and they really define the condition and status of Margate for man. He stated many of the plazas were in unfortunate shape and had not been upgraded. He noted that in some places the plaster was falling off, they were in need of pressure cleaning, and parking needed to be resurfaced and restriped. Mr. Zucchini stated the Board had recommended any combination of three (3) triggers, but that had not been passed along to the Commission. He noted interpretation of the Code as related to tenants and change of use, stating it resulted in the tail wagging the dog when a new tenant wants to come in and stagnation of the plazas. Mr. Zucchini reviewed the triggers suggested, including:

1. Asking the Development Services Department to keep a running tally of change of use and having a trigger that the landlord would have to upgrade the plaza to meet Code at an accumulated percentage, no longer putting the onus on the tenant.

2. Age of plaza trigger to require upgrading to current Code, potentially with the recertification of commercial properties, or at a time determined by the City Commission.
3. Accumulated change of use for parking.

Mr. Zucchini stated that the Commission had approved the elimination of minimum parking standards for commercial properties, which he found regrettable. He noted that was now in the negotiation between the potential tenant and landlord, taking it away from City staff. He asserted that should be looked at again and noting that the unfortunate byproduct of that decision was an input on mixed use. Mr. Zucchini explained that he saw these as issues that should come before the DRC, the Planning and Zoning Board, and the City Commission. He stated that he would like to see the City go back to minimum parking standards for specific uses.

Mr. Zucchini reviewed the traffic discussion which Board members had brought up and further discussed the Special Meeting held in 2019. He discussed the need for the City to commission traffic studies as the first step, and stated that he did not believe the City had commissioned any, but he believed they needed to. Mr. Zucchini stated traffic calming was needed, and options were limited. He discussed the option of rumble strips as a more suspension-friendly and inexpensive speed reduction. He stated he had recommended it for the past four (4) or five (5) years.

Ms. DeAngelis asked if rumble strips actually slow traffic.

Mr. Zucchini stated that they do, by creating an awareness via a vibration in the steering wheel that lets drivers know to slow down. He added that based on the spacing of the rumble strip, that would determine what kind of speed you want to address.

Ms. DeAngelis asked how the speed limit signs affect the speed of traffic. She noted that in her residential area, there is a street with a 30 mile per hour speed limit, and additional signage was needed to slow people down.

Mr. Zucchini responded that when you put the traffic calming in, you also add signs.

Ms. DeAngelis asked if that would require involvement by the County.

Mr. Zucchini stated that would be the City. He noted it was another choice they could make. He stated that a few years ago he had petitioned for traffic calming in his own neighborhood, but the initial study was poorly done, and a second study had to be done. He discussed what was done to address that issue. Mr. Zucchini noted that Banks Road would be a good area for rumble strips to be used to calm traffic.

Ms. DeAngelis commented on discussion regarding upgrading the plazas. She asked if the CRA had funds for offsetting costs of façade improvement and encouraging outdated buildings to upgrade my offering cost assistance.

Mr. Zucchini stated that they probably had the money, but he did not see them having the will to do so.

Ms. DeAngelis explained that in other communities the CRA has a program that offsets the cost of façade improvements such as a 70/30 split with the property owner.

Mr. Zucchini recommended the idea be suggested at the next CRA meeting. He stated that he thought it was long overdue that landlords that had owned shopping centers for decades be encouraged to update façades and bring plazas up to date.

Ms. DeAngelis stated the program in Pompano had been popular. Discussion ensued regarding upgrades to commercial properties in other communities.

Mr. Reiner thanked the participating residents of Margate who have really shown what the community is made of. He discussed an idea to help underprivileged kids receive gifts for Christmas and talked about how quickly it came together. Mr. Reiner shared details of a program to gather backpacks and duffel bags for foster children and stated a program was in the works to get senior citizens and youth interacting. He stated there is no other City around that can do what the City of Margate has done, and said he was proud to be a part of it.

Mr. Zucchini thanked Mr. Reiner for his leadership in charitable endeavors.

Ms. Van Der Meulen responded to Ms. DeAngelis' question, noting that the CRA does offer grant funds of up to \$50,000 to individual businesses for façade upgrades, and there was also a program for shopping centers. She stated the word needed to get out, because people were not using the funds.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Zucchini, Chair