

Building and Construction Advisory Committee Minutes

The Brevard County Building and Construction Advisory Committee (BCAC) met on Wednesday, September 13, 2023, at 1:00 p.m., in the Space Coast Room, Building C, Brevard County Government Center, 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Viera, Florida.

Members present: Michael Williams, District 1; Mike Jaffe, District 3; and Ralph Durham, Vice Chair, District 4.

Staff present: Billy Prasad, Strategic Operations Manager, Planning & Development; Terry Talbert, Building Official; and Jennifer Jones, Special Projects Coordinator.

The Vice Chair, Ralph Durham, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Approval of August 9, 2023, Minutes

Motion by Mike Jaffe, seconded by Ralph Durham, to approve the minutes of August 9, 2023. The motion passed unanimously.

Amendment to Chapter 62, Article I, Section 62-2, "Rules of Construction and Definitions", Brevard County Code of Ordinances, to add a definition of "Major Transit Stop", in order to comply with Chapter 2023-17, Laws of Florida (Live Local Act).

Billy Prasad stated the amendment is being proposed because the Live Local Act requires the County to consider reduced parking requirements for qualifying affordable housing developments within a half-mile of a "major transit stop", which the Statute says is as defined in the County's code. Brevard County doesn't have a definition of major transit stop, and this amendment would add that definition. Staff sought input from Brevard County Transit Services Department to craft a definition, and they suggested modeling it after FDOT's definition of "transit center". It is not clear how often this provision would be utilized because the County's code already allows for reduced parking requirements, including for affordable housing developments. Unlike other jurisdictions that pulled back their existing affordable housing incentives and replaced them with the Affordable Care Act, staff is proposing to leave everything in place, and this would be layered on top of everything existing, and it would be an additional tool. The proposed amendment for how a major transit stop would operate in Brevard County states, "This shall include, but not be limited to, parking requirements except that if the development is within a half-mile of a major transit stop and such stop is accessible from the development. Staff shall evaluate whether it is appropriate to reduce parking requirements on a case-by-case basis". How often this portion of the Live Local Act would be utilized in Brevard County is probably debatable since developers can do this already under County code; the County is just now required to have it.

Ralph Durham stated he noticed some of the different stop locations have already been determined.

Mr. Prasad replied yes, some that have been identified so far include Titus Landing, Shepherd Park, Cocoa Transit Center, Melbourne Square Mall, and Hammock Landing, but those are subject to change depending how it evolves over time. The Affordable Care Act applies to cities as well; however, the County's definition does not. It depends on where the development is, not where the stop is. If a developer is developing within unincorporated Brevard County they would use the County's definition, but the stop can still be within a city. If developing in a city, they have to use the city's definition.

Mr. Durham stated some other municipalities might be resistant. Mike Jaffe stated West Melbourne was resistant, but Melbourne adopted an ordinance.

Mr. Prasad stated some of what is before the Committee today is modeled after Melbourne. The difference is Melbourne also retracted some of their existing incentives and replaced them, and as of now, the County is just looking to layer it.

No public comment.

Motion by Michael Williams, seconded by Mike Jaffe, to recommend approval an Amendment to Chapter 62, Article I, Section 62-2, "Rules of Construction and Definitions", Brevard County Code of Ordinances, to add a definition of "Major Transit Stop", in order to comply with Chapter 2023-17, Laws of Florida (Live Local Act). The motion passed unanimously.

Building Code Monthly Report

Terry Talbert, Building Official, gave the following reports.

New single-family residential permits: the permits are up from the last couple of months, with staff averaging 89 per month, which is 10% more than last year.

Monthly inspection requests: the requests are approximately the same as last month.

Roofing permits issued: the permits go up and down but are up 11% from last year.

Inspections performed: staff is up over 10% as of today from last year for inspections performed. The monthly average is 5,000 inspections. He stated he received a call from a private inspection firm who is going to be using Vuspex like the County does, except they are a private firm and will send the County private provider information. They are out of state, but they have state licensed inspectors.

Permits issued: the Building Department is up 8.23% from last year in permits issued.

Monthly inspection requests: requests are also up, with over 6,000 requests; staff input was 3,011, and the BASS system was 3,300 requests. Staff is trying to push everything through BASS because if an inspection comes in through BASS, it has to be done because it puts in automatically.

Inspections by agency: the Building Department still does the majority of inspections, with 5,000 last month; private providers did 265.

Ralph Durham stated last month, Mr. Talbert mentioned insurance companies rejecting homes based on solar panels, and asked if he has heard anything else about that. Mr. Talbert replied two homeowners called him last month and said a contractor installed solar panels in their roofs, but their insurance companies cancelled them because of it. The solar contractor should have informed the homeowners, or checked with the insurance companies first.

Mr. Durham stated the problem is that it is legitimate and legal, and it has been engineered. Mr. Talbert noted when the roof has to be replaced in 15 years, the whole system has to be replaced.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:12 p.m.