

## PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 20, 2026 - 4:00PM

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** David Hubbard, Chair  
Sam Angelides, Jr., Vice Chair  
Grant Izzi, Member  
Mark Kanak, Member  
Cindy Perry, Member

**STAFF PRESENT:** Brandon Berry, Senior Planner  
Ralf Brookes, City Attorney  
Ginny Bodkin, Deputy City Clerk

Chair Hubbard called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Approval of the Agenda –

Chair Hubbard added a personal comment item as 5c.

**Motion:** Member Perry moved, and Vice Chair Angelides seconded, to approve the April 20, 2026 agenda as amended; the motion carried unanimously.

2. Audience Comments – No one came forward to comment.

3. Approval of Minutes – Minutes February 26, 2026

**Motion:** Member Perry moved and Member Izzi seconded, to approve the February 26, 2026 minutes as presented; the motion carried unanimously.

4. Action Items –

a. Election of Officers 2026-27

**Motion:** Member Perry moved and Member Kanak seconded, to appoint David Hubbard to continue as Board Chair for 2026-27; the motion carried unanimously.

**Motion:** Member Izzi moved and Member Kanak seconded, to appoint Sam Angelides, Jr. to continue as Board Vice Chair for 2026-27; the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Hubbard adjourned as the Planning Board and reopened the meeting as the Local Planning Agency at 4:04 PM.

b. Ordinance 2026-06: Land Development Code Division 37 - Town Center Corey Circle and Coquina West Districts amendments

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, FLORIDA AMENDING DIVISION 37 OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE TO PERMIT STANDALONE MULTI-FAMILY, LIMITED REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING TEMPORARY LODGING, AND REDUCE ACREAGE THRESHOLDS FOR MIXED-USE REDEVELOPMENT IN THE TOWN CENTER

COREY CIRCLE AND COQUINA WEST ZONING DISTRICTS; AMENDING AND SPECIFYING DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE DISTRICTS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; CONFLICTS; SEVERABILITY; CORRECTION OF SCRIVENER'S ERROR; CONSTRUCTION; PUBLICATION; AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Senior Planner Brandon Berry presented the two related items 4b. and 4c. at same time. His presentation is part of the meeting record. The ordinances are focused on the six-acre, three block TC-2 Coquina West District (76th Ave to 73rd Ave and Coquina Way to Sunset Way). The City Commission directed staff to evaluate the area in late 2025. Past engagement included a Community Meeting and multiple requests for direction from the City Commission in 2025 and 2026. His presentation touched on challenges and solutions. There are many residential properties that cannot redevelop under current land use regulations. There is support from the community and Commission for horizontal mixed-use developments. The proposed regulations are written to support: a walkable downtown, incentives to redevelop under modern codes (floodplain, building, design, parking, landscape), local beautification, and support for and retention of existing uses.

Mr. Berry reviewed proposed use changes (residential) – If adopted, the ordinances would allow standalone multi-family residential (single- and two-family dwellings may be maintained but not newly-developed). The ordinances would also allow smaller-scale mixed-use developments common in smaller urban downtowns (18 units per acre, 3 stories in height) and would allow 24 units per acre and 50 feet in height for property owners who consolidate half a block for a mixed-use development. Proposed changes in lodging use would allow existing lodging facilities in place as of the date of the amendments to redevelop, there would be no increase to density, there would be 20% increases in unit sizes (or 750 sq. ft., whichever is larger), and new lodging projects would be prohibited on sites smaller than 1.8 acres (one block).

Mr. Berry reviewed an assessment of economic viability within the county (staff worked with Forward Pinellas). Based on the analysis, and estimation of local land values, mixed-use appears to be viable from a solely profit-generating consideration. Residential has other considerations. He also reviewed consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

If recommended, next steps would be a City Commission transmittal hearing, a Forward Pinellas review, a State of Florida review, and adoption at a Commission hearing in August or September.

The board discussion focused on whether the two proposed ordinances would realistically achieve the city's long-standing goal of creating a mixed-use district—and whether that goal still makes sense. Member Izzi questioned whether the area will ever turn into a true mixed-use “town center,” noting that little progress occurred even before the storm. Limited walkability makes it unlikely the two sides of Corey Avenue will function as a unified commercial district. There was acknowledgment that the area already functions more as residential, and market conditions may favor multifamily housing over retail or mixed-use development. The proposed ordinances—such as removing floor area ratio limits—were seen as enabling more feasible apartment development. It was questioned whether the city is continuing to pursue an outdated mixed-use vision, or ready to pivot toward a primarily residential strategy.

There was concern the changes may simply accommodate current property owners rather than advance a clear, citywide plan. Staff explained that “transient” and “temporary lodging” are treated

the same under the code (i.e. hotels, vacation rentals). The ordinances would allow redevelopment of existing lodging but do not broadly expand new lodging entitlements unless approved case-by-case.

Board members raised whether allowing more short-term rentals could benefit the area by increasing spending at local businesses, though no conclusion was reached. Staff noted this could be revisited and adjusted. While mixed-use demand appears limited, the community and Commission expressed a desire to retain existing restaurants and commercial spaces, allowing them to coexist with new residential development rather than be displaced.

Development incentives and standards were discussed. Larger mixed-use projects (e.g., half-block assemblies) could gain additional height allowances. Limits on lodging unit size were discussed to reduce traffic and parking impacts.

The members were generally open to the ordinances but expressed skepticism that they would achieve the intended mixed-use vision. There is a clear tension between long-standing planning goals and current market realities, with increasing support for a more residential-focused future while still preserving some commercial presence.

**Motion: Member Perry moved and Vice Chair Angelides seconded, to recommend approval of Ordinance 2026-06 to the City Commission and find the ordinance consistent with the St. Pete Beach Comprehensive Plan; the motion carried unanimously.**

- c. Ordinance 2026-05: Comprehensive Plan Amendments to Element II - Future Land Use, Attachment 2 Special Planning Area (SPA-1), II. Downtown Redevelopment District and II.III Town Center Coquina West District (TC-2)

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, FLORIDA AMENDING ST. PETE BEACH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENT II – FUTURE LAND USE, ATTACHMENT 2 – SPECIAL PLANNING AREA 1 (SPA-1), II. DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT AND II.III TOWN CENTER COQUINA WEST DISTRICT, TO PERMIT STANDALONE MULTIFAMILY AND EXISTING LODGING USE DEVELOPMENT, MODIFY THRESHOLDS FOR MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT, AND MODIFY ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; CONFLICTS; SEVERABILITY; CORRECTION OF SCRIVENER’S ERROR; CONSTRUCTION; PUBLICATION; AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

**Motion: Member Perry moved and Member Izzi seconded, to recommend approval of Ordinance 2026-05 to the City Commission and find the amendments consistent with the St. Pete Beach Comprehensive Plan; the motion carried unanimously.**

- d. Ordinance 2026-09: Synthetic turf

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH AMENDING LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE DIVISION 22 – LANDSCAPING AND TREE PROTECTION, SECTION 22.4. – TYPE, QUALITY, AND SIZE OF PLANT MATERIAL, AND CREATING SECTION 22.15. – STANDARDS AND RESTRICTIONS PERTAINING TO SYNTHETIC TURF, TO ALIGN LOCAL STANDARDS WITH THE FLORIDA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE AND PRESERVE LIMITATIONS ON NON-PREEMPTED USES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY,

## CODIFICATION AND SCRIVENER'S ERRORS AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mr. Berry reviewed a presentation which is part of the meeting record. The ordinance is a follow-up on from a Planning Board discussion in late 2024 pertaining to regulation of synthetic turf. FL Stat. 125.572 (effective 4/20/26) prohibits regulation of artificial turf on residential single-family property under half an acre in size, following publication of standards by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. It preempts color, quality, material standards, and most locations (not in drainage facilities or swales or adjacent ponds or mean high water line) unless a seawall is present.

Mr. Berry reviewed residential single-family standards. Property-wide synthetic turf standards would apply only to single-family residences (multifamily, office, and commercial, are still limited to 20% of required permeable area). The standards require submittal of product specifications and base/subgrade layer details and adopt state standards. He reviewed standards for all other uses: Requires vegetative sod and groundcovers in all required buffer areas to comprise 80%+ of the site's required permeable area. The standards allow the City to specify additional waterbody and pond setbacks during the site planning process when those facilities would be compromised by the presence of turf. There is a requirement to direct drainage away from areas containing synthetic turf, to prevent runoff impacts.

He reviewed some of the benefits (reduced irrigation use, lower maintenance) and concerns (surface heat, negligible ecological benefits, drainage, and runoff issues) with the use of synthetic turf. Lastly, he reviewed the consistency with the Comprehensive Plan - Code amendments to accommodate the statutory preemptions are consistent with Element XI – Private Property Rights, particularly the rights for individuals to maintain their property for personal use subject to applicable law. Proposed preservation of standards on non-single family property supports the promotion of Florida-friendly and native landscaping, along with waterway protection policies, in the Future Land Use and Coastal and Conservation Elements.

Board discussion followed including how the new law limits the city's ability to regulate synthetic turf on single-family residential properties. City Attorney Ralf Brookes confirmed that the state law overrides local regulations for single-family homes on parcels of one acre or less. The board has no choice but to comply and keeping conflicting local laws on the books could expose the city to legal challenges and attorney fees. While the city cannot regulate synthetic turf for most single-family properties, it still retains authority over commercial properties and larger parcels. The board discussed potentially maintaining or strengthening restrictions in those areas.

Some frustration was expressed with the state removing local decision-making authority, especially since the city had previously adopted regulations for a reason. There was concern that if the state reverses course later, the city will have to redo its ordinance again. The board considered whether to keep some form of guidance—such as encouraging natural turf instead of requiring it—since enforceable restrictions are limited.

Member Perry raised strong ecological objections, noting that artificial turf does not support biodiversity (no habitat for insects or birds), contributes to heat buildup (urban heat island effect), may involve potentially harmful chemicals and plastics, and could negatively impact waterways, especially near seawalls. Staff explained that existing limits on non-vegetative ground cover (like

shell or rock) were originally intended to prevent degradation, maintain permeability, and ensure some level of vegetation, aligning with environmental guidance.

The board accepted that state law forces them to roll back local restrictions on synthetic turf for most residential properties despite environmental and aesthetic concerns, and focus shifted to maintaining control where it is still legally allowed and using non-binding guidance to express policy preferences.

**Motion: Member Izzi moved and Vice Chair Angelides seconded, to recommend approval of Ordinance 2026-09 to the City Commission and find the ordinance consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; the motion carried unanimously.**

Chair Hubbard adjourned as the LPA and reopened the meeting as the Planning Board at 4:55 PM.

## 5. Discussion Items -

### a. Interpretation of "height" in the Pass A Grille Overlay District

Mr. Berry explained that the Historic Preservation Board has already reviewed and approves of this information. The Pass A Grille Overlay District, while now significantly expanded, was adopted in 1999 solely to regulate height of new residential construction. The standards include a maximum height of 28-32 feet from required flood elevation (original) or eight feet above grade (added 2021). Non-habitable overruns up to ten feet above the roofline, as permitted elsewhere in the City, are prohibited. As homes have gotten larger in the Overlay, there have been concerns about the allowed “overruns” in the 28–32-foot height space on flat and low-sloped roofed structures specifically. The presentation included a depiction of the flat vs. gabled roof issue.

Interpretation clarifications accepted by the Historic Preservation Board at their April meeting were that a low-sloped roof has a pitch of 2:12 or less, and is treated the same as a flat roof and only non-occupiable elements are allowed above 28 feet on a flat roofed structure (i.e. water tanks, mechanical spaces within elevator shafts, mechanical equipment (not storage rooms), cupolas, belfries, etc. The clarification does not allow habitable overruns that are still considered occupiable within the 28-32-foot height span such as storage rooms, stairs, bathrooms, etc. This will be going forward to the City Commission with any Board comments for acceptance or modification.

Board discussion followed. The code is not being rewritten but providing “rules of thumb” (e.g., slope ratios, measurement guidance) to help architects and staff apply it consistently. Attorney Brookes indicated the city is on solid ground making clarifications based on existing language, even for projects already submitted, as long as it’s an interpretation—not a substantive change. The interpretation addresses a 4-foot overrun allowance and applies only in Pass-a-Grille, not citywide. The base height standard (e.g., tied to design flood elevation) remains unchanged. The clarification is intended to help resolve ongoing ambiguity - such as whether features like parapets, railings, or rooftop elements count toward height and provide clearer, more consistent guidance on height calculations and reduce disputes during project review.

### b. Updates to seawall standards

Mr. Berry wanted to make the Board aware that staff are looking at potential amendments to the seawall standards and will bring something forward in the next few months. They are streamlining

the exception process - staff are working to turn what's currently a variance-like process into a more straightforward administrative exception, especially for cases where property owners face real hardship due to existing elevations.

Board members emphasized that seawall rules are closely tied to fill and site elevation requirements, noting inconsistencies - such as limiting height increases while requiring conditions that can worsen flooding. Member Perry pointed out that strict requirements (like low seawalls or fill limits) can force water toward homes, creating impractical or unsafe conditions. Staff noted they've recently clarified that homeowners can raise certain elements (e.g., slabs) above grade, even by a few feet, if they manage resulting stormwater impacts on-site. Staff are still refining these updates and plans to bring back more formal recommendations later.

c. Chair Hubbard Comment (Added)

Chair Hubbard noted that he has reached 3 years of service on this Board. He thanked Senior Planner Brandon Berry for always being accessible and helpful, allowing him to do a better job. He stated that he serves at the pleasure of the Mayor and thanked former Mayor Petrila for his appointment and Mayor Tate for allowing him to continue. It has been rewarding and gratifying working with the residents.

Member Izzi requested adding a future agenda item to review the city's sign regulations, focusing on storm resiliency, safety, and consistency, citing concerns about wind vulnerability and visual clutter. Staff noted a sign ordinance was recently adopted but agreed to bring the topic back for discussion at a future meeting.

Vice Chair Angelides noted that he cannot attend the May meeting and inquired about moving the date; two members were unavailable the previous week and the following week is the Memorial Day holiday weekend, making a change of date difficult. Member Izzi cannot attend the June meeting; some dates were considered. Mr. Berry will assist with securing a different date in June if possible.

6. Adjournment - Next meeting May 18, 2026.

There being no further business, Chair Hubbard adjourned the meeting at 5:14 PM.

*These minutes were approved at the May 18, 2026 meeting of the Planning Board.*