

Town of Lovettsville

Minutes of the Planning Commission Regular Meeting January 21, 2015

Call to Order/Welcome

Chairman Joseph Mueller called the regular meeting of the Lovettsville Planning Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. on January 21, 2015 at the Lovettsville Town Hall, 6 East Pennsylvania Avenue, Lovettsville, VA.

Present at Meeting

- Chairman Joseph Mueller
- Vice Chair Robert Gentile
- Commissioner Thomas Ciolkosz
- Commissioner Frank McDonough
- Commissioner Anthony Quintana

Absent

- Commissioner Dorri O'Brien
- Commissioner Buchanan Smith

Staff Present

- Zoning Administrator Joshua Bateman
- Town Manager Laszlo Palko
- Town Clerk Harriet West

Public Comment

Chairman Mueller called for comments from the public.

Matt Samaha, 13 Cooper Run Street, said the Commissioners should keep the Town in mind when they go through this plan. He said that both of the examples Commissioner O'Brien gave at the last meeting were personal. He said this is not really good reasoning to base zoning decisions on.

Additions/Deletions/Modifications to the Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

Approval of Planning Commission Minutes

A. July 2, 2014 – Regular Meeting

- Motion:** To approve the minutes of the July 2, 2014.
By: Commissioner Quintana
Second: Commissioner McDonough
Aye: Commissioners Gentile, McDonough, Mueller, and Quintana
Nay: None
Abstain: Commissioner Ciolkosz
Absent: Commissioners O'Brien and Smith

B. August 6, 2014 – Regular Meeting

- Motion:** To approve the minutes of the August 6, 2014 Regular Meeting.
By: Commissioner McDonough
Second: Commissioner Gentile

Aye: Commissioners Ciolkosz, Gentile, McDonough, Mueller, and Quintana
Nay: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioners O'Brien and Smith

C. September 3, 2014 – Regular Meeting and Public Hearings

Motion: To approve the minutes of the September 3, 2014 Regular Meeting and Public Hearings.
By: Commissioner Quintana
Second: Commissioner Gentile
Aye: Commissioners Ciolkosz, Gentile, McDonough, Mueller, and Quintana
Nay: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioners O'Brien and Smith

D. September 17, 2014 – Special Meeting

Motion: To approve the minutes of the September 17, 2014 Special Meeting.
By: Commissioner Quintana
Second: Commissioner McDonough
Aye: Commissioners Ciolkosz, McDonough, Mueller, and Quintana
Nay: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioners O'Brien and Smith

Staff Reports

Zoning Administrator Bateman referenced his staff report. He noted that the Planning Commission will be considering a request from the owner of the property at 2 East Pennsylvania Avenue for a veterinary hospital at the February 4, 2015 meeting. He added that the Town Council has referred a potential zoning amendment to the Planning Commission to require a fiscal impact analysis for certain sized projects. Zoning Administrator Bateman also gave an update on proposed redevelopment of the 7-Eleven convenience store.

Action/Discussion Item

A. Comprehensive Plan Review – Policies Regarding Medium and High Density Residential Uses

Zoning Administrator Bateman presented this item. The Planning Commission is being asked to conduct a review of the 2011 Comprehensive Plan's policy statements and future land use maps pertaining to medium and high density dwelling types and consider amending the plan to provide clarification on the proposed locations, characteristics, and densities of such uses.

Zoning Administrator Bateman explained that the Town is required to review the Comprehensive Plan at least once every five years. He then discussed those sections of the Comprehensive Plan which address townhouses, duplexes, or medium density residential dwellings. He said the intent of the residential zoning amendment was to diversify the types of housing in Town, not the affordability. He said that 86% of the occupied dwellings in the Town are single family detached homes and that this percentage is high compared to other towns and the rest of the County. He also noted that allowing townhouses and duplexes is not inherently a good way to achieve affordable housing. The Commissioners had a lengthy discussion about housing, economic development, and changes in local demographics. It was noted that the Town has doubled in size over the past ten years and that many people move here because the housing is affordable. The Commissioners and Zoning Administrator reviewed and discussed potential changes to those sections of the Comprehensive Plan pertaining to mixed housing types. Chairman Mueller noted that this is an opportunity to determine how the remaining infill properties in Town will be developed over the next 10 to 15 years. The Commissioners and staff also discussed potential growth outside of the Town's boundaries and the impact this could have on the Town. Based on the input from the Commissioners, Zoning Administrator Bateman said he would draft an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan to reflect that single family homes are the predominant residential land use in the

Town and should remain so and that undeveloped parcels planned for future residential development should be planned for single family detached homes, at some scale (6,000, 8,000, or 10,000 square foot lots). This would eliminate the need for a medium density zoning district or medium density land use category; rather, there would just be variations on single family lot sizes. Zoning Administrator Bateman reminded the Planning Commissioners that it is their responsibility to draft the Comprehensive Plan, not just make recommendations. The Comprehensive Plan reflects the Town's land use policy. Following further discussion, the Commissioners agreed to use the second meeting of the month to discuss the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Information Items

Chairman Mueller discussed the upcoming Town Council and Planning Commission meeting schedules.

Comments from the Mayor and Commissioners

Mayor Zoldos thanked the Planning Commissioners and the Zoning Administrator for the good discussion regarding the Comprehensive Plan and for providing good attendance at the Town Council meeting. The Mayor gave updates on recent water leaks, the Town's new emergency notification system, snow plowing, new businesses including the Mad Horse Coffee Shop and Minuteman Arms, the upcoming Town Council retreat, amendments to the Town Charter, upcoming meetings and events, and the proposed charity grant for water/sewer services.

Commissioner Quintana suggested that the Mayor emphasize with the Sheriff that Lovettsville is the only town that does not have the support of the auxiliary unit. He said there are two auxiliary members in Town but there are no vehicles stationed in Lovettsville. Mayor Zoldos said that 10 to 15 years from now, the Town may have its own police officer; however, in the short-term the arrangements with the Loudoun County Sheriff's office will have to work. The Mayor noted that Deputy LoPreto is the Town's community policing officer, but he is only here for about 20 hours per week. The Mayor said he would bring this up with when he and the Town Manager meet with the Sheriff in February.

Commissioner Ciolkosz asked about the bike path. He is on the Board for the Town Center Home Owners Association (HOA). They have walked the property and had questions about the HOA property at the intersection of Hammond Drive and Church Streets. He wanted to know who the property manager should call to find out if there is an easement for the bike path through this area and if it will affect the ditch. Mayor Zoldos said all of the easements have been acquired by VDOT and that Town staff could review the plans with them. Commissioner Ciolkosz also said that the lights at the Walker Pavilion appear to be out. Mayor Zoldos said he would have staff check on this.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Planning Commission the meeting was adjourned at 9:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Harriet West, Town Clerk

Date Approved: July 1, 2015

Attachments:
None