

Town of Lovettsville

Planning Commission

Minutes of the Regular Meeting February 5, 2014

Call to Order/Welcome

Chairwoman Miller called the Regular Meeting of the Lovettsville Planning Commission to order at 7:37 p.m. on February 5, 2014 at the Lovettsville Town Hall, 6 East Pennsylvania Avenue, Lovettsville, VA.

Present at Meeting

- Chairwoman Deborah Miller
- Vice Chair Joseph Mueller
- Commissioner Lorraine Bauer
- Commissioner Robert Gentile
- Commissioner Jennifer Jones
- Commissioner Frank McDonough
- Commission Anthony Quintana

Staff Present

- Zoning Administrator Melissa Hynes
- Town Manager Keith Markel
- Town Clerk Harriet West

Audience

- Mayor Robert Zoldos II
- Former Mayor Elaine Walker

Public Comment

Chairwoman Miller called for comments from the public.

Ed Spannaus, 32 East Broad Way, spoke on behalf of the Lovettsville Historical Society regarding the upcoming rezoning application for the Lovettsville Community Center (Attachment 1). He reviewed the background for their concerns, which are based on the County's plans to build a new building, rather than renovating the existing building as posed in the 2007 referendum. He stated that the 18 people who voted for new construction at the County's public input meeting effectively overrode the votes the 947 people who voted for renovation of the Community Center in the 2007 referendum. He noted the historic importance of the building, which has served as a school in the past. He said that the historical significance of the building will be lost now that the County plans to demolish the existing building. The Lovettsville Historical Society is asking that the building, or at least the classroom portion, be preserved. He also expressed concerns about the back of the new building facing Broad Way. He said many people are in favor of putting the new Community Center in the Lovettsville Community Park and suggested that the old building could be put to other uses, such as a senior center or museum.

Elaine Walker, 40 South Berlin Pike, came forward to speak regarding the Community Center (Attachment 2). Mrs. Walker also noted her concerns about plans for the back of the new Community Center to face Broad Way. She and Mayor Zoldos are very proud of the Broad Way Streetscape Project and she is not happy that the back of the building will be facing the Town's beautification project.

Judy Fox read a written statement on behalf of Fred George, President of the Lovettsville Alumni Association (Attachment 3).

Judy Fox, Vice President of the Lovettsville Alumni Association, then spoke about her group's opposition to the demolition of the Lovettsville Community Center (Attachment 4).

Pam Potts, Treasure of the Lovettsville Alumni Association, read a letter from Fred George (Attachment 5).

Chairwoman Miller called for additional public comments. There were none.

Additions/Deletions/Modifications to the Agenda

Chairwoman Miller called for changes to the agenda. There were none.

Approval of Planning Commission Minutes

A. Planning Commission Regular Meeting – December 4, 2013

Motion: I move that we adopt the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 4, 2013.
By: Vice Chair Mueller
Second: Commissioner Quintana
Aye: Commissioner Bauer, Gentile, Jones, McDonough, Miller, Mueller, and Quintana
Nay: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

Staff Reports

There was no staff report.

Action/Discussion Items

A. LVPS 2014-0001 Lovettsville Glen Subdivision

Zoning Administrator Hynes said this item has been postponed until March 5, 2014 so that the applicant can discuss the project with the new owner of the adjacent property, 27 North Berlin Pike.

B. LVPS 2014-0002 Cooper Run Subdivision

Zoning Administrator Hynes presented this item. The Planning Commission is being asked to consider approval of the Preliminary Plat for the Cooper Run Subdivision. This project would create five lots for single-family residential homes on a 1.34 acre parcel located near the intersection of Cooper Run Street and West Broad Way. Initially, there were six proposed single-family lots; however one of the lots included a 52-foot wide storm drainage area which would essentially be unusable by the future property owner. To address Staff concerns about this storm drainage area, the developer offered this parcel to the Town. At the regular meeting on December 12, 2013 the Town Council voted to accept the developers offer to donate the parcel to the Town. The only requirement the Council asked of the developer is to install a fence or other suitable barrier to separate the storm drainage area from the adjacent residential lot.

The Commissioners and Staff discussed the location of the proposed project in relation to other existing developments and fencing alternatives that would mirror other fencing in the area, as well as maintenance and landscaping of the donated parcel.

Motion: I move that the Lovettsville Planning Commission approve LVPS 2013-0002 Cooper Run Estates as presented.
By: Vice Chair Mueller
Second: Commissioner Quintana
Aye: Commissioner Bauer, Gentile, Jones, McDonough, Miller, Mueller, and Quintana
Nay: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

C. LVZA 2014-0002 Fence Design Text Amendment

Zoning Administrator Hynes presented this item. The Planning Commission is being asked to consider an amendment to Section 4-7 and Section 13 of the Town of Lovettsville Zoning Ordinance to modify fence requirements as follows: a) to define a three or four rail post and board horse style fence (including similar styles) and; b) to allow them on non-residential and large lot residential properties, up to four-feet in height. The Zoning Administrator discussed the basis for the proposed amendment and provided photographs of the types of fencing being proposed.

Commissioner Jones expressed concerns about allowing four-foot fences in front yards for some properties and not others, especially since the Town had just recently amended the fence ordinance. She also said she was not in favor of continuing to make exceptions for people on a case-by-case basis and reiterated the need for the Town to have architectural guidelines.

Chairwoman Miller said that is a valid concern; however, there are houses in Town with the type of fencing being proposed.

Vice Chair Mueller said the proposed amendment would only apply to a small number of properties in Town and he did not have a problem with this type of fencing from an aesthetic point of view.

Chairwoman Miller noted that her townhouse community has this type of fencing in the frontage of its common area.

Following further discussion, Zoning Administrator Hynes asked the Commissioners if she should continue to draft new text.

Motion: I move that the Lovettsville Planning Commission postpone further action on the amending Section 4-7 Uses and Structures Permitted in Required Yards.
By: Commissioner Jones
Second: Commissioner Quintana
Aye: Commissioner Bauer, Jones, Mueller, and Quintana
Nay: Commissioner Gentile, McDonough, and Miller
Abstain: None
Absent: None

D. LVCU 2014-0001 Lovettsville Community Center

Zoning Administrator Hynes presented this information item. The Planning Commission is being asked to discuss the upcoming zoning applications that impact the Lovettsville Community Center including the text amendment to Residential Districts and the Conditional Use Permit in the R-1 District.

The new Lovettsville Community Center will be built by Loudoun County. The Town Manager and Zoning Administrator met with County staff to review the application process for building the new Community Center. The first step is to amend the Town's Zoning Ordinance to create a permitted use for "Community Centers" since the existing facility is a non-conforming use. The County is going through a parallel application process – applying for a zoning ordinance text amendment to create a new term that would apply to use of the Community Center and then applying for a Conditional Use Permit for that use.

Staff reviewed similar terms and definitions contained in the Town of Leesburg Zoning Ordinance and the Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Commission is being asked to provide input to Staff on the definition and conditions that may be applicable to the proposed new Community Center.

Commissioner McDonough asked if the County could be required to have the building face East Broad Way.

Mayor Zoldos discussed the Town's two major concerns which have been shared with County staff and Supervisor Higgins. He said that having the back of the building face the Town's main street project is a

major issue. The second issue is the size of the building. The new building is technically smaller but has more useable space. The current building is booked all of the time. The new building needs to be designed for the needs of the future. The Town has asked that the facility be expanded when certain usage "triggers" are met. The Lovettsville Community Center gets a lot of use because there are limited opportunities to work out or take your children to daycare, compared to other parts of the County. Town staff will be attending a meeting with the County on February 6, 2014 to further discuss these concerns.

Commissioner Bauer asked if there was a reason the new community center could not be located in the Lovettsville Community Park. Mayor Zoldos said the question would then be what to do with the current community center, which is not ADA compliant. He did not think they could have both a new facility and the current facility. Moving the facility to the park would involve using land that has already been designed for other uses and may delay the development of the park.

In response to a comment from someone in the audience about losing the ball field, Mayor Zoldos said he has coached baseball for many years and the current ball field does not meet Little League standards and is located in a low lying, wet area. He added that the new park will have four new ball fields.

Zoning Administrator Hynes said they could address the architecture for the front of the building in the conditions for the Conditional Use Permit. Staff will be working on the draft conditions. The next steps will be to schedule the public hearing before the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission's recommendations will then be presented to the Town Council.

E. LVZA 2014-0003 Residential Zoning Districts

Zoning Administrator Hynes presented this item. The Planning Commission is being asked to review and discuss Section 3. Residential Districts, to consider additional permitted housing options beyond single family attached homes. She reviewed the currently permitted uses and staff recommended housing choices for the Town's Residential Districts (R-1, R-2, and R-3). The additional housing options include semi-detached (duplex), attached (townhouse), and multiple dwelling. Staff will continue to work on the proposed modifications to the Residential Zoning Districts.

Information Items

There were none.

Comments from the Mayor and Commissioners

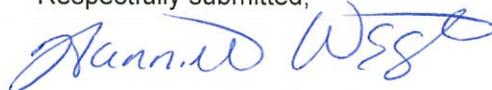
Mayor Zoldos reported on the following:

- Recent meetings with the City of Brunswick to formalize the partnership between the Town and the City.
- Challenges with viewing the Olympic opening ceremonies at the Lovettsville Elementary School.
- Progress on negotiations with property owners on the East Broad Way sidewalks project.
- The upcoming meeting with Chairman York, Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, to discuss Lovettsville's priorities.
- Recent meetings with NV Retail to discuss the Town Center commercial project.
- The grand opening for Bake It.
- Plans for a Valentine's Day event on the Town Square.
- Parking issues at the Community Center during the Lovettsville Dolphins Swim meets during the summer.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Harriet West, Town Clerk

Date Approved: May 7, 2014

Attachments:

1. Written authorization from the Lovettsville Historical Society
2. Written Statement from Elaine Walker
3. Written Statement from Fred George, III, President Lovettsville Alumni Association
4. Written Statement from Judy Virts-Beard Fox, Vice President Lovettsville Alumni Association
5. Written Statement from Fred George

Lovettsville Historical Society, Inc.

4 East Pennsylvania Avenue

P.O. Box 5

Lovettsville, Virginia 20180

540-822-5499

<http://www.lovettsvillehistoricalsociety.org/>

To: Town of Lovettsville Planning Commission

**From: Tom Bullock, President
Lovettsville Historical Society**

RE: Public Comment at 2/5/14 meeting

This is to authorize Edward Spannaus, the Vice President of the Lovettsville Historical Society, Inc. to speak on behalf of the Lovettsville Historical Society on the subject of plans for the Lovettsville Community Center.


Thomas Bullock
President

Date: 1 Feb. 2014



Harriet West <toflovettsville@gmail.com>

Lovettsville Planning Commission, February 5, 2014

1 message

Elaine Walker <ewalker40@comcast.net>
To: Harriet West <clerk@lovettsvilleva.gov>

Tue, Feb 11, 2014 at 11:56 AM

Lovettsville Planning Commission, February 5, 2014

Elaine Walker, 40 South Berlin Pike.

Madam Chairman and Members of the Lovettsville Planning Commission.

I understand you will be hearing a Staff report on the plans for the future of the Lovettsville Community Center, formerly Lovettsville High School. I realize you will not be taking action this evening. However, some time soon you will be taking action by recommending or denying the Site Plan which the County will be presenting to you.

In 2007, the Board of Supervisors proposed a Bond Referendum asking for approval for funding to renovate the Bluemont, Lucketts, and Lovettsville Community Centers. The Referendum was approved by Loudoun County voters. Bluemont and Lucketts Centers were renovated, both being former schools. In November 2012, the County presented plans for renovation of the Lovettsville Community Center and plans for a new building to be located directly in front of the existing facility, thus requiring the demolition of the existing Center. It seems as though demolition has prevailed by the County hearing the voices of the small number of people who were present that evening. The plans for the new building shows that the back of the Center will face Broad Way. Directly across the street is the 92 acre park which would allow for a new building to be built and would allow for more parking and would provide a beautiful location for a new Center. The plans for the new building shows a smaller facility than the present Center, and shows no Senior Citizen space for activities that are very much needed in this area.

I feel the citizens who voted for approval of the referendum to renovate never dreamed this action would result in the demolition of the former Lovettsville High School, which by the way is located in our Historic District.

During my tenure as a member of the Town Council and as Mayor, I certainly favored and advocated for saving buildings in our Town. Specifically, there was discussion of raising the Apartment Building on Broad Way, which was the Town Movie Theater. After learning of the history, developers decided to keep and renovate the building. The old McClain's Store and the Creamery are other examples of buildings that were in poor condition and could have easily been torn down and replaced with new structures but instead Fred George saved these historical buildings. The Museum is formerly the Potterfield Meat Store. This building could have been demolished when the Town Office was constructed, as it was in very poor condition. Instead, the Town Council decided to appoint a committee to save the building. Other old homes have been restored and saved from demolition. These properties all contribute to the history of our Town.

If the County should decide to renovate, please encourage them to incorporate the old architecture in the renovation, and if they decide that Lovettsville needs a new Center, then encourage them to go directly across the street and build that new building in the Lovettsville Community Park. This action would begin the process of development of the Park on the land the County purchased in 2004. I ask that we all attempt to work with the County to save the old Lovettsville High School from demolition.

Thank you for your time and attention to this most worthwhile matter.

02052014 Lovettsville Planning Commission

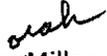
As president of the Lovettsville Alumni Association I am writing this letter to voice our concerns about the future of the existing community center. Initial indication was that it was going to be renovated but now it is our understanding that it is going to be razed after a newer, smaller structure is built. Our group has been in existence since 1915 and have a banquet once a year and at times have had them in the existing building. Our association began with the 1915 graduation class of Lovettsville High School and now includes anyone who went to any school in Lovettsville and Hillsboro. Even though the building has changed the grounds have not. We encourage you to go back to the county and ask that a renovation take place that will include the two wings which were left after the fire and are still part of what is there today. If for no other reason that it serve as a reminder of what our school looked like back in the day. Once it is gone it is but a memory. We also encourage you to keep the ball field as open space and not destroy it for parking. Once the sidewalks are in place it will be a walking friendly community.

Thank you,

/s/

Fred George, III
President Lovettsville Alumni Association

Judy Virts-Beard Fox
Vice President
Lovettsville Alumni Association
PO Box 349
Lovettsville, VA 20180
540-668-5282
Judy.fox10@aol.com
February 5, 2014


Debra Miller
Chairman, Lovettsville Planning Commission
Lovettsville Town Council
6 East Pennsylvania Avenue
Lovettsville, VA 20180

Dear Ms. Miller:

I am the Vice President of the Lovettsville Alumni Association. I and many other members wish to express our opposition to the demolition of the Lovettsville Community Center. I am an alumni of what was the Lovettsville Elementary School. My mother graduated from the Lovettsville High School. My family was one of the first families that settled Lovettsville in 1732 or earlier. For this reason, I as well as others take great pride in being from Lovettsville and in the history and future of Lovettsville as a German settlement. We therefore have strong feelings about plans to tear down a structurally sound building that holds so many memories for so many people from Lovettsville. A portion of the building is on the list of historical structures in the historic district.

We believe the present Community Center structure is sound and could be used for other purposes. It is a travesty to demolish this building for something modern and destroy the ball field for a parking lot when the building and the ball field mean so much to so many when you have other options (the 92 acres across the street).

Soft ball was the first organized sport in Lovettsville so it has history as well. The field was dedicated to Mr. Jasper Rickard who was active with youth baseball. His son, Mr. John Rickard has asked for the memorial plaque that is located near the ball field that is slated to be destroyed and turned into a parking lot. We doubt that many of the decision makers on this project know or care about these memories.

There are community needs (e.g., senior center, historical society exhibits, arts and crafts, meeting place for groups, etc.) that could be met with the present structure. People in Lovettsville do not want to be shipped to Purcellville for activities! With the present traffic it's bad enough to get through Purcellville and, as it continues to grow around Purcellville it will only get worse. Crossing Rt. 9 on Rt. 287 coming from Purcellville during high traffic hours is already congested.

Ms. Miller

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In saying this, we propose that it makes more sense economically and for the safety of the children to locate the proposed new Community Center (which for the most part is a day care center) across the street on the 92 acres that is owned by Loudoun County Government. This would also get some action in the 92 acre dormant park. This option would not sacrifice what other people want. There would be a cost savings to construct the Community Center in the Park as no path crossing Broad Way would be needed. Liability and safety of an active building site where building materials are delivered and stored, access and egress for dumpsters, trucks and contractors right next to a building where children are being cared for would be reduced entirely. Remember children are curious. Why try to retrofit something that may not be aesthetically pleasing (back of the building facing Broad Way) next to the existing Community Center?

We would be able to keep the ball diamond which holds great memories for many residents and is used. We oppose the back of the Community Center facing Broad Way on any property. A priority should be that the site should have proper, aesthetically pleasing road frontage. We are surprised that the Lovettsville Government doesn't find a problem or concern with this. What about the beautification of our German settlement?

We are a German settlement. We are not a Town that wants a big city look. Go to the city if that is what you want. You can go to many larger towns/cities and see complexes with the back of buildings facing the street! This is not what we feel fits with the theme of what Lovettsville represents. At the 2013 Oktoberfest I questioned some visitors from Alexandria and asked them how they ended up in Lovettsville. They said they come every year as they love the small town friendliness and the non-commercial look of our town.

When we talk with people in and around Lovettsville they have no idea of the plans that are in the making for the present Community Center? Why? The Lovettsville Alumni Association and the Lovettsville Historical Society only found out in late 2013 that the original bond referendum that was approved County wide in 2007 to renovate the Community Center was disregarded. Instead plans for a new Community Center passed by a hand full (40 votes) of people representing a small interest group. We would expect that most of these people have children in day care at the Community Center or they work there.

We have discussed this and feel that a Government body should widely advertise meetings for major decisions like this? What happened? This vision has been in the works for a long time and we just found out about it in November 2013. We met with the Supervisor of the Catocin District, Mr. Higgins, in November 2013 and saw the schematics of the proposed buildings. He promised to get back with us. This never happened. He was totally unaware of the historic value of this building and the ball field to many in Lovettsville.

Ms. Miller
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One statement expressed by Supervisor Higgins was "It will take more time to change things now." Well, why not take the time to do it right! We see this in our children all the time "We want it now." Now we see it in our Government. Again, why not take the time and do it right. This will be a permanent fixture in Lovettsville. What we propose would make everyone happy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judy Fox". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

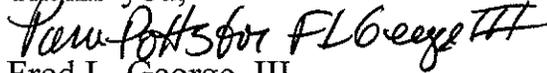
Judy Fox

2/5/14

Lovettsville Planning Commission

As I am fast becoming one of Lovettsville's senior citizens, I am concerned about many of the changes. Some are eminent, others are not and can be controlled. I have worked hard to maintain several of the old structures in town in a state like they were over one hundred years ago and longer. I don't have to but want to as it is part of our history. That brings me to the reason for this letter. I urge you, as the controllers of the future of the community center building, to maintain the history by rejecting the razing of the current building and demand a renovation instead.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fred L. George, III". The signature is written in a cursive style with some stylized flourishes.

Fred L. George, III