

Town of Lovettsville

Planning Commission Minutes of Regular Meeting August 1, 2012

Call to Order/Welcome

Chairwoman Bushway called the Regular Meeting of the Lovettsville Planning Commission to order at 7:31 PM on Wednesday, August 1, 2012 at the Lovettsville Town Hall, 6 East Pennsylvania Avenue, Lovettsville, Virginia.

Present at Meeting

- Chairwoman Mari Bushway
- Vice Chair Deborah Summitt
- Commissioner Jennifer Jones (arrived at 7:35 PM)
- Commissioner Joe Mueller
- Commissioner Tony Quintana

Staff Present

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

Absent

- Commissioner Lorraine Bauer

Audience

Among those present in the audience were former Mayor Elaine Walker, Councilman Mike Senate, and Councilman James McIntyre.

Public Comment

Chairwoman Bushway asked for comments from the public. There were none.

Additions/Deletions/Modifications to the Agenda

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

Approval of Planning Commission Minutes

No minutes were presented.

Staff Reports

Zoning Administrator Hynes presented her staff report for June 2012. There were no questions from the Commissioners.

Discussion Items

A. Review of Planning Commission Work Plan

Zoning Administrator Hynes presented this item. She recapped the presentation from July about implementing the Comprehensive Plan Work Plan for East Broad Way. She reviewed the existing uses, goals, and vision for the new district. The target area includes 33 residential and/or commercial use properties, some of which are home to well-established businesses. Options for incentives could include financial, regulatory flexibility, or a combination of each, as well as a support team to assist with marketing and promoting the Town.

Staff and the Commissioners discussed the logistics and costs of relocated the power lines on East Broad Way. Manager Markel said it is prohibitively expensive to bury the lines; however, they will be relocated to the north side of East Broad Way as part of the Streetscape Project.

Commissioner Jones asked if there had been a study of how much traffic comes through Town. Manager Markel said VDOT does annual traffic counts. Commissioner Jones said there may be misconceptions about the amount of traffic through Town. Chairwoman Bushway said the Town may want to publish some of VDOT statistics on its website.

Commissioner Mueller asked how best to utilize open land on small lots. He said that people may not want to build on small lots; however, they may be suitable for temporary uses, if the current zoning allowed for this. He said the vacant lots in the target area may be suitable for parking lots or mobile businesses, like the food trucks in Washington, DC. Zoning Administrator Hynes said the Zoning Ordinance is vague on uses like food trucks. Commissioner Jones said she is not in favor of food trucks based on her experiences in Miami because they can attract the wrong element.

B. Review of Possible Modifications to the Zoning Ordinance

Zoning Administrator Hynes presented this item. The purpose of the draft Zoning District is to get input from the Planning Commission on what the new district would look like. Once she receives their input, the next steps will be to conduct a public workshop and then present the recommendations to the Town Council. She reviewed the draft Zoning District including proposed changes for commercial/residential uses, personal services, and eating establishments, as well as provisions for accessory apartments. She noted parking will be the biggest challenge for commercial uses in the Old Town District.

Commissioner Mueller asked about the 25% limitation for accessory apartments. Staff said this is what is in the current ordinance but that it could be modified.

Staff discussed recommendations for reducing the front yard and side yard setback requirements for parking. Commissioner Mueller said many of the buildings are virtually a zero lot line but that there should be some separation between buildings. The Commissioners discussed reducing the setbacks to three or five feet for the Old Town District.

Zoning Administrator Hynes discussed staff recommendations for reducing the requirements for rear yard setbacks, parking, and the landscape buffers between two uses. Commissioner Mueller said reducing the buffer requirements may create a problem with noise. Commissioner Jones said the Town should promote planting trees.

Staff and the Commissioners discussed proposed uses for the district, standards for outdoor storage, and permitted versus prohibited uses. Chairwoman Bushway asked if the Zoning Administrator could be given the authority to determine what uses are permitted. Manager Markel said it is better to have clear standards about what is and is not permitted, rather than leaving it to the discretion of the Zoning Administrator.

Commissioner Jones said they need to consider uses that address the needs of children and stay-at-home moms.

Staff and the Commissioners discussed plans for a community workshop and survey. Manager Markel said the first step will be for staff to present this to the Town Council to get their approval for moving forward with the process.

Information Items

Manager Markel said National Night Out will be at the Community Center next week.

Comments from the Commissioners

Chairwoman Bushway called for comments from the Commissioners.

Mayor Zoldos reported on the following:

- He invited the Commissioners to attend National Night Out.
- The work the Planning Commission is doing on the Old Town District is in line with the Town's economic development efforts.
- He and the Town Manager met with the County Executive and County Economic Development staff yesterday. They discussed "site selectors" for the national retail profile, used for attracting businesses.
- The Town Council is restructuring and rebranding the Economic Development Advisory Committee and will be setting some clear goals that include economic development, special events, and more.
- The Parks Committee is working on plans for the new storage building at Quarter Park and the Walker Pavilion, named in honor of Mayor Elaine Walker.
- The next Movie on the Green is *Cool Runnings*.
- The Town is working on replacing the flag pole.
- The Town Council is working on modifications to the Rules and Regulations, including how they handle new appointments to the Council.

Adjournment

- Motion:** To adjourn the Planning Commission meeting of August 1, 2012.
By: Commissioner Mueller
Second: Chairwoman Bushway
Aye: Commissioners Bushway, Jones, Mueller, Quintana, and Summitt
Nay: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioner Bauer

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Harriet West, Town Clerk

Date Approved: January 2, 2103

Attachments:
None