

# Town of Lovettsville

## Planning Commission Minutes of the Regular Meeting August 6, 2014

### Call to Order/Welcome

Chairman Joseph Mueller called the Regular Meeting of the Lovettsville Planning Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. on August 6, 2014 at the Lovettsville Town Hall, 6 East Pennsylvania Avenue, Lovettsville, VA.

### Present at Meeting

Chairman Joe Mueller  
Vice Chair Robert Gentile  
Commissioner Thomas Ciolkosz  
Commissioner Dorri O'Brien  
Commissioner Frank McDonough

Chairman Mueller welcomed new Planning Commissioners Thomas Ciolkosz and Dorri O'Brien.

### Absent

Commissioner Tony Quintana  
Commissioner Lorraine Bauer

### Staff Present

Town Manager Keith Markel  
Acting Zoning Administrator Stephen McGregor

### Public Comment

Chairman Mueller called for comments from the public. There were none.

### Additions/Deletions/Modifications to the Agenda

Chairman Mueller asked if there were any changes to the agenda. There were none.

### Approval of Planning Commission Minutes

No minutes were presented.

### Staff Reports

Manager Markel gave updates on new construction at Town Center, the Town Center Commercial proffer amendments and public hearing process, and the Cooper Run Estates and Lovettsville Glen projects.

In response to a question from Commissioner McDonough, Manager Markel explained the rationale for conducting the joint public hearing on the Town Center Commercial project rather than two separate public hearings. He said that the Town Council felt that so much time had passed since the project was originally proposed that it would be beneficial for the Planning Commission and the Town Council to hear the applicant's request at the same time. The Commissioners requested that staff schedule a workshop to brief them on the Town Center Commercial project prior to the joint public hearing.

### Action/Discussion Items

#### A. Residential District Housing Options

Acting Zoning Administrator McGregor presented this item. He referenced the minutes from the October 16, 2013 Planning Commission minutes where Mr. Clinton Chapman noted the discrepancy between housing options referenced in the Town's Comprehensive Plan and what is permitted in the Zoning

Ordinance, as well as the subsequent recommendation put forward by the former Zoning Administrator Melissa Hynes to consider making more housing options available in Town.

Mr. McGregor noted that the Town's Comprehensive Plan contains objectives to support and enhance housing diversity and provide more affordable housing options. This means that housing types, such as single family attached units, duplex units, quadriplex and multi-family units should be allowed to develop according to planned land use policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner O'Brien suggested that accessory dwelling units should also be considered as part of the discussion. She referred to a copy of a report she had from HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development), *Accessory Dwelling Units: Case Study*. The report discusses the benefits of accessory dwelling units and gives examples from across the county. She noted that this type of housing provides flexibility and affordability for elderly family members, in-laws, and boomerang children. She said this type of housing option would increase economic development, the local tax base, and property values and asked that it be considered as part of the discussion.

Mr. McGregor gave a PowerPoint presentation showing examples of several different housing types including Courtland Square townhouses in Purcellville, Lake View Village townhouses and Heritage Highlands duplexes in Lovettsville, and triplexes and townhouses in Fairfax County.

In response to a question from Commissioner Ciolkosz, Manager Markel explained the Town's 2011 Comprehensive Plan was intended to incorporate more housing types in a community where single family detached is the primary product. He said that one of the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, in the future, is for the Planning Commission and Town Council to find ways to broaden the housing choices in this community. One of the ways to do that is to look at undeveloped or underdeveloped R-3 land in the Town and R-1 that could be rezoned for a higher density use. Manager Markel said that most communities have a stair-stepped density in each district; whereas, all the Town has is single family homes in R-1, R-2, and R-3 with the only difference being the minimum lot size requirements. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to begin the discussion to see if there is still interest to have the Planning Commission advocate for a mixture of housing types to be allowed in Town either through by-right or conditionally permitted use. Staff feels that the conditionally permitted use would be a better fit and would give the Town more control.

Manager Markel said most of the people who are moving to Town are young professionals starting families and the Town has the most affordable single family homes in Loudoun County. He noted that in 2006, the developer of Town Center had proposed to include townhouses; however, they withdrew the townhouse component of their project in response to strong opposition from the public. He said that this has not been approached since then except for being touched upon in the Comprehensive Plan and the recent discussions that have occurred over the past six months to a year to determine what it would take to provide more housing options.

Mr. McGregor referenced the Town's land use plan which he said suggests residential building types to implement. It includes multiple use and medium density residential (no more than six dwelling units per acre) but does not include townhouse density of eight to ten units per acre. He then reviewed and discussed the following issues related to amending existing residential zoning districts with the Commissioners:

1. Amending only the R-3 zoning district, which would mean most development with alternative housing types would have to undergo a rezoning process since most land in the Town is zoned R-1.
2. Whether or not a single alternative housing type can be developed on a site or if a mixture of housing types would be required, possibly requiring single family detached units in any case.
3. Which of the numerous alternative housing types should be allowed?
4. Should there be a minimum and maximum size for sites with alternative housing types?
5. Should a minimum and/or maximum number of alternative housing type units be required on a site proportional to the size of the site or otherwise?

6. If affordable housing should be required and, if so, how much.
7. If affordability is an objective, should lot sizes, lot width, private outdoor space, unit square footage, common open space, off-site parking and amenity requirements be reduced and/or density increased?
8. What building height is appropriate for alternative housing types?
9. Should site design be controlled to minimize any potential visual or activity impact on adjacent property, occupied or otherwise? Would increased open space be used as buffers for this purpose instead of reduced to help achieve affordability?
10. Should private streets be allowed? They are not currently allowed in the Town Subdivision Ordinance.
11. Should a design plan be required to develop a site with alternative housing types in order to control potential impacts on adjacent property and activities?
12. If a specific design plan is required for sites with alternative housing types then approval should be subject to public hearing. How could this be accomplished? Alternative housing types could not be allowed by right in any residential zoning district. The best way to subject such development proposals would be by requiring a conditional use permit, which would require the public hearing process. In this way approval of development with alternative housing types would not be only an administrative matter.

Chairman Mueller asked staff what they need from Commissioners. Manager Markel said that if the Planning Commission agrees with this conceptually, then staff can begin preparing a draft text amendment. The Commissioners discussed affordability and different housing options, including smaller lots for detached homes. Staff will begin working on this and bring a draft back for the Commissioners to review in September.

**B. Appoint Representative to Parks Committee**

Manager Markel presented this item. The Planning Commission is being asked to appoint a representative from the Planning Commission to serve on the Town's Parks Committee.

Mayor Zoldos discussed the proposed composition for the Town's standing committees (Parks, Utilities, and Facilities) which will include a representative from the Planning Commission. Commissioner McDonough expressed an interest in serving on the Parks Committee. Chairman Mueller said he is interested in the Utilities Committee and Commissioner Ciolkosz said he would serve on the Facilities Committee. Mayor Zoldos noted that the Parks Committee is currently in place but the Town Council will still need to approve the two other committee.

**Motion:** I move that the Lovettsville Planning Commission appoint Commissioner Frank McDonough to represent the Planning Commission on the Town's Parks Committee.  
**By:** Commissioner O'Brien  
**Second:** Commissioner Gentile  
**Aye:** Commissioners Ciolkosz, Gentile, McDonough, Mueller, and O'Brien  
**Nay:** None  
**Abstain:** None  
**Absent:** Commissioners Bauer and Quintana

**C. Planning Commission Representative to Attend Town Council Meetings**

Chairman Mueller presented this item. The Planning Commission is being asked to consider ways that the Planning Commission and Town Council share information on a monthly basis.

Chairman Mueller discussed the need for the Commission to be represented at Town Council meetings and to report on Planning Commission activities. He recommended developing a schedule so that each of the Commissioners could participate on a rotational basis. Commissioner McDonough agreed to attend the Town Council meeting on August 21.

**Information Items**

A. Distribution of Recently Modified Rules and Procedures

Manager Markel referenced the updated Rules and Procedures that had been placed in the Commissioners' binders. Chairman Mueller suggested that everyone review this document. Commissioner Ciolkosz noted that he did not receive a copy.

B. Update on Hiring Process of New Zoning Administrator/Planner

Manager Markel gave an update on the hiring process for the new Zoning Administrator. He said that interviews with three candidates will be conducted tomorrow and he hopes to have someone hired within the next three weeks. He said this will be a full-time position for planning/zoning only and will not include economic development.

**Comments from the Mayor and Commissioners**

The Commissioners and Mayor Zoldos gave brief introductions.

Mayor Zoldos gave updates on We're In activities, including the Lovettsville Business Directory, Potomac Partnership, and Town seal; Oktoberfest; the Town Council Organizational Chart; Wild on the Green; Movies on the Green; Easy Riders of Loudoun County, a group of local parents looking at better busing options for children; the recent Hazardous Household Waste Collection day conducted by the County; the Town Council Work Session on Fats, Oils, and Grease; National Night Out; Concert on the Green; Town Charter changes; the Town's new utility section; the final Town Seal; and the proposed Town Sign.

The Commissioners raised the issue of people failing to stop at the stop sign around the Town Square. Mayor Zoldos said he would ask Deputy Sheriff LoPreto to increase enforcement.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Harriet West, Town Clerk

Date Approved: January 21, 2015

Attachments:  
None