

Town of Lovettsville

Planning Commission Minutes of Regular Meeting December 5, 2012

Call to Order/Welcome

Chairwoman Summitt called the Regular Meeting of the Lovettsville Planning Commission to order at 7:30 PM on Wednesday, December 5, 2012 at the Lovettsville Town Hall, 6 East Pennsylvania Avenue, Lovettsville, Virginia.

Present at Meeting

- Chairwoman Deborah Summitt
- Vice Chair Joseph Mueller
- Commissioner Lorraine Bauer (arrived at 7:35 PM)
- Commissioner Jennifer Jones
- Commissioner Robert Gentile
- Commission Anthony Quintana

Absent

None

Staff Present

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

Audience

- Council Member Jack Burden

Public Comment

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

Additions/Deletions/Modifications to the Agenda

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

Approval of Planning Commission Minutes

No minutes were presented.

Staff Reports

No staff report was presented.

Action/Discussion Items

A. Old Town District Study

Zoning Administrator Hynes presented this item. She referenced the results of the online community survey and said there were 100 completed surveys. Staff and the Commissioners discussed the comments received which primarily had to do with sidewalks, walkability, lighting, and the type of businesses suggested for the area. Commissioner Jones asked if the Town will be providing better lighting for the area. Manager Markel said the street lighting will be upgraded as part of the Streetscape Improvement Project for East Broad Way.

Zoning Administrator Hynes said the survey results supported relaxing the zoning ordinance for the area, increasing the number of commercial properties, and creating a historic main street.

Zoning Administrator Hynes recapped the elements of the Old Town District Study, which includes the property owner survey, community workshop, community survey, a study of other communities, and a review of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Staff used this information to prepare the draft Old Town District Study, which the Planning Commission is being asked to review in preparation for presentation to Town Council.

Staff and the Commissioners discussed some of the possible features including open space, green roofs, and commercial loading. Commissioners Mueller and Jones noted some of the limitations considering the geography of some of the properties in the Old Town area.

Commissioner Mueller asked if there are buildings in the Old Town District that were built in the first half of the 19th century. Manager Markel said there are several structures that date back to the 1820s.

Zoning Administrator Hynes further reviewed the possible features which include parking requirements, landscaping, open space and public amenities, vehicle and pedestrian features, loading, standards for vertical mixed use buildings, permitted housing types, street level façade, entryway standards, and awnings and canopies.

Commissioner Jones said that benches in open space may encourage loitering. Zoning Administrator Hynes said this can cause a problem; however, it can be mitigated by having a busy main street. Commissioner Gentile said lighting may also discourage loitering.

Commissioner Bauer suggested including vertical landscaping as an option for beautification.

Chairwoman Summitt said the open space requirement should address the area between parking spaces and the front entrance. Commissioner Mueller suggested including standards for parking areas in the back of buildings.

Commissioner Jones asked about requirements for existing businesses to improve signage. Staff said the requirements would apply to new signs only; however, existing signs could be addressed through proffers, conditional use permits, or grants.

The next steps will be for staff to add more details to the draft study, develop recommendations for how to implement the Old Town District, and continue to educate the public about the voluntary process and the benefits to the property owners. Staff will present a revised draft document to the Planning Commission in January 2013.

B. Parking Requirements Study

Zoning Administrator Hynes referenced the Parking Requirements Study presented at the November 7, 2012 Planning Commission meeting. The goal is to offer reduced parking standards in the Old Town District; however, they need to assess the commercial parking requirements for the whole Town first. Staff and the Commissioners discussed the study and VDOT requirements for commercial entrances. Staff will prepare an updated version of the parking recommendations for the next Planning Commission meeting.

Information Items

There were no information items.

Comments from the Mayor and Commissioners

Chairwoman Summitt called for comments from the Mayor and Commissioners.

Councilman Burden encouraged the Commissioners to attend the water/sewer tour because it is the biggest responsibility the Town has. He noted that the Town Council has made no changes to the Comprehensive Plan, which was developed by the CPAC (Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee). He also encouraged the Commissioners to attend the Planning Commissioner training session and said it was worthwhile. Councilman Burden then gave the following report on behalf of Mayor Zoldos:

- The next Town Council meeting is on Saturday, December 8 at 11:00 AM. This is one of several quarterly Saturday meetings the Town is conducting to provide greater access to the residents.
- The Town is in the final stages of designing the Pavilion so that it is finished before MayFest.
- The Veterans Day Ceremony went very well and was attended by more than 200 people.
- The Community Center input meeting on renovations to the building was well attended. Manager Markel said there is a link to the County's presentation on the Town's website.
- The We're In entrepreneurial mixer went well.
- The Christmas Tree Lighting and Light Up Lovettsville are coming up soon.
- Berzerkle in the Squirkle will be held on January 1, 2013 at 10:00 AM.
- MayFest is expanding and will include more vendors and longer hours.
- The Town is still trying to work with the developer of Town Center on finding businesses to occupy the space on the second floor.
- He encouraged the Commissioners to sign up for the Friday email and Alert Loudoun, which now has a feature for Lovettsville emergency announcements.
- He asked them to help spread the word about volunteering through Doozer Lovettsville.
- The Town is getting more information about the delayed opening of the Inova Health Center.
- He congratulated Commissioner Quintana for graduating from the Citizen Police Academy.
- He commended the new Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Commission.

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the Planning Commission meeting of December 5, 2012.

By: Vice Chair Mueller

Second: Commissioner Jones

Aye: Commissioners Bauer, Jones, Gentile, Mueller, Quintana, and Summitt

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Harriet West, Town Clerk

Date Approved: January 16, 2013

Attachments:

None