

**TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNT
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
MAY 8, 2012
6:00 P.M.**

The Planning Commission of the Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia, met at the Rocky Mount Municipal Building on Tuesday, May 8, 2012 at 6:00 p.m., with Madame Chair Janet Stockton presiding.

The following members of Planning Commission were present when the meeting was called to order: Madame Chair Janet Stockton and Vice Chair John Speidel; and Planning Commission Members Bud Blanchard, Ina Clements, Jerry Greer, Derwin Hall, and John Tiggler.

The following staff members were present: Assistant Town Manager Matthew C. Hankins, Finance Director Linda Woody, and Deputy Clerk Stacey B. Sink.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Madame Chair Stockton asked if there were any additions or corrections to the presented agenda. The Assistant Town Manager noted that item four on the agenda should actually be listed under Old Business. There being no further discussion, Madame Chair Stockton entertained a motion.

- Motion was made by Planning Commission Member Clements to approve the agenda as corrected, with motion on the floor being seconded by Planning Commission Member Greer. There being no discussion, let the record show that the motion on the floor passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Let the record show there were no draft minutes submitted for approval at this time.

PUBLIC HEARING

Let the record show that Madame Chair Stockton recessed the meeting to hold the

following public hearing:

(1) *Special Use Request of Piedmont Community Services*

After being duly advertised and pursuant to the Town Code of Rocky Mount and the Code of Virginia, Piedmont Community Services came before Planning Commission to request a special use permit for its Mental Health Support (MHS) program to offer on-site mental health client programming at its 50 West Church Street location, Franklin County Tax Map and Parcel Number 2070058300. The program currently uses this location for office space but would like to begin offering on-site services, which may include but is not limited to skill-building and socialization opportunities for adult clients with serious mental illness. Outpatient mental health facilities are a use-by-special-exception in the Central Business District (CBD).

The Assistant Town Manager spoke briefly on the request, offering the following points:

- Piedmont Community Services (PCS) currently uses the building at 50 West Church Street for office space. It was formerly a group home and has been used as office space since the group home moved up the hill.
- They want to begin offering on-site services which will require a special exception. Outpatient mental health facilities are listed as a use-by-special exception in the Zoning Ordinance.
- Currently, there are no outpatient mental health facilities in Rocky Mount. There are several public and private mental health care providers now located in town; however, all of these facilities provide home visits and do not have clients coming to the offices for on-site visits (East Mental Health, Trinity Support Services).
- The major staff concerns are: (1) this may set a precedent which would motivate the other mental health services providers to request the same special use of allowing outpatient mental health programs on site; and (2) existing parking is limited, and permitting this facility would strain parking at nearby businesses and town/county facilities. Therefore, staff's recommendation is for denial of the request.
- Mr. Jim Tobin, Executive Director of PCS, is available to answer any questions which Planning Commission may have.

Madame Chair Stockton called upon the Mr. Tobin to speak in reference to the request.

Mr. Jim Tobin came forward to speak, introducing members of his staff who were also in attendance, being Terri Crews, Clinical Manager for clinical services in Franklin County, and Becky Pendleton, Program Manager for the service which is located at the 50 West Church Street site. Mr. Tobin offered the following comments:

- Thanked Planning Commission for its consideration.
- He appreciates the staff concerns which have been raised.
- In reference to parking, they do not anticipate that this will create any additional parking needs. The clients receiving this service are already being transported by PCS, so they do not anticipate more parking than is currently being used.
- He also appreciates the issue of precedence for zoning and land use. Until a year ago, this was a group home for adults with mental retardation. He wants to stress the word “home” because what PCS is really after in requesting on-site services is the kitchen. They want to use this facility to teach life-skills to their clients: how to make breakfast, how to sweep floors, to take care of themselves, etc. This will be a unique use of this facility. It is not general outpatient counseling. It is the home environment that PCS is interested in. Does not feel that any of the other organizations have the same scenario.
- Turned discussion over to Terri Crews to talk about the service.

Terri Crews offered the following comments:

- Mental Health Supports (MHS) is a service in which a staff member has a limited number of clients. Right now the total amount of MHS clients in the program is ten.
- The MHS staff already has offices in this home.
- The program is for people with serious mental illness or life issues which may prevent them from being able to care for themselves properly.
- An example of a possible service might be taking a client to the grocery store, then bringing them to the home to help them prepare meals using the food they bought.
- Most likely there will be two to four clients receiving services at the same time, though it will not necessarily be on a daily basis.
- The program already takes clients to appointments, parks, and other community events.
- Reiterated that the main desire for this location is to have a home environment.
- The program will only be during work hours, Monday through Friday.
- Currently there are ten clients, but that is not the capacity. PCS is currently advertising for another MHS staff member, which would bring the total client

- capability to fifteen.
- There would not be that many clients in the home at any given time.
 - The MHS staff provides transportation for the clients and since staff is already located in the building, there would be no additional parking used. They use agency cars.
 - MHS clients are generally referred to MHS from other services that PCS offers.
 - Usually work with clients several hours a day, but do not see the same clients every day. They do work with every client every week. Hope is to get clients to get to the point that they can take care of themselves, and not to keep them for a lifetime.
 - Responding to Planning Commission's concern over how expansive the program may become in the future: She has been with PCS for 12 years and during that time they have had no more than three MHS workers at any given time, throughout the 12 years. They are very strict on the individuals that go into the program. Do not generally use the program to address small needs. These individuals have serious mental illness with extreme deficits in their ability to be on their own. Therefore, PCS tends to keep a small case load with a limited staff. She does not envision the need for more than three MHS staff members at any given time. Additionally, Mr. Tobin added that he does not imagine the need to ever have more than five MHS staff members, and he is also willing to accept a limit on that by Planning Commission.
 - PCS is open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, so there should never be any client there outside of those hours.

Madame Chair Stockton called upon any member of the audience who wished to speak in reference to this request. Let the record show that no additional persons came forward to speak.

Discussion by Planning Commission ensued:

- Would like to see a limit on the number of MHS staff.
- Confirmed with Ms. Crews that it is PCS's intention to begin offering on-site services as soon as approval is granted.
- Could possibly treat this request as they did the soup kitchen, by asking for a report on the program in the future. PCS expressed no issues with this request.
- Is it necessary to limit the hours/days of operation?
- Confirmed with Ms. Crews that there would never be any overnight activities, as PCS's licensing prohibits it, though there may be a need to occasionally use the building in later evening hours for rare circumstances like a holiday

celebration with clients.

There being no further discussion, Madame Chair Stockton called the meeting back into regular session and entertained a motion.

- Motion was made by Vice Chair Speidel that Planning Commission recommends to Town Council the approval of the special use request for 50 West Church Street, Tax Map and Parcel Number 2070058300, with the following conditions: (1) that the services be offered Monday through Friday; (2) that staff be limited to five workers; and (3) that the town is presented with a review of activities in six months. Motion on the floor was seconded by Planning Commission Member Greer. There being no further discussion, let the record show that the motion on the floor passed unanimously.

Madame Chair Stockton recessed the meeting to hold the next public hearing:

(2) Town of Rocky Mount 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the fiscal period beginning July 1, 2012 and ending June 30, 2017

After being duly advertised and pursuant to the Town Code of Rocky Mount and the Code of Virginia, town staff presented the 5-year CIP for review and recommendation to Town Council for approval. Commission received a copy of the CIP at last month's meeting, and the Assistant Town Manager noted that one change had been made by Town Council since then, being the removal of a replacement vehicle for the Community Development Department's Cavalier vehicle, which amounted to \$25,000.

Discussion ensued:

- Under BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS – Com Dev.- \$275,000, proposed Town share for music venue, when will the Town know if this is an accurate cost? Is this just a guess?
- Figure is an educated guess. Town expects to receive around \$500,000 in foundational grants in support of the project, but will apply for more.
- Feedback good at the public input session regarding the music venue, with approximately 80 people attending.
- There is no commitment to the music venue. The Town owns the building, but currently there is not a commitment to complete.
- Celeste Park work is being done by Dr. Tsanacas of Ferrum College, whose students received a \$2,000 grant from Lowe's to spruce up a corner of their world. They chose Celeste Park. They will be requesting additional funding from Lowe's. The Town has also received donations from the Robert Williams

- estate, and also received donations when Keister Greer passed away.
- Everything listed in the CIP for FY2013 is covered in the budget.
 - Discussed revenue lost on trash collection and water production.

There being no further discussion, Madame Chair Stockton called the meeting back into regular session and entertained a motion.

- Motion was made by Vice Chair Speidel that Planning Commission recommends to Town Council the approval of the 5-year CIP for the Town of Rocky Mount, with corrections as noted by staff, with motion on the floor being seconded by Planning Commission Member Tiggle. There being no further discussion, let the record show that the motion on the floor passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

(1) Consider setting special date for work session to finalize Zoning Ordinance update work

Staff is making this request because over the past few months there have been scheduled public hearings and it is often difficult to judge how much time will be available during a meeting for work session discussion. Staff asked for a 2-hour meeting to finish the Zoning Ordinance revisions discussion, advising that it could be done at a regular meeting, but it could make for a long meeting, if public hearings are scheduled. It was the consensus of Planning Commission that the meeting should be scheduled for the regular June meeting, but in case of public hearing, the meeting will begin at 5:00 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

(1) Consideration of Changes to Current Minutes Format

Staff is making this request to limit the amount of time spent preparing meeting minutes. From a time management perspective, bullet or outline- style minutes would be better than long-form minutes, especially since meeting recordings are kept and stored in the vault. The Deputy Clerk advised that she would like to get away from listing what each person says individually. She would like to use bullet points instead. Planning Commission is required to keep a record of its meetings,

but code does not specify the amount of detail that must be kept. It was the consensus of Planning Commission that the Deputy Clerk should begin preparing minutes in a shorter, more direct format, and if they later have objections they will let staff know.

COMMISSIONER CONCERNS

Discussed stoplight at the Wal-Mart/CVS/Shoe Show intersection and need for there to be a leading green coming out of Wal-Mart, along with other stoplight issues.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:02 p.m., and with no further business to discuss, Madame Chair Stockton entertained a motion to adjourn, with motion being made by Planning Commission Member Tiggle, seconded by Vice Chair Speidel, and carried unanimously.

Janet Stockton, Chair

ATTEST:

Stacey B. Sink, Deputy Clerk

/sbs

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