

**TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNT  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 5, 2013  
6:00 P.M.**

The Planning Commission of the Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia, met at the Rocky Mount Municipal Building on Tuesday, February 5, 2013 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, Vice Chair John Speidel and Planning Commission Members Bud Blanchard, Ina Clements, Jerry Greer, and John Tiggle. Let the record show that Planning Commission Member Derwin Hall was not present.

The following staff members were present: Assistant Town Manager Matthew C. Hankins, Town Planner Patrick Rust, Town Attorney John Boitnott and Deputy Clerk Stacey B. Sink.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Madame Chair Stockton asked if there were any additions or corrections to the presented agenda, and being none, entertained a motion.

- Motion was made by Planning Commission Member Clements to approve the agenda as presented, with motion on the floor being seconded by Vice Chair Speidel. There being no discussion, let the record show that the motion on the floor passed unanimously by those present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Prior to the meeting, the Planning Commission received the following minutes for review and consideration of approval:

- November 8, 2012 – Regular Meeting Minutes
- December 4, 2012 – Regular Meeting Minutes
- January 8, 2013 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Madame Chair Stockton asked if there were any additions or corrections to the draft

minutes, and being none, entertained a motion.

- Motion was made by Planning Commission Member Tiggie to approve the draft minutes for November 8, 2012, December 4, 2012, and January 8, 2013 as presented, with motion on the floor being seconded by Vice Chair Speidel. There being no discussion, let the record show that the motion on the floor passed unanimously by those present.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

Let the record show there were no public hearings held at this time.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- (1) ***Review and consideration of draft ordinance amending Chapter 22, Article II, Division 2 of the Code of the Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia (2002), in part, and providing for changes to weed and trash abatement in the Town of Rocky Mount.***

Let the record show that at the request of Rocky Mount Town Council, the Planning Commission reviewed the weed and trash ordinance during the December 2012 meeting and made recommendations to staff regarding amendments to the ordinance. Presented tonight for Planning Commission's review is a draft ordinance.

Discussion ensued:

- The proposed draft ordinance contains amendments as recommended by Planning Commission, in addition to additional changes which are proposed in compliance with State Code.
- One proposed change which was not discussed by Planning Commission is changing the required mowing buffer on unimproved lots greater than one acre to 50 feet. The current ordinance requires a five-foot buffer.
- There are not many lots in town to which this change will apply.
- The proposed ordinance was modeled in part after the Roanoke City ordinance.
- The grass height has been lowered from 14 inches down to 10 inches and the amount of time to abate the conditions has been lessened from 14 days to 7 days.
- Again, the 5-foot boundary on unimproved parcels greater than one acre has

been increased to 50 feet. The town attorney noted that this is in line with the Roanoke City ordinance, and he included this change because of Council and Planning Commission's concern regarding tall grass and its ability to harbor rodents and snakes.

- There are two processes to follow: An administrative process in which failure to comply will result in a lien, or a legal process in which the property owner would be cited and summonsed to court. With the legal process, the first offense results in a civil penalty, the second in an enhanced civil penalty, and the third offense (within a 24-month period) would allow for prosecution as a Class 3 misdemeanor.
- Under the proposed ordinance, the remedies are basically the same; however, the manner in which the violations are prosecuted in the General District Court has been brought into compliance with State Code.
- In addition, written notice is only required to the property owner one time between April 1 and November 1 of each year. If a property becomes a nuisance a second time during that time frame, the town will be able to abate the nuisance with sending another notice.

There being no further discussion, Madame Chair Stockton entertained a motion.

- Motion was made by Planning Commission Member Greer to recommend to Town Council the proposed draft ordinance as presented, with motion on the floor being seconded by Planning Commission Member Blanchard. There being no discussion, let the record show that the motion on the floor passed unanimously by those present.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Let the record show there was no new business submitted for discussion at this time.

## **COMMISSIONER CONCERNS & STAFF UPDATES**

- Staff Update: The 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will most likely be presented to Planning Commission for review in April 2013 instead of May, as has been the past history.
- Staff Update: Staff has received an application from a potential new business who wishes to locate in the Central Business District (CBD). Since this business will be manufacturing ceramics with the use of a kiln, and special use permit will be needed. This is expected to come before Planning Commission during the March

2013 meeting.

- Commissioner Concern: Traffic lights blinking on Tanyard Road recently were the result of an accident.
- Commissioner Concern: There are a lot of empty buildings in town, and a rumor that the Hallmark store will be closing if a buyer is not found.
- Commissioner Concern: The performance center was recently put out to bid. To date, the architect has received interest from 15 firms.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 6:20 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 Clements, seconded by Planning Commission Member Tiggle, and carried unanimously by those present.

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Janet Stockton, Chair

ATTEST:

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Stacey B. Sink, Deputy Clerk

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