

**TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNT
PLANNING COMMISSION
JUNE 4, 2013
6:00 P.M.**

The Planning Commission of the Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia, met at the Rocky Mount Municipal Building on Tuesday, June 4, 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, Derwin Hall, and John Tiggle. Let the record show that Planning Commission Member Jerry Greer was absent from the meeting.

The following staff members were present: Assistant Town Manager Matthew C. Hankins, Town Planner Patrick Rust, Town Attorney John Boitnott and Deputy Town 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 Planning Commission Member Blanchard. 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 draft minutes for review and consideration of approval:

- April 23, 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 Tiggle to approve the draft minutes for April 23, 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) Piedmont Community Services Special Use Request for 50 West Church Street

Let the record show that in May, 2012, Town Council approved a Special Use Request for Piedmont Community Services (PCS) for the property located at 50 West Church Street to allow on-site services to clients. One of the conditions of the special use was that PCS report back to Planning Commission and Town Council after six months of operations. PCS has done so in writing in a letter, which is included in the packet.

Assistant Town Manager Hankins noted that there have been no complaints associated with PCS operations at 50 West Church Street and there is no reason for further action at this time.

Discussion ensued:

- PCS can be asked to submit regular reports on a six-month basis. They are easy to work with and very good about complying with requests.
- There has been no mention of expanding their services. They currently use the same facility for office space. PCS has not asked for an expansion of client services.

NEW BUSINESS

(1) Town participation in Franklin County Enterprise Zone Application

Assistant Town Manager Hankins noted that the Town's current Enterprise Zone is expiring at the end of 2013 and is not eligible for renewal. Towns are no longer eligible to apply independently, but the Town of Rocky Mount may be included through partnership with Franklin County. Town staff has worked with County staff to identify parcels that should be included. The Town did try to save its own program through the General Assembly, but that effort failed, mostly due to opposition from other localities that want an opportunity to apply for a limited number of zones.

Town Planner Rust noted the following:

- The Town can still participate and offer its own incentives which are separate from the County's incentives, but the application must be made by the County.
- Staff looked at the parcels currently located in the Enterprise Zone, evaluating each parcel, and then removed or added parcels based on whether the parcel was eligible to receive Enterprise Zone benefits. For example school, residential and church properties were removed.
- The proposed zone has basically the same shape as the current zone. (Maps of the current zone and proposed zone are attached as Exhibits A and B for reference). Major differences include the addition of parcels along North Main Street to the north and the addition of properties near Ronile to the south.
- The large property included at the top of the proposed zone along North Main Street will most likely change before the application is made due to some recent subdivision activity.
- The County will have zones in addition to the Town zone. There are hundreds of acres available. The County has not, yet, finalized its zone. The County zone will extend out 220 North toward Plateau Plaza, down 220 South and also out Route 40 West.
- DHCD allows three separate subzones.
- Staff stayed away from the 40 East corridor near Wal-Mart because this area will develop on its own, instead focusing on areas that need help such as 40 West, uptown, downtown and North and South Main.

Assistant Town Manager Hankins added the following points:

- The four largest Town businesses which have benefitted from the Enterprise Zone are Plygem, Lineal Technologies, Trinity Packaging, and Empire Foods, mostly through job creation grants and real property investment grants.

- Small businesses are typically helped with start-up costs like water connection or permit fee waivers.
- Currently, County businesses get no breaks because the County does not have an Enterprise Zone.
- This will be a ten-year program with two optional five-year renewals.
- Fiscal stress makes up half of the scoring for which localities are approved for Enterprise Zones. There is a possibility that the County will not qualify.
- The County will hold a public hearing in June before the Board of Supervisors. The application is due by June 28. The Town zone will be presented during the County's public hearing.

Let the record show there were no additional questions or comments from Planning Commission.

(2) *Presentation of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) of the West Piedmont Economic Development District*

Assistant Town Manager Hankins advised that Aaron Burdick, the Director of the WPPDC had planned to present the CEDS tonight; however, tonight is also the 6-year improvement plan public hearing with the Commonwealth Transportation Board in Roanoke, and Mr. Burdick is required by law to attend that public hearing. Staff, therefore, is offering the presentation. The major points are:

- The priorities for the Town of Rocky Mount are included in the CEDS.
- The key reason for doing the CEDS is to make the Town eligible for grant funding through the U.S. Economic Development Administration in the event that funding becomes available. This is typically a competitive process and if a project is not on the list, then it is not eligible for funding.
- The Town's proposed projects are on the list and ranked in importance from one through three.

HEARING OF CITIZENS

Mr. David Brown came forward to address Planning Commission, stating that he thinks his address is 111 Pell Avenue. He runs a small aluminum buy-back business behind Advance Auto in town. He works out of a trailer. He has learned that Little Caesar's is adding a drive thru, and he is concerned. He noted that he did not learn this from the landlord, nor did any of the other tenants. The drive-thru will be between Advance Auto and the shopping center in the vacant spot. He is there four days a week and has noticed the amount of traffic that comes there to service Food Lion, Sherwin

Williams, etc. He is shocked to learn that Little Caesar's has gotten permission to have a drive-thru there. At first he thought that his business is done because his customers will not be able to get through. Then he started to think that neither he nor any of the other tenants had been notified. He is not sure how it will affect him or the other tenants. He is concerned about traffic flow.

Madame Chair Stockton opened the floor to questions from Planning Commission for Mr. Brown. Discussion ensued:

- Vice Chair Speidel clarified with Mr. Brown that trucks can get behind the mall on either side, though there is less room on the other (right) side. Aaron's, Food Lion, and Roses trucks often come through the gap.
- Mr. Brown has not spoken to the landlord, stating that he has reasons for not asking. He advised he has been paying rent for ten years there.
- His biggest issue is with the landlord.
- Planning Commission Member Hall noted that Little Caesar's provides the Town with meals tax, and that Town revenue from taxes provides services for Town citizens, and that there was no reason to deny Little Caesar's request.
- Assistant Town Manager Hankins noted that Mr. Brown did call ahead to express his desire to speak before Planning Commission, allowing staff to prepare for his comments. He presented a drawing of the proposed Little Caesar's drive through to Planning Commission. He noted that the drive-thru lane will be painted onto the pavement so that vehicles will follow the paint along to the order board. Staff looked at the space near Advance Auto. There is a curb and parking spots at the side of the Advance Auto building. The Little Caesar's site plan allows for 12 feet between the edge of the drive-thru and the last parking spot. The space is fairly tight and this was taken into consideration. However, there is no structure or curb at the drive-thru. It is just paint. So, if there are no cars in the drive-thru, then a truck can still drive through the area.
- Madame Chair Stockton suggested that Mr. Brown discuss the matter with his landlord, and clarified that the responsibility to notify him of the proposed drive-thru lies with the landlord, not the Town.
- Mr. Brown advised that he hopes he is wrong and that this will not affect the traffic flow. He also added that another thing he is disappointed about happened a couple of years ago. He was trying to think of ways to increase his exposure so he asked Advance Auto for permission to place a sign in the grassy area behind the building. He was hoping that people coming in off of 220 could see a sign that said something like "Recycle Here for Cash" with an arrow pointing to him. Advance gave him permission, but when he spoke to someone with the Town, he was advised that he could not have a sign because he does not have a store front. He hopes that Planning Commission can commiserate with him. He

understands that he does not generate as much tax money for the Town as Little Caesar's, but he is disappointed that Little Caesar's can build a drive-thru and jam things up, but he cannot have a sign.

- Assistant Town Manager Hankins asked Mr. Brown if he would stop by the Town's business office sometime in the next few days to provide updated contact information and to obtain a business license. Mr. Brown assured that he would.

COMMISSION CONCERNS & STAFF UPDATES

- Staff Update: Work has started on the performance center.
- Staff Update: The six-year improvement plan public hearing is this evening, and the realignment of Pell-Franklin-South Main is included in that plan. VDOT has indicated, depending on cash flow, that this project could happen before the six-year mark. Assistant Town Manager Hankins noted that when the Pigg River Bridge project started, the Town was not prepared with a replacement six-year plan project. He does not want this to happen again and asked that Planning Commission think about it and offer ideas on what the next project should be. Any new projects should be submitted to VDOT by December.
- Commissioner Concern: The Farmers' Market is open all week. The concern is that there are not a lot of people there selling during the week.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:50 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.

Janet Stockton, Chair

ATTEST:

Stacey B. Sink, Deputy Clerk

/sbs