

**TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNT  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
MARCH 2, 2010  
6:00 P.M.**

The Planning Commission of the Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia, met at the Rocky Mount Municipal Building on Tuesday, March 2, 2010 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 Ina Clements, Bobby Cundiff, Derwin Hall, and John Tiggle. Planning Commission Member Greer arrived at the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

The following staff members were present when the meeting was called to order: Assistant Town Manager Matthew C. Hankins, Deputy Clerk Stacey B. Sink, and Executive Director of Community Partnership for Revitalization (CPR) Katie McElroy.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Madame Chair Stockton asked if there were any additions or corrections to the presented agenda. There being none, Madame Chair Stockton 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 further 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 a copy of the following minutes for review and consideration of approval:

- February 2, 2010 – Regular Meeting Minutes

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

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

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

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

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### ***(1) Continuation of Arts and Culture District discussion***

Let the record show that prior to the meeting, Planning Commission received a draft ordinance document entitled “Arts and Culture District, General Provisions” and that a copy of this document is incorporated with the minutes for reference.

The Assistant Town Manager addressed the Commission stating that in drafting this document he used the codes of other localities as models. He further stated that he broke the code into two parts. The first part is code that will become part of Town Code, authorizing and creating the Arts and Culture District. The second part will create the incentives and it has been done this way so it will be easier to modify in the future if need be. He also noted that the borders are the same as were discussed in the past, and he called upon Planning Commission for any specific questions they may have.

Planning Commission Member Hall questioned why the Town Manager is named the administrator and not the planner, with the Assistant Town Manager advising that this is the way it is usually done, as it reads “the Town Manager or his designee” and the Town Manager can then designate someone to oversee the district.

As there were no additional questions, Madame Chair Stockton asked how to proceed from this point. The Assistant Town Manager advised that he will draft the ordinance that spells out the incentives and grants that Planning Commission has discussed and then all of this can be discussed at the joint meeting with Town Council. Following this, there will need to be a public hearing in either April or May. This topic was brought up at the previous joint meeting in September 2009 and this

will be a good topic to discuss at the joint meeting scheduled for later this month. This must go to Planning Commission first for a recommendation and then on the Town Council for final approval. Madame Chair Stockton advised that she feels the joint meeting will be a good opportunity to let Town Council know that Planning Commission has been working on this and what its plans are.

It was the consensus of Planning Commission that this was the best way to proceed.

Vice Chair Speidel stated that if the Assistant Town Manager drafts the incentives portion and brings it to Planning Commission in April, then they will have another month to review it all together and it can go to public hearing in May. The Assistant Town Manager also clarified that Planning Commission could ask for public input at the April meeting.

## ***(2) Update on Flora Funeral Service Inc.'s Special Use Request***

The Assistant Town Manager advised that Planning Commission made a unanimous recommendation to Town Council in February to approve the Special Use Request of Flora Funeral Service, Inc. Town Council took no action at the February meeting, as Council had concerns after a couple of people spoke at the public hearing. This raised some questions that Council wanted to answer for itself. Since then, Council has had its own site visit to Oakey's and Flora's and he expects that Town Council will again address this request at the March meeting, which is scheduled for Wednesday, March 10, 2010.

Madame Chair Stockton questioned if the minutes from the Planning Commission meeting, along with Planning Commission's recommendations, are sent to Town Council before the Council meeting. The Assistant Town Manager advised that Town Council gets essentially the same document (staff report) that Planning Commission gets for its consideration, except that he edits the document before sending it to Town Council to include Planning Commission's recommendation. He updates it to include what Planning Commission did, what concerns were brought up, who spoke at the public hearing, etc., and this is placed in the packet that Council gets prior to the meeting, which is typically on Thursday before the meeting on Monday.

*(Let the record show that Planning Commission Member Greer arrived at the meeting at 6:10 p.m.)*

Planning Commission Member Hall questioned if Town Council had questions during

their meeting that Planning Commission didn't cover. The Assistant Town Manager advised that questions raised by Town Council were primarily related to the distance from the Stalnaker's house to the building the crematory will be housed in, and the fire chief, given his experience with the fire service, raised a couple of questions regarding smells and smoke.

Madame Chair Stockton stated this is why she wanted to know when Town Council received Planning Commission's report. The Deputy Clerk clarified that Town Council does not actually get a copy of Planning Commission's minutes, with the Assistant Town Manager also clarifying that Town Council gets the same summary (staff memo) that is given to Planning Commission in their packets, along with a summary of what is brought up at the Planning Commission public hearing, particularly in regards to questions that are raised. He also noted that it would be difficult for the Deputy Clerk to turn out minutes in a couple of days following the Planning Commission meeting and in time for Town Council. Madame Chair Stockton stated that she thought Town Council received Planning Commission's minutes and her concern was that Town Council didn't read and see what Planning Commission heard and saw.

Planning Commission Member Greer stated that what he has realized in the ten years that he has been in this position that someone who will not come to a meeting will come to a Council member with concerns. He thinks that a lot of Town Council members received calls and visits from the public and this prompted Town Council to want to visit a crematory, to become better educated.

Planning Commission Member Clements questioned if Town Council is made aware of site visits. She thinks that Town Council would have had a better understanding if they had been able to hear the gentleman from Florida (Mr. Lyle). The Assistant Town Manager advised that in the past Town Council has not been made aware of site visits but staff has discussed making it a policy to notify Council of Planning Commission site visits. Madame Chair Stockton and Planning Commission Member Clements both stated they felt this would be a good idea.

Planning Commission Member Cundiff questioned if Town Council received the same information as Planning Commission, as far as the description of the equipment and the operation, with the Assistant Town Manager confirming that they did.

*(Let the record show that Madame Chair Stockton exited the meeting at 6:15 p.m. and Vice Chair Speidel assumed the chair.)*

**(3) Update on Pending Subdivision Agreements****a. Arrington Development (Landmark and Plateau)**

The Assistant Town Manager advised the last thing that remains is for Mr. Arrington to pave the road from Grassy Hill up to the start of the second phase. This is all that remains on the first phase. There is a bond, and due to General Assembly legislation there is an extension on when the subdivision agreements expires. He is working with the Town Attorney to get a new agreement with Mr. Arrington, noting that Mr. Arrington called today and is eager to sign the document and has been good to work with.

**b. Fralin Development (Oaks at Rakes Tavern Phase I)**

The Assistant Town Manager advised that Phase I has been subdivided and the road is complete. Construction is ready to begin. Mr. Fralin has broken off the first piece but has not subdivided the individual lots. He is waiting on the installation of sewer lines and also working on a subdivision agreement. The Town Attorney has been working on these documents for a couple of weeks. The Town has met its obligations and it is now up to the developer to begin work.

Vice Chair Speidel questioned if the project is on schedule. The Assistant Town Manager confirmed that the Town's part is on schedule although the permitting process has taken a while. He advised that the developer may say that he missed out on the big housing boom, but this may also work out for the developer. The clock is ready to begin ticking on the obligations made by the developer and he has made some commitments in his proffers that he must now start meeting.

**c. Jubal's Retreat (paving)**

The Assistant Town Manager advised that the developer is about half done with phasing, and all that is down is a base coating of pavement. He wants to send a letter to ask the developer to top coat the pavement, and thinks that residents will also be interested in this. The base coat is starting to crack and some potholes are forming. He realizes it has been a rough winter for pavement and particularly base coats, but he thinks the residents would be interested in a better driving surface.

Planning Commission Member Greer questioned if he will ask for pavement or another base coat, with the Assistant Town Manager advising that the developer has two more phases to go and he knows this is a tough time, but with what is there already, a top coat will be the way to go. He further stated that he will work with the developer if there are some circumstances that merit another base coat, noting that the plans will allow a top coat on the back part, but the entrance will still have construction equipment. The Assistant Town Manager advised that his approach with the developer will be more along the lines of “what do see as a schedule for the paving?” rather than dictating it.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### ***(1) Joint Town Council – Planning Commission Meeting Topic Development***

The Assistant Town Manager advised that Planning Commission should have received in their packets a “save the date” card announcing the joint meeting for Tuesday, March 23, 2010 at 5:30 p.m. Dinner will be served in the beginning and staff hopes to have a productive joint meeting. He further stated that he is looking to the Commission for items to be included in the discussion, and that if Planning Commission has nothing, then there are some pending items that can be included on the agenda.

Planning Commission Member Greer stated that he thinks a lot of doors have been opened between Council and the Planning Commission in the past year.

Vice Chair Speidel stated that one item for the agenda has already been discussed tonight, and that is how much information from the Planning Commission meetings should go to Town Council. How much time does Council have to look at something from the Planning Commission? Planning Commission sometimes goes into a lot of detail and does this information doesn't get relayed on? Planning Commission Member Hall stated that it was his impression that Town Council received Planning Commission minutes so that they didn't have to cover the same ground that Planning Commission has already covered. The Deputy Clerk added that one reason Council doesn't receive the minutes is that they sometimes have had two or three meetings of their own for which they have minutes to read, and adding another ten page document would be too much. She also clarified for the record that Town Council does get a **written** summary of Planning Commission's action and reiterated that the Assistant Town Manager takes the same staff memo that is provided to Planning Commission prior to their meeting, edits the memo to include Planning Commission's action, plus any relevant points or discussion by Planning

Commission, like people who spoke at the public hearing for example, and then this goes into the Town Council packet. Planning Commission Member Greer stated that he feels like it is important for Town Council members to make contact with Planning Commission Members as well, pointing out that he talks with Planning Commission Member Hall on a regular basis because they want to understand what each other is thinking.

Planning Commission Member Hall stated that one thing he would like to discuss at the joint meeting is what Council is looking for in regards to revisions to Article 13. What is the thought behind their desire to revise the Article?

Vice Chair Speidel asked the Assistant Town Manager what items he was thinking of regarding the joint meeting agenda. The Assistant Town Manager stated that his board is relatively full of current projects, and probably the biggest one that seems to loom overhead is the Comprehensive Plan update.

Planning Commission Member Greer stated that he feels like staff, Planning Commission, and Town Council are working better together than they ever have before, with the Assistant Town Manager commenting that he will do his best to keep it that way.

Planning Commission Member Clements questioned if the Assistant Town Manager will still be performing the planning duties due to the current economic situation. She stated that she feels like the Assistant Town Manager is doing a fine job but she knows that he feels overwhelmed. The Assistant Town Manager advised that the plan is to change the structure somewhat but to still hire a planner. The Town needs someone to focus on what happens five years down the road along with best land use practices. The Town needs a professional to do this, someone with more training and expertise than he has. The plan is to try to hire someone with the start of the new fiscal year and to advertise in April or May. Typically, the Town gets someone new, a recent college graduate, or someone that hasn't been in the field very long.

### **COMMISSIONER CONCERNS**

There being no Commissioner concerns, the Assistant Town Manager noted that he wanted make the Commission aware of a Google mapping tool called Google Street View. This tool takes the viewer down to street level and can show a particular neighborhood. It also will allow you to go up and down the street. He hopes to

demonstrate this for Planning Commission next month and thinks it is a great tool for this type of meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 6:35 p.m. and with no further business to discuss, Vice Chair Speidel entertained a motion to adjourn, with motion being made by Planning Commission Member Clements, seconded by Planning Commission Member Cundiff and carried unanimously by those present.

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Janet Stockton, Chair

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John Speidel, Vice Chair

ATTEST:

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Stacey B. Sink, Deputy Clerk

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