

**TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNT
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
NOVEMBER 3, 2010
6:00 P.M.**

The Planning Commission of the Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia, met at the Rocky Mount Municipal Building on Wednesday, November 3, 2010 at 6:00 p.m., with Madame Chair Janet Stockton presiding.

The following members of Planning Commission were present: Madame Chair Janet Stockton and Vice Chair John Speidel; Planning Commission Members Ina Clements and John Tiggle. Let the record show that Planning Commission Members Jerry Greer and Derwin Hall were not present.

The following staff members were present: Assistant Town Manager Matthew C. Hankins, Town Attorney John Boitnott, and Deputy Clerk Stacey 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 further discussion, let the record show that the motion on the floor passed unanimously by those present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Let the record show there were no minutes presented for consideration of approval at this time.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

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

OLD BUSINESS

(1) Consideration of Arts & Culture District draft ordinance

The Assistant Town Manager addressed the Planning Commission, stating that the Planning Commission has been talking about the Arts & Culture District for about a year now, and he has committed to getting something done by the end of this year. What he proposes is that the Town adopt an ordinance which will be very similar to what Staunton adopted, to get something on the books, and then at a later date, hopefully sooner rather than later, work out the incentives of what to offer the businesses that locate in the district. He pointed out that the map of where the district will be located was displayed on the screen, and briefly discussed the District's boundaries. He further added that he basically took Staunton's ordinance and used it as a model. Staunton mapped out its district, gave it a name, which is not required, though he did suggest in the draft ordinance that Rocky Mount's district be named the "Gateway District," adding that this was only a suggestion and could be left out or added back at a later date. He recommends the "Gateway District" because it ties in to the Crooked Road and the 'Round the Mountain Artisan Trail. His recommendation is for the Town to get something on the books and then to look at defining the incentives later.

Discussion ensued:

- Staunton calls its district the "Red Brick District," and that name has significance for them because of all the brick crosswalks, etc.
- The purpose of this district is to create a place where the Town can entice arts and culture businesses to locate, along with some restaurants that will bring in live music and regular performances for Crooked Road listeners. This will have to be done in a fairly compact area, and the state has given localities the ability to offer incentives, but the difficulty is in determining what those incentives should be. The Assistant Town Manager's thinking is that it would be best to take small bites of the apple, in that it would be best to get the district created and on the books, and then come back to define the incentives.
- The District will be a draw for people to come to Rocky Mount.
- Under part four regarding administration, the draft ordinance contemplates benefits.
- At this point, what is needed is for Planning Commission to set a public

hearing for December, and then in December, if there are no changes, then Planning Commission can make a recommendation to Town Council to adopt the ordinance or table it, whatever the decision might be. Then staff can proceed from there.

- This is a stand-alone ordinance and will not be part of the Zoning and Development Ordinance.

It was the consensus of the Planning Commission Members present for staff to proceed with advertising for a public hearing to be held on December 7, 2010 regarding the draft Arts & Culture District ordinance.

NEW BUSINESS

Let the record show there was no new business to discuss at this time.

COMMISSIONER CONCERNS

Vice Chair Speidel questioned the progress on South Main for the Uptown Revitalization Project, and the Assistant Town Manager provided a brief synopsis of the project, explaining recent utility, concrete work, and telephone vault issues. His expectation is that the project will be complete in February. The Christmas Parade route will be changing. It will be forming on South Main Street in front of the hospital down toward the Top Notch Video. It will travel Floyd Avenue to Franklin Street, to the Angle Bridge, will then turn down Pell Avenue and onto Donald Avenue and will break up near the Municipal Building. This is the best solution right now. Dorothy Cundiff has been able to secure a highland band this year since the parade route will be flatter.

Planning Commission Member Clements questioned the status of the Depot, with the Assistant Town Manager advising that there have been some members of the Chamber of Commerce who have expressed interest in reforming and possibly continuing to operate out of the Depot. If this does not happen, then the Town will put together a proposal to try to find a community partner interested in operating the facility. It may mean that the hours of operation or days of operation will be changed. Right now, the Town is giving the Chamber a little more time to see what they are able to do. It will probably be the new year before it is decided.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:21 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 Planning Commission Member Clements, and carried unanimously by those present.

Janet Stockton, Chair

ATTEST:

Stacey B. Sink, Deputy Clerk

/sbs