

**TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNT
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
AUGUST 2, 2011
6:00 P.M.**

The Planning Commission of the Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia, met at the Rocky Mount Municipal Building on Tuesday, August 2, 2011 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 Bud Blanchard, 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: Town Attorney John Boitnott, Assistant Town Manager Matthew C. Hankins, 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 Vice Chair Speidel to approve the agenda as presented, with motion on the floor being seconded by Planning Commission Member Tiggle. 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, Planning Commission received the following draft minutes for review and consideration of approval:

- May 3, 2011 – Regular Meeting Minutes
- June 7, 2011 – 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 Clements to approve the May 3, 2011 and June 7, 2011 minutes 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.

PUBLIC HEARING

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

OLD BUSINESS

(1) Introduction of Town Planner, Patrick Rust

The Assistant Town Manager introduced the new Town Planner, Patrick Rust to the Commission, advising that Mr. Rust is straight out of college. Mr. Rust went to Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina. He double majored in Geography and Community Planning. He has GIS experience and most of the tools the Town is looking for in a good planner. He will also be doing the Code Enforcement and Erosion and Sediment Control for the Town, so the tools he does not have, he will be trained for. So far, he has been a good addition to the team. He is young and energetic, and he works hard.

The Town Planner addressed the Commission, stating that he has had the opportunity to meet each of the Commission members and he is looking forward to becoming a part of this great community.

(2) Ordering and Organizing the Zoning Ordinance

The Assistant Town Manager advised the Commission that staff has been working on editing the "Blue Book" for awhile, and one of the suggestions that came from Planning Commission in a previous meeting was to re-order the way that the ordinance is set up. The current plan developed by staff is to group the ordinance in five different categories including: (1) General Administrative; (2) Residential; (3) Commercial; (4) Industrial; and (5) Special Administrative. He referenced the new organizational chart on gold paper. The reasoning behind this is that staff tends to use the proposed renumbered Articles 1-15 more than any of the others. These

are the articles that are looked at for site plan specifications, parking requirements, and signs, and staff tends to use these more often than others. The residential, commercial and industrial sections give the requirements for those districts and staff felt like they needed to be in the middle. The special administrative section at the end of the book contains sections that are not used very often. Nonconforming uses do not often come up. Public and open space does not come up very often, nor does wireless communications or wind energy, so for working purposes, staff would like to set the ordinance up this way. However, staff is open to suggestions as there is always room for improvement. He pointed out that once the order is determined, staff will have to go back through each of the articles to renumber them and to correct references, as each article can reference several other articles. This will not be a difficult process, but staff needs to have a plan that Planning Commission approves of before this process is started. He also pointed out that there will be a number of reserved articles in case articles will need to be added due to special needs. The proposed new ordinance will have 41 sections with several blank sections to allow for future use. The residential, commercial, and industrial sections are organized from the least intensive use to the most intensive use. He asked Planning Commission for their guidance.

Vice Chair Speidel advised he thinks staff has done a good job. His only thought is should the Public Open Space POS be nearer the other zones somehow? The Assistant Town Manager advised it was placed in the Special Administrative section because it does not fit specifically with any of the other zoning districts. He offered that it could be moved up to the new Article 37 so that it would at least be contiguous to the other zoning districts. Vice Chair Speidel thought this was a good idea.

There was discussion between the Assistant Town Manager and the Town Attorney regarding the POS district.

The Assistant Town Manager advised that the new books will have tabs for each of the five categories with numbered tabs for each of the articles. He also reiterated that the articles were placed in the order of greatest use, except for the first three articles, which are not used very often but needed to be gotten out of the way up front.

The Town Attorney questioned in terms of density of use, where does POS fit into the districts, with the Assistant Town Manager advising that it depends on the use. If is the high school then it is more intense than the parks. The Town Attorney suggested that POS could be placed at the end of the residential section. There

was more general discussion regarding the reorganization of the ordinance.

(3) *Discussion regarding joint meeting with Town Council*

The Assistant Town Manager advised that Planning Commission Member Hall brought this item up several months ago. Town Council has considered this and has suggested Monday, October 17, which is one week after their regular monthly meeting and the third Monday of the month. Tuesday, October 18 or Thursday, October 20 was offered as a better date by Planning Commission, as some Planning Commission members will not be available on October 17. The Assistant Town Manager advised he will share this information with Town Council so that a firm date can be established.

NEW BUSINESS

(1) *Possible referral from Town Council regarding carports*

The Assistant Town Manager advised that this item is on the agenda as a “heads-up.” He has spoken to one Council member about it and it may or may not end up on an agenda. There have been a couple of recent issues with stand alone carports. People have not come in for zoning permits, and when they were made to come for permits, they have not been happy, either because they have put it in a location that does not meet the ordinance, or they just are not happy that a zoning permit is required. Planning Commission may wish to start thinking about what they do and do not like about carports.

(2) *Town Council committee action on sidewalks*

The Assistant Town Manager advised that the Streets, Sidewalks, and Sanitation Committee met approximately two weeks prior and wanted to talk about money set aside in this year's budget for sidewalk construction. One of the options brought up is that a number of people who stay at the Holiday Inn Express make a mad dash across Route 40 East to get to Kroger, Wendy's or Applebee's. It is a safety issue, and the Committee asked staff to look at putting some sidewalks and crosswalks in that area. The Town Planner has been working on a couple of concept plans, but he suspects that the Committee will want Planning Commission's input on this as well. Madame Chair Stockton noted that she has seen people making this dash. The Assistant Town Manager pointed out that with the recent pharmacy constructions there is some sidewalk there to connect to. It is a matter of priorities.

COMMISSIONER CONCERNS

Planning Commission Member Clements questioned the status of the Spring Street house, with the Assistant Town Manager confirming that little has been done, and that the owner is about at the end of the time period she was given to make improvements. He also confirmed that he has served 30 day notices on the other property owners for the demolitions that were approved by Town Council.

The Assistant Town Manager gave a brief update on the status of the Uptown Revitalization Project, including crosswalk installations, line striping, and bench and trash receptacle installation.

Planning Commission Member Clements pointed out that there is still a large amount of mud at the Farmers' Market which resulted from last week's flash flooding. The Assistant Town Manager advised that Public Works will be cleaning it, but it is not as high on the priority list as some of the other issues which were caused by the flooding.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:35 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

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