



**TOWN OF OCCOQUAN**  
**Town Hall – 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125**  
**MEETING DATE: 2019-08-27**

**MEETING TIME: 6:30 PM**

**Present:** Darryl Hawkins, Ann Kisling, Jenn Loges, Eliot Perkins, Ryan Somma

**Absent:** none

**1. Call to Order**

The Planning Commission Public Hearing was called to order by Eliot Perkins on 2019-08-23, at 6:30 p.m.

**Secretary for Meeting**

Ryan Somma took minutes for the meeting.

**2. Citizen Comments**

There were no citizen comments.

**3. Approval of Minutes July 9, 2019 and July 23, 2019**

Jenn Loges moved to approve the July 9, 2019 meeting minutes with revisions to correct misspelled names. Ann Kisling seconded. The motion carried.

Jenn Loges moved to approve the July 23, 2019 meeting minutes with revisions to correct misspelled names. Ann Kisling seconded. The motion carried.

**4. Planning Commission Priorities Update**

*o Beautification, Town Entrances, Streetscaping*

Eliot Perkins noted that the trees and bushes had died at the Town entrance, and they will be replaced in the fall as it cools down. He said that Darryl Hawkins had brought in sketches for potential signs at the Town entrances. Eliot Perkins recommended members take photos of the sketches to consider them and give feedback to Darryl. He asked members to think about both entrances and how the sign will relate to the size of the lot and placement.

Jenn Loges asked about replacing the trees and bushes and if it was a maintenance issue or result of the quality of what the Town received. Eliot Perkins said he hadn't spoken to the landscaper concerning the quality, but concerning maintenance, he talked with Chris Coon about a watering schedule. Chris Coon said that, going back to last meeting, when the landscaper plants the trees, it will be their responsibility. If they die again, it will be their responsibility again. This is why the Town

was pushing replanting to September when it's cooler. This summer has been too hot and trees planted now would die again. Additionally, the landscaper could not warranty the trees if they were planted early September. The Town will follow their maintenance recommendations for watering. Eliot Perkins said the bottom line was that it's the landscaper's responsibility and they will tell us what to do.

#### *o Parking and Traffic*

Eliot Perkins said that discussions with Town Council have moved on to staff. Chris Coon said they have moved forward on sign-design and other items they can get done quickly. Such as taking down some signs and replacing the Town visitor center sign with a free public parking sign. Staff were trying to get everything done all together to save money. The ARB is currently working on font, colors and design guidelines for town signage. Staff won't buy signs until they have guidelines. Eliot Perkins asked about the timeline. Chris Coon said it would depend on the ARB, if the Commission wanted to ask the ARB for a schedule. Eliot Perkins said that, if it wasn't pushing them too much, then the sooner the better. Chris Coon noted the Town Council has set the free public parking signage on hold until things were finalized on Visitor Center closing. Eliot Perkins said he would push at the Town Council meeting, and that he didn't want to wait a year while Visitor Center is resolved. There might be a need to postpone that sign and buy the rest. Jenn Loges noted the ARB had signage on agenda for tonight. Chris Coon said that once the guidelines were finalized, the Town can start ordering signs and can save money on bulk signs like timed parking.

Eliot Perkins said the Town Council standpoint on timed parking was generally favorable and thought it was overdue. They also felt the Planning Commission proposed option was the best option. Chris Coon said that Town Attorney, Martin Crim, and Police Chief, Adam Linn, were tasked with ways to enforce parking. Martin Crim said legal opinion allowed photographing license plates, but officers would need to delete photos as they go. VDOT regulations don't leave much leeway for timed parking signs, including font and size. Signs will go to VDOT for approval. Jenn Loges asked who the vendor is for signage. Chris Coon said it would be the Prince William County sign shop or Signorama. Jenn Loges asked if that meant going local, within the county. Chris Coon confirmed it would be regional to Prince William County to save money on shipping. Eliot Perkins said he will touch base with ARB and Town Council to move forward.

#### *o CIP*

Eliot Perkins said the boat ramp had funding and that the Town was now just waiting for a date. Chris Coon said the development also needed a project manager, and that Kathy Leidich was working to find PM with experience with Government Grants. The timeframe is between 45 and 90 days once started. Eliot Perkins said the goal was to have it before 2020.

### **5. Chair/Town Council Report**

Eliot Perkins said that consideration for the Mill at Occoquan was coming next meeting. The Commission will be considering approval for height and setback exceptions and will be first line of consideration for the community. The Commission will ask for balloons at the property so people can get an idea of the height. Chris Coon said the balloons would be FAA-approved and up for about 48 to 70 hours. This will be advertised so Planning Commission is aware.

Eliot Perkins said that collaboration will be important and that he will reach out to members individually for questions and opinions. It's a complicated thing and everyone has thought about it a lot. The Town Engineer and Town Attorney will be present for the discussion. Members should make sure to get answers to questions from them before the meeting. There will be a very lively discussion with the town residents with lots of opinions and viewpoints either way, and that's fine. And it's his responsibility will be to ensure that discussion is respectful.

Darryl Hawkins asked about the timeline for the development. Chris Coon said that Kathy Leidich will have a staff report in the coming weeks with site plans. If anything is missing from the report that members need to ask Kathy to provide it.

Jenn Loges asked about the timeline for the balloons and if that would be considered a meeting for members to come out and view them. Chris Coon said that members need not necessarily come out at the same time, but members will need to come out to view the balloons. Jenn Loges asked if there was a plan for communicating about the balloons to the public. Chris Coon said staff would put out an OCQ alert or include it in Mayor Porta's newsletter. Eliot Perkins said that we want as many people as possible to come out and see it as we can and don't want residents upset that we didn't do due diligence. He asked how many people were on the OCQ alert. Chris Coon said there were 250 on the OCQ alert out of 500 households and that Mayor Porta can send an email out very quickly. Ann Kisling asked if a sign could be placed outside on the property stating what the balloons are for. Eliot Perkins agreed that a sign should at a minimum explain why the balloons are there.

Chris Coon told members to be prepared if many people show up for the meeting then there may be a need to extend it over two days. Jenn Loges asked if the Town would advertise the extended meeting. Chris Coon said the Chair could announce at the beginning of the meeting that meeting will be recessed and readjourned at 6:30pm the next night and not closed. Staff report and developer presentation will take time, followed by public comment.

Jenn Loges said that, to clarify, this is the public hearing specifically for the exemptions, not the site plan approval. Chris Coon said the Chair should state this before staff report, developer presentation, etc. So the public understands as they may not know the difference between the different aspects. Eliot Perkins said the plan is to explain at meeting opening and set expectations. Chris Coon recommended members lean on Town Engineer, Zoning Administrator, and Town Attorney, and ask them to explain things or ask questions. Sometimes questions will go to developer, but also ask Town staff.

Jenn Loges asked about the meeting process. Chris Coon said there would be a Staff Report, Developer Presentation, the Planning Commission will ask questions which may address citizen questions, and then public questions. Eliot Perkins said he preferred PC questions come first.

Chris Coon said there could also be a second round of questions. If citizens ask questions, the Commission can note them and ask them of developer on behalf of citizens. Jenn Loges said that citizens comments are not a back and forth. Eliot Perkins agreed that, due to the potential for contentiousness, he preferred not to have back-and-forth, and the Planning Commission will ask questions of developer on behalf citizens. Chris Coon recommended stating the process at beginning of public comment. That if citizens have questions, the Commission will note them and bring them up during a follow-up time. Some questions won't be pertinent, and members should ask the Town Attorney if they are applicable. Jenn Loges said Commission members will then each have the floor to make sure our questions are answered.

Eliot Perkins said that Chris Coon will be leaving to work for Haymarket. That Chris has always worked very hard, above and beyond the call of duty and always does what's best for Occoquan. And that he wanted to say thank you.

## **6. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

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Eliot Perkins: Perkins  
Chair, Planning Commission

*Submitted by Ryan Somma, Planning Commission Secretary*