



TOWN OF OCCOQUAN
Town Hall - 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125
MEETING DATE: 2020-09-22

MEETING TIME: 6:30 PM

Present: Darryl Hawkins, Ann Kisling, Eliot Perkins, Ryan Somma

Town Staff: Kirstyn Jovanovich, Katy Nicholson

1. Call to Order

The Planning Commission Public Hearing was called to order by Eliot Perkins on 2020-09-22, at 6:30 p.m.

Secretary for Meeting

Ryan Somma took minutes for the meeting.

2. Public Hearing: Revised Sign Ordinance

Pete Cramer, of Elicott St, said that he was concerned about an ordinance five weeks away from an election. He planned on putting out a normal number of yard signs and a political flag on the first of October, which will be down by election day. Does the commission see a problem with this? Eliot Perkins said that, from a Freedom of Speech perspective, there is no reason this ordinance should curtail the freedom of speech, but there is a need to standardize the size and location of signs, but not to impact speech. Pete Cramer asked if he could hang his flag as a banner. Eliot Perkins said he would be happy to talk offline to help clear up how to present the flag.

3. Citizen Comments

Trish Dean, of Elicott St, said that she had lived here for four years, and that the unfinished Townhomes are an eyesore. She was curious what the Town planned to do about the matter and that it seemed excessive to let it go on so long. Eliot Perkins said he would be happy to respond in private.

4. Approval of Minutes August 25, 2020

Anne Kisling motioned to approve the minutes. Darryl Hawkins seconded. The motion carried.

5. Discussion: Mill at Occoquan

Eliot Perkins said that the Town will hold a public meeting, not a public hearing, tomorrow night at 7:00pm. He encouraged members to attend via Zoom, and that the Town had sent out a mailer for this meeting, posted on the website, Facebook, texted, posted in Town Hall, the Post Office, and the Mayor's email. The builder will have a presentation on the latest designs and will open to public questions and comments.

Eliot Perkins said that a public meeting is a clear and important distinction from a public hearing as there will be no voting. Meetings will be held in the future, first with the Planning Commission, and then with the Town Council. The builder is asking for three exemptions for height, setback, and mixed use permission.

6. Approval of Revised Sign Ordinance

Eliot Perkins told the audience that this ordinance was something previously approved, and that the Planning Commission was approving some clarifications tonight. Ryan Somma noted that it looked like a definition of an Abandoned Sign was added, replacing Obsolete Sign, which was more user friendly and that the yard sign language was tightened up.

Ryan Somma asked about the enforcement of Temporary Signs, noting that the town may remove them. Does a Town employee or contractor remove the sign with Law Enforcement overseeing the removal? Krystin Jovanovich said that it would fall under Zoning Enforcement, with lots of notices, and potential fines.

Ryan Somma moved to approve the Revised Sign Ordinance, Anne Kisling seconded, the motion carried by unanimous consent.

7. Comprehensive Plan Review and Discussion

Eliot Perkins asked that if Planning Commission members wanted to provide feedback on priorities or items they would like to add, please get those to him before October 2nd.

8. Planning Commission Priorities Update

Eliot Perkins said he has been, been pushing to get Parking and Traffic done. He presented to Town Council at the last meeting and presented Middleburg as an example of a municipality with same challenges Occoquan has. He thinks Town Council will be broadly be supportive.

Eliot Perkins posed a question for Planning Commission member and those in attendance: the Town entrance was a jungle, which has been cleared and improved with trees and plants. The Town intends to add attractive signage. Is this something anyone has noticed? Pete Cramer said it was a big improvement, and the overgrowth used to be creepy. Eliot Perkins said the Town had \$10k allocated for a sign at the entrance of Town, but because of COVID and fiscal losses, it's been postponed, but it's still important.

9. Chair/Town Council Report

Eliot Perkins said the most important thing was the Mill at Occoquan presentation tomorrow night.

Eliot Perkins noted the accomplishment of the kayak launch opening to the public, and that now residents can put boats into the river for free and its set up for folks with disabilities as well. Future plans included storage for boats and kayaks as well as for visitors who want to stop and have lunch.

Katy Nicholson noted the indoor ski facility planned across the river. Eliot Perkins said that needed discussion under Comprehensive Plan. If the development happens, it's estimated to bring 400,000

people a year, which will impact Occoquan substantially, bringing potential positives and negatives. There was a need to plan for this and report to Town Council to be proactive rather than reactive.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Eliot Perkins: Perkins
Chair, Planning Commission

Submitted by Ryan Somma, Planning Commission Secretary