



**TOWN OF OCCOQUAN
PLANNING COMMISSION**
Town Hall - 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125

MEETING DATE: 2021-10-27
MEETING TIME: 6:30 PM

Present: Chairperson Eliot Perkins, Commissioners Darryl Hawkins, Ralph Newell, Ryan Somma

Absent: Commissioner Ann Kisling

Town Staff: Kirstyn Jovanovich, Town Manager; Bruce Reese, Town Engineer (remote), Martin Crim, Town Attorney (remote)

1. Call to Order

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Chairman Perkins on 2020-10-27, at 6:30 p.m.

2. Citizen Comments

There were no comments.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. September 29, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Somma motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Hawkins seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

4. Action Items

a. Request to Consider Zoning Text Amendments to Town Code § 157.304 (B)(12) Regarding Illuminated Signs and to Set Public Hearing Date

Mr. Reese explained this is a correction to an oversight of the original Town Code. It was not intended that signs could not be lit, but that signs could not be lit internally. Mr. Crim said this is a matter of clarifying definitions and accomplishing what the original intent was. Chairperson Perkins said this vote is to set a public hearing and asked for concerns from the Commissioners. There were no questions or concerns.

Commissioner Somma moved to set a public hearing date of November 16, 2021 on the draft ordinance. Commissioner Newell seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

b. Request to Consider Zoning Text Amendments to Town Code § 157.121 to Permit Residential Use By-Right in One Story Buildings Fronting Commerce and Ellicott Streets in the B-1 Zoning District and to Set Public Hearing Date

Mr. Reese stated that the intent of the 2017 Town Code update was to maintain a healthy business district by preventing residences on the first floor adjacent to the primary sidewalk and/or street. Currently, the Town Code only allows residential in the B1 through a special use permit and only in the situation where commercial is on the floor adjacent to the primary sidewalk and/or street, thus allowing commercial use or mixed-use within the B1. This proposed amendment to the Town Code would allow one-story structures fronting Commerce and Ellicott Streets in the B1 to be either by-right commercial or residential use. Currently, staff has identified four one-story structures fronting Commerce and Ellicott Streets that would qualify for by-right residential use with this proposed amendment.

Commissioner Newell asked if the four existing residences are grandfathered in. Mr. Crim said that, with this amendment, they would become by-right uses. Ms. Jovanovich further stated that all existing residential uses in the B1 at the time of the Town Code update in 2017 became non-conforming uses and could continue in that use until which time a commercial use is introduced to the property after which, the property could no longer be residential-only use.

Commissioner Newell moved to set a public hearing date of November 16, 2021, on the draft ordinance. Commissioner Somma seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

c. Request to Set Public Hearing Date for Zoning Text Amendments Relating to Land Development Process

Mr. Reese explained the goal of these amendments is to (1) clarify site plan requirements, (2) update the parameters of when a site plan is required and, (3) make the review and approval process administrative. Mr. Reese clarified that plans that require a special use permit would still be considered by the Planning Commission and Town Council.

Mr. Crim said the proposed amendments reduce the current requirements for site plans when there are very minor disturbances. The Planning Commission and Town Council are involved with policy decisions and approving site plans is not a policy decision.

Commissioner Somma moved to set a public hearing date of November 16, 2021, on the draft ordinance. Commissioner Newell seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

d. Request to Set Public Hearing Date for Comprehensive Plan Update

Ms. Jovanovich said she made additional revisions and provided a revised copy of the Draft Comprehensive Plan Update to the Commission. Specifically, she adjusted the Main Street America references throughout the document. Chairperson Perkins said the Mainstreet Program is incredibly valuable, but someone other than the Town needs to run the program. The new language in the Comprehensive Plan describes the program, the positives, and keeps it under consideration if someone comes forward to seek the designation for the Town. Ms. Jovanovich said she removed references to the Town seeking the designation and revised the statements to encourage cooperation with entities that should seek the designation on behalf of the Town in the future. She took out a reference in Chapter Three in the Vision statement and requested guidance on replacement language. Chairperson Perkins suggested referencing the Community Plan document currently under development.

Ms. Jovanovich stated that page 39 will be updated to seek organizations or individuals to operate the program. Chairperson Perkins said this keeps Mainstreet America as an option should we find someone to take it up.

Commissioner Somma moved to set a public hearing date of November 16, 2021, on the Comprehensive Plan Update. Commissioner Newell seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes Prepared by Ryan Somma, Planning Commission Secretary