



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

MEETING DATE: 2023-12-12
MEETING TIME: 6:30 PM

Present: Chairperson Eliot Perkins, Commissioners, Darryl Hawkins, Ann Kisling, Ralph Newell, Ryan Somma, Don Wood

Absent: Commissioner Bob Love

Town Staff: Matt Whitmoyer, Management Fellow; Philip Auville, Town Clerk

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:34pm

2. Citizen Comments

None

3. Approval of Minutes

a. October 26, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Newell motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Wood seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

4. Work Session

Chairperson Perkins expressed appreciation to Mr. Whitmoyer and the Commissioners for all their hard work and enthusiasm over the year.

b. Strategic Planning Update

Chairperson Perkins and Mr. Whitmoyer provided an overview of the meetings so far, upcoming meetings, and reports. They said the Riverwalk Work Group was discontinued in favor of a Riverwalk Expansion Special Committee (RESC). Commissioner Hawkins asked why it was no longer a Planning Commission responsibility. Chairperson Perkins said the Planning Commission has a lot going on in all different areas and needs to focus on those. The Planning Commission will be involved going forward and will have feedback on the project. Commissioner Wood asked how to formally send workpieces to the committee. Chairperson Perkins said they had a public meeting on November 30th and will have one December 13th. He asked that items be provided to Chairperson Perkins or Mr. Whitmoyer.

Chairperson Perkins said he would like to continue to move forward on the Economic Development piece. That folks have brought it to the Chair's attention that the Planning Commission should not move forward on it. At a minimum, the Commission needs to help people renting buildings here to find the best match ups and bring desired businesses into Town. Commissioner Hawkins said other Towns have a dedicated Economic Development group unrelated to the Planning Commission, like a Chamber of Commerce. Chairperson Perkins agreed and said the Town doesn't have money and resources for that.

Mr. Whitmoyer said they would be changing the group "Walkability, Connectivity, and Accessibility" name to "Parking and Transportation." Mr. Whitmoyer provided updated timelines, including a schedule of how to move from report writing to final reports for delivery to Town Council. The months of April and May will be when we may have influence on budgetary decisions. Chairperson Perkins said the February Planning Commission meeting will need the final reports for each group delivered to allow for answering questions and finalizing into a single packet for Town Council. Commissioner Wood asked if reports that go to council need to have projected costs and price tags. Chairperson Perkins said to the extent that we can be as specific as we can. Mr. Whitmoyer said that staff time will be decided during the budgeting process as well.

Chairperson Perkins said that everyone has the new report layout now and instructed commissioners to schedule final meetings as needed to finalize documents and collaborate on documents online. The Commission agreed to move the Green Infrastructure work session into January's meeting. Mr. Whitmoyer reminded the Commissioners of FOIA adherence and to keep reports within a certain length.

a. Trail Towns Work Group

Commissioner Somma provided an overview of the Trail Town Program report. Chairperson Perkins added that the state does not have Trail Town designation, and the Town should lobby for creating such a designation. He requested additional action items to work with local businesses for trail town advocacy, promote the trail town status, and support trail users. He said there should be an action item to advertise and sell ourselves as a Trail Town.

Commissioner Somma noted difficulty with previous efforts for the Town to seek a Mainstreet America designation as a prior-history challenge that would apply to a commission managing a Trail Town. Chairperson Perkins said the Town now has Visit Occoquan, which will eventually seek the designation. Chairperson Perkins said there is also new funding for Amtrak that was recently approved. Chairperson Perkins said there will be a need for new amenities for bike repair, kayaks, and signage. Chairperson Perkins said the report will need to evaluate things that cost money.

5. Discussion Items

c. Planning Commission Priorities Update

- **North Woodbridge Town Center**

Chairperson Perkins said this project is now called "Riverside Station" and there is a 13-slide presentation on it online. Commissioner Wood asked about the Mill at Occoquan. Chairperson Perkins said the project is planning a January demolition.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39pm

Minutes Prepared by Commissioner Somma, Planning Commission Secretary