



# TOWN OF OCCOQUAN

Circa 1734 | Chartered 1804 | Incorporated 1874

314 Mill Street  
PO BOX 195  
Occoquan, VA 22125  
(703) 491-1918  
occoquanva.gov  
info@occoquanva.gov

## PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

March 26, 2024 | 6:00 PM

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Citizens' Time** - Members of the public may, for three minutes, present for the purpose of directing attention to or requesting action on matters not included on the prepared agenda. These matters shall be referred to the appropriate town official(s) for investigation and report. Citizens may address issues as they come up on the agenda if advance notice is given during 'Citizens' Time
3. **Approval of Minutes**
  - a. February 27, 2024 Meeting Minutes
4. **Reports**
  - a. Town Council Report
  - b. Deputy Town Manager Report
  - c. Architectural Review Board Report
5. **Action Items**
  - a. Request to Approve and Refer Strategic Planning Recommendations to Town Council
6. **Discussion Items**
  - a. Zoning Administrator Report on Potential Zoning Text and Comprehensive Plan Amendments Relating to Density
  - b. Riverwalk Planning Update
  - c. Planning Commission Priorities Update
    - i. Riverside Station (Formerly North Woodbridge Town Center)
    - ii. Alpine X
    - iii. Belmont Bay Expansion Project
7. **Adjournment**

Eliot Perkins  
Chair, Planning Commission



# TOWN OF OCCOQUAN PLANNING COMMISSION

## Agenda Communication

<b>3. Approval of Minutes</b>	<b>Meeting Date:</b> March 26, 2024
<b>3A: February 27, 2024 Meeting Minutes</b>	

**Attachments:** a. February 27, 2024 Meeting Minutes

**Submitted by:** Matt Whitmoyer  
Deputy Town Manager

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**Explanation and Summary:**

This is a request to approve the meeting minutes from February 27, 2024 for the Planning Commission Meeting.

**Proposed/Suggested Motion:**

"I move to approve the meeting minutes from February 27, 2024 as presented."

OR

Other action the Planning Commission deems appropriate.



**TOWN OF OCCOQUAN  
PLCOMMISSIONER KISLINGING  
COMMISSION**

**Town Hall - 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125**

**MEETING DATE: 2024-02-27**

**MEETING TIME: 6:30 PM**

**Present:** Chairperson Eliot Perkins, Commissioners, Darryl Hawkins, Ann Kisling, Bob Love, Ralph Newell, Don Wood

**Remote:** Ryan Somma

**Town Staff:** Matt Whitmoyer, ~~Management Fellow~~ Deputy Town Manager; Adam Lynn, Town Manager

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm

**2. Citizen Comments**

None

**3. Approval of Minutes**

a. January 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Love brought up two issues. The third page needed to include that Occoquan does not have jurisdiction across the river concerning parking and it needs to be included that Economic Development will be included in the Planning Commission's recommendations.

Commissioner Kisling motioned to approve the minutes with the two inclusions. Commissioner Newell seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**4. Reports**

a. Town Council Report

Chairperson Perkins said he had meetings with individuals for NVRC and Nova Parks concerning a path under the 123 Bridge including a walk under the proposed path with Supervisor Stewart of Fairfax County.

b. Deputy Town Manager Report

Town Council is addressing three items, land use density, resolution in support of the ISDLC grant and assistance with the Riverwalk, and drainage working with Fairfax Water. There is a new Town Seal. Commissioner Kisling's reappointment to the Planning Commission was approved.

c. Architectural Review Board Report

No updates.

**5. Action Items**

a. Request to Review Town Council Items Relating to Potential Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Commissioner Love moved to direct the Zoning Administrator to prepare a report evaluating the three items and making recommendations on potential actions for the Planning Commission to consider at its March 26, 2024 meeting. Commissioner Kisling seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**6. Work Session**

a. Strategic Planning Report Drafting Session

Chairperson Perkins asked everyone to start at the end of the process, which is what the Planning Commission is asking Town Council to do. The Commission must do its due diligence. For example, items under Placemaking and Beautification need to list how much they are going to cost and staff time.

Mr. Whitmoyer presented the initial matrix of consolidated recommendations. There was a discussion about the consolidation, what items were removed, what items were feasible, and prioritization. Commissioner Wood asked about consistent formatting for the report presentation to make the information easily accessible. Chairperson Perkins gave an overview of the formatting.

Chairperson Perkins said each report emphasized the importance of promoting the Town's features and asked the Commissioners what was expected of Town Council concerning this. There was a discussion of the Trail Town items, including signage and Tanyard Hill park. Commissioner Love recommended 1B and 1C be prioritized first. Commissioner Somma said 1F, Trails Day, was more of a long-term action item. Tanyard Hill Park maintenance did not need budgeting and could be accomplished with volunteers. Chairperson Perkins said connecting the Occoquan Greenway to Tanyard Hill park might be accomplished by the County. Commissioner Newell asked if Occoquan can simply declare itself a Trail Town, and that Damascus Virginia had done so. Chairperson Perkins said such a declaration could be timed to maximize its impact.

For Parking and Transportation, Chairperson Perkins noted the OmniRide connection to Occoquan needed more research and clarification. The Biking Infrastructure defines Bike Friendly Community status and bike rack enhancements. Commissioner Love noted the county designated Tanyard Hill Road a bike trail and that it is very dangerous and could the Town petition the county about the safety of the trail. Chairperson Perkins noted the connections to Occoquan Regional Park and the importance of connecting to all the upcoming regional attractions and the trail under the 123 Bridge. Concerning Parking Outside of Town, with Fairfax County there may be potential with the trail and unused road. Traffic Calming measures are already happening, so he doesn't know that we are

adding to the discussion. Commissioner Hawkins said the recommendations were in addition to existing measures.

For Public Health, Chairperson Perkins noted the existing water testing and health of the river. He recommended expanding education to include many more subjects. There was a discussion about 14A, reducing waste materials in restaurant operations, about the role of government and education. There was a discussion concerning an awards system for environmentally-friendly businesses, glass recycling, gas lights, Prince William County's sustainability plan, and tree management in Town. For Public Art, Chairperson Perkins gave an overview of action items such as reaching out to the community, photographing potential areas for improvement, and the Nova Arts and Culture initiative. There was an overview of the Placemaking initiatives and the Economic Development initiatives.

Chairperson Perkins asked Commissioners to review the items and recommend adding or removing from the list, in each Commissioner's area they need to determine the costs of each item by March 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### **7. Discussion Items**

None.

#### **8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:33pm

*Minutes Prepared by Commissioner Somma, Planning Commission Secretary*



# TOWN OF OCCOQUAN PLANNING COMMISSION

## Agenda Communication

<b>5. Action Items</b>	<b>Meeting Date:</b> March 26, 2024
<b>5A: Request to Approve and Refer Strategic Planning Recommendations to Town Council</b>	

**Attachments:** a. Draft Report – To Be Provided

**Submitted by:** Matt Whitmoyer  
Deputy Town Manager

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**Explanation and Summary:**

This is a request to review, discuss, and approve a strategic planning recommendations report and refer it to the Town Council for review, feedback, and, where appropriate, approval for programmatic and budgetary requests.

The attached report is a draft consolidating the results of strategic planning work sessions carried out by the Commission over the past year.

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff defer to the Commission for a determination on the contents of the report and how it would like to move forward.

**Proposed/Suggested Motion:**

“I move to approve the attached draft report as presented and to refer it to the Town Council for their review and feedback.”

OR

“I move to approve the attached draft report and to refer it to the Town Council for their review and feedback with the following changes:\_\_\_\_\_.”

OR

“I move to disapprove the attached draft report because \_\_\_\_\_.”

OR

Other action the Planning Commission deems appropriate.



# TOWN OF OCCOQUAN PLANNING COMMISSION

## Agenda Communication

<b>6. Discussion Items</b>	<b>Meeting Date:</b> March 26, 2024
<b>6A: Zoning Administrator Report on Potential Zoning Text and Comprehensive Plan Amendments Relating to Density</b>	

**Attachments:** a. Zoning Administrator Reports

**Submitted by:** Matt Whitmoyer  
Deputy Town Manager

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### **Explanation and Summary:**

This is a discussion item to review the reports provided by the Zoning Administrator on zoning text and comprehensive plan amendments relating to density issues.

The Zoning Administrator will be present to answer questions on the reports.

At the February 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Planning Commission requested that the Zoning Administrator evaluate and report on the following three (3) zoning-related items:

1. Evaluate the extent to which it is appropriate to alter density in specific areas,
2. Consider whether the parcel immediately east of the Route 123 bridge currently zoned R-1, should be considered for business zoning, and
3. Review the restrictions on accessory dwellings and determine whether or not adjustments are warranted.

### **Background**

A number of jurisdictions in the area have been reviewing their density restrictions over the past year. As Occoquan continues to mature, it seems likely that the Town too will need to do so in response to expressed needs for additional housing and revenues.

Since areas adjacent to other high-density areas are often the most suitable for such changes, the Council at a minimum would like the Planning Commission to evaluate those areas along Washington Street zoned R-1 or R-2 that are proximate to areas zoned R-3. Additionally, there have been repeated suggestions in the past that the parcel immediately east of the Route 123 bridge currently zoned R-1, should be considered for business zoning, and thus the Council requests that the Planning Commission evaluate this as well. Finally, the Council would like the Planning Commission to review the restrictions on accessory dwellings and determine whether or not adjustments are warranted.



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Eliot Perkins  
Nancy Freeborne Brinton  
Theo Daubresse

**TOWN MANAGER /  
CHIEF OF POLICE**  
Adam C. Linn, J.D.

March 22, 2024

Mr. Eliot Perkins, Chair  
Planning Commission  
Town of Occoquan  
P.O. Box 195  
Occoquan, VA 22125

*Re: Accessory Dwellings*

Dear Chair Perkins:

The Town Council at its February 27, 2024, meeting requested the Zoning Administrator to review the restrictions on accessory dwellings and determine whether adjustments to the zoning ordinance are warranted.

## **ZONING ORDINANCE:**

The zoning ordinance includes some definitions that are important to understanding what an accessory dwelling is and how it may be permitted.

Accessory building use or structure. *"A separate building, use or structure on the same lot with and customarily incidental to the principal use of the parcel or principal structure."*

Apartment house. See Dwelling, multi-family.

Boardinghouse. *"A building arranged or used for lodging for compensation, with or without meals, and not occupied as a single-family unit"*.

Building, main. *"A building in which the principal use of the lot is conducted"*.

Duplex. *"A building situated on a single lot and containing two dwelling units structurally attached, each having separate entrances."*

Dwelling, attached. *"One of a series of three or more dwelling units separated from one another by common party separated from one another by common party walls without openings, i.e., townhouses."*

Dwelling, detached single-family. *"A detached dwelling designed for occupancy by one family and not attached, duplex, or semidetached."*



Dwelling, multifamily. *“A building or portion of a building, designed for occupancy by three or more dwelling units with shared principal entryways,, including rental apartments and apartment condominiums.”*

Dwelling, semidetached. *“A dwelling having a party wall in common with another dwelling but which otherwise is designed to be and is substantially separate from any other structure or structures except accessory buildings.”*

Dwelling unit. *“A room, interconnected rooms, constituting a separate independent housekeeping establishment intended for permanent, full-time human occupancy and physically separated from any other rooms or dwelling units which may be in the same structure, and containing independent cooking and sleeping facilities.”*

Recreational vehicle. *“Any vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer designed for human occupation and not meeting the definition of manufactured home and is not meant for permanent occupancy.”*

There is no separate definition for accessory dwelling or accessory dwelling unit. Zoning districts R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, and PPU all allow accessory buildings. The B-1 zoning district has conflicting requirements. It does not allow accessory buildings as a permitted use but does allow residential uses provided that they do not occupy the floor of the building that is adjacent to the primary street or sidewalk. However, in the height limitations, it references that *“no accessory building may be more than one story tall.”*

Reading the definitions of accessory building use or structure combined with the definition of dwelling unit, it can be surmised that accessory dwelling units are permitted in the R-1, R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts. The units would have to be incidental to the principal use of the parcel or principal structure. For an accessory dwelling unit to be incidental to a principal dwelling unit, it must serve the occupants of the principal dwelling. Traditionally this means that the accessory dwelling unit must be designated for a family member(s), employee(s) of a family run home business or guest(s) of the family residing in the principal dwelling. An accessory dwelling unit is smaller in scale and subordinate to the primary dwelling. They are often found in the basement of a dwelling where they can be physically separated or as part of or the entirety of a detached structure.

Recently, there has been some discussion in the Town about the permissibility of the use of Tiny Houses on private property. The use of tiny houses or tiny homes has been growing in popularity in recent years. This practice is often referred to as alternative housing and sometimes associated with Affordable Dwelling Units (ADU). Such use has been defined and permitted by some locality zoning ordinances and restricted by others.

Any single-family dwelling unit is a principal structure that requires a building permit and building inspections to ensure compliance with building code regulations. When constructing any house it must meet the Building Code. A tiny house being constructed as a single-family dwelling must meet appendix Q of the International Residential Code (IRC) which would be reviewed by Prince William County Building Official’s Office. As a principal structure, there could be only one tiny house on a lot. A tiny house could be an accessory dwelling provided it is smaller in size and subordinate to the principal dwelling.

Many tiny houses are marketed and sold on wheels for mobility, which requires registration and licensing by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. Many localities regulate these

structures as “campers” or “recreational vehicles” or “Tiny-Homes-On-Wheels (THOW’s). Tiny homes could be captured in this definition if it was on wheels, but it would further be restricted by the permanent occupancy provision of the definition. In other words, a tiny house on wheels cannot be used for permanent residence, cannot be permanently connected to utilities and similar to a recreational vehicle must periodically be removed from a property.

The zoning ordinance for the Town does not define tiny homes. However, it does define *Dwelling, Detached Single-Family* which does not outline size or square footage for such a unit. Accessory building is also defined. This can be viewed in one of two ways. Either construction of a tiny home is permitted if constructed as a single-family dwelling, or it is permitted as an accessory dwelling. Any tiny home constructed on a chassis is not a building and would be categorized as a recreational vehicle.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Zoning Administrator recommends that the zoning requirements in the B-1 zoning district be clarified to permit accessory buildings and to permit accessory dwellings. Accessory dwellings should be called out as use permitted in the residential zoning district. It would be advisable to create a definition of accessory dwelling and place limits on its size and scale to minimize community impacts.

*Dwelling, accessory.* An ancillary dwelling unit which may be located in a principal structure or a detached accessory building for such uses as a family member apartment, guest house (for occasional visits by family or friends), maid's quarters, short term rental, and shall conform to the following:

- (1) An accessory dwelling shall not exceed the total gross floor area of the principal dwelling unit.
- (2) When an accessory building is located in the principal dwelling, the entry to the unit and its design shall be such that the appearance of the building shall remain a one-family residence.
- (3) An accessory dwelling shall have the same address as the principal dwelling.
- (4) Detached accessory dwellings shall meet the setback and building height requirements of accessory buildings.
- (5) Each accessory dwelling shall have at least one (1) designated off-street parking space.

Thank you for the time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey A. Harvey". The signature is stylized with large loops and a prominent initial "J".

Jeffrey A. Harvey, AICP  
Assistant Zoning Administrator

JAH/bar

cc: Adam C. Linn, Town Manager



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Adam C. Linn, J.D.

March 22, 2024

Mr. Eliot Perkins, Chair  
Planning Commission  
Town of Occoquan  
P.O. Box 195  
Occoquan, VA 22125

**Re: *Potential Zoning for 119 Poplar Lane***

Dear Chair Perkins:

The Town Council at its February 27, 2024, meeting requested the Zoning Administrator to review 119 Poplar Lane GPIN 8393-73-4888 east of the Route 123/Gordon Boulevard Bridge which is currently zoned R-1, limited residential, low-density and evaluate whether it should be rezoned to B-1, general business, with mixed-use components.

**EXISTING CONDITIONS:**

119 Polar Lane is an undeveloped property located adjacent to the Gordon Boulevard Bridge and the Occoquan River. The property is 0.8952 acre ( $\pm$ 38,995 square feet). Improvements consist of an existing paved driveway entrance, electric power lines, transformer boxes, and a private pier. The property has gradually sloping topography. The highest elevation is approximately 18 feet, mean sea level at the driveway entrance on Polar Lane and slopes towards the river. It is comprised of a cleared area with tree lines along the river and a drainageway extending from Polar Lane north to the river. Most of the property is located within the 100-year floodplain. There is Resource Protection Area (RPA) extending 100 feet from the shoreline of the river interior to the parcel. There is also an Intensely Developed Area (IDA) across the property's shoreline, allowing development, within certain circumstances to occur within the RPA. The entire parcel is located within a dam break inundation zone (DBIZ) associated with the Occoquan Dam.

The street conditions in front of the property are open ditch drainage and asphalt curb. There is no sidewalk along the property frontage. There is a sidewalk immediately across the street that extends to the west under the Gordon Boulevard Bridge. The area under Gordon Boulevard immediately west of the property is used for a public parking lot and kayak launch. The area along Poplar Lane east of the property is occupied by single family residences. The property is also encumbered by two utility easements associated with overhead electric service. There is an easement along the eastern part of the Poplar Lane frontage for a local distribution line. There is also an easement generally running parallel to the Gordon Boulevard Bridge across a portion of the property that serves a significant electrical transmission line.

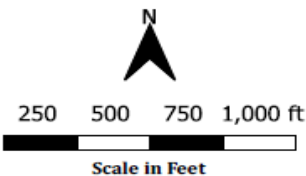
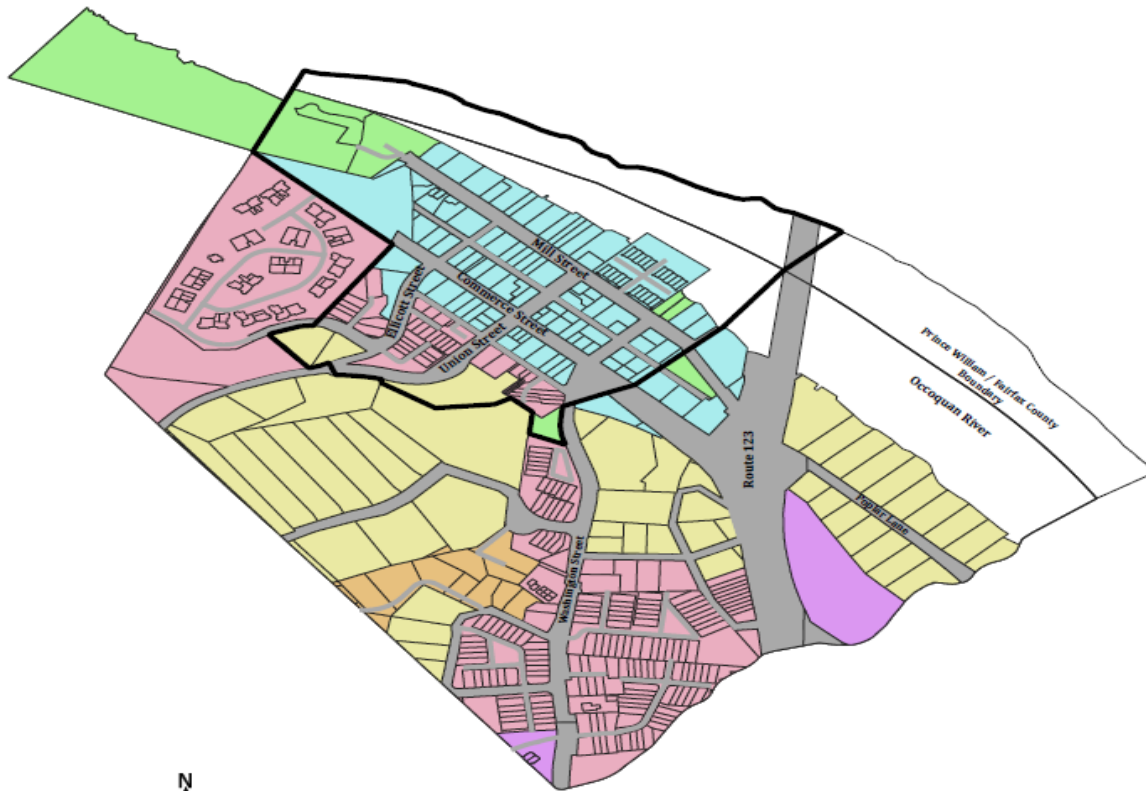


### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**

The Future Land Use Plan Map in the Comprehensive Plan identifies 119 Poplar Lane for Low Density Residential use. This land use is compatible with the property's current R-1, limited residential, low-density zoning. The Land Use Plan Map recommends low-density residential use along Poplar Lane east of the Gordon Boulevard Bridge. This is reflective of the existing R-1 zoning and single family detached housing units that can be seen along Poplar Lane extending east to the town limits. Properties located to the west of the Gordon Boulevard Bridge along Mill Street are designated for mixed use overlay and park and open space. They are zoned B-1, general business and are comprised of several commercial establishments leading into the historic downtown area.



# Town of Occoquan, VA Future Land Use Map



For more information on Zoning, please refer to the Town Code, Chapter 157.

Zoning update June 12, 2014

Zoning District Designation	
Low Density Residential	Mixed Use Overlay
Medium Density Residential	Park and Open Space
Med-High Density Residential	Street
High Density Residential	Historic District

## **ZONING ORDINANCE:**

The Town has six primary zoning districts. R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, B-1, and PPU.

As noted earlier, the property is currently zoned R-1. The intent of the R-1 district is *“...to promote and encourage a healthy and sustainable environment for family life, especially for families that include children, and to ensure that the limited physical size of the town is developed in accordance with its historical character as a town that is primarily residential,*

*with concentrations of commercial uses. To this end, development in the R-1 District is limited to low concentration residential use, mostly detached single-family residences, together with certain additional uses that would serve the residences of the district, including schools, parks, and utilities.....".* The permitted uses in the district are single-family homes and activities that support single-family homes such as parks, schools, places of assembly, public utilities, and limited home related businesses. The minimum lot size in the district is 10,000 square feet with a minimum lot width of 70 feet. The property in its current configuration has only 76 feet of frontage along Poplar Lane and therefore cannot be further subdivided.

The request from the Town Council was to evaluate whether the property should be rezoned to the B-1 zoning district. The intent of the B-1 district is *"...for the conduct of general business to which the public requires direct and frequent access, but is not characterized either by constant heavy trucking, other than stocking and delivery of light retail goods, or by any nuisance factors, other than incident light and noise congregation of people and passenger vehicles. This includes the use of retail stores, banks, theaters, business offices, newspaper offices, restaurants, and taverns. The B-1 district is also encouraged to incorporate mixed-use designs, characterized by business uses along the street or water font with high-density residential above, as new developments and redevelopment occurs.* The permitted uses in the district match the intent as they are primarily commercial businesses. Residential uses may not occupy the floor of the building that is adjacent to the primary street and, or sidewalk. Buildings can be constructed as close as 5 feet from the front property line. There are no requirements for side or rear yard setbacks and no floor area ratio (FAR) requirements.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Zoning Administrator recommends that 119 Polar Lane retain its current R-1 zoning. The Comprehensive Plan recommends the future use for the property to be low-density residential which is compatible with the current R-1 zoning. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a guide for future development but is not determinative. The Gordon Boulevard Bridge acts as a physical delimiter between the residential part of town along Poplar Lane and the commercial and mixed-use area along Mill Street. The current conditions on the property significantly restrict the buildable area. Since the B-1 zoning district has no side yard setback, any commercial building would likely be constructed close to the eastern property line and Poplar Lane frontage to avoid impacts of the RPA and floodplain. There is an existing single-family dwelling abutting the property that would be directly impacted without mitigation measures such as buffers, fencing, limiting the types of businesses and hours of operation. Given the limited buildable area and physical constraints of the property, a likely use could be for a parking lot. If the existing parking lot under the Gordon Boulevard Bridge were to be expanded on to this property, a rezoning to the B-1 district would not be necessary as a public parking lot owned by the Town could be permitted in any zoning district. Mitigating measures such as buffering, fencing and hours of operation would also be advisable for a parking lot in this location.

Thank you for the time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey A. Harvey". The signature is stylized with large loops and a cursive font.

Jeffrey A. Harvey, AICP  
Assistant Zoning Administrator

JAH/bar

cc: Adam C. Linn, Town Manager





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**TOWN MANAGER /  
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Adam C. Linn, J.D.

March 22, 2024

Mr. Eliot Perkins, Chair  
Planning Commission  
Town of Occoquan  
P.O. Box 195  
Occoquan, VA 22125

*Re: **Evaluation of Potential Changes to Density – Washington Street and other areas of the Town***

Dear Chair Perkins:

The Town Council at its February 27, 2024, meeting requested the Zoning Administrator to evaluate the extent to which the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance could be adjusted to increase development densities of properties along Washington Street that are in proximity to other properties zoned R-3. This was the primary area of focus, but other areas of the Town could be considered.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**

The Comprehensive Plan is the guiding document that the Town uses to make land use decisions. Comprehensive Plans are known to be “Living Documents”, as they reflect the desires of the community, but they change over time, and must be reevaluated every five years as required by the Code of Virginia. Occoquan’s Comprehensive Plan has several themes that would apply to the review of density. These themes are:

- Sustain Occoquan’s community character and distinctive quality of life.
- Enhance Occoquan’s circulation and mobility with an emphasis on pedestrian safety.
- Sustain and enhance Occoquan’s business/historic district while diversifying the town’s economic base.

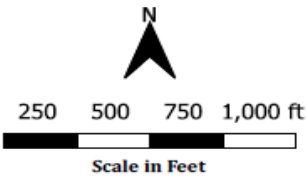
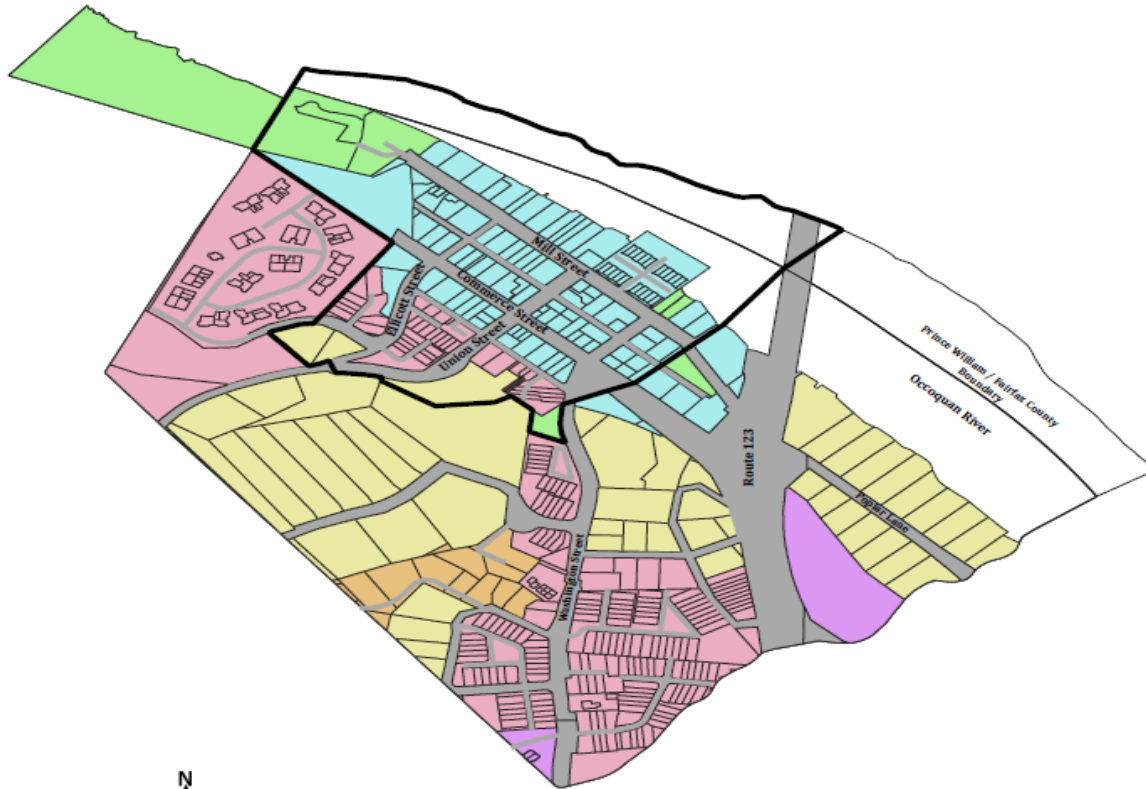
- Witness environmental stewardship by living in harmony with our diverse natural environment.
- Partner with neighboring localities to coordinate planning and governance matters of mutual interest.
- Commit to developing a comprehensive plan schedule and accountability metric.

The Plan acknowledges past population growth, its desirable location to include proximity to the Occoquan River and easy transportation access to Interstate-95, making it a “community of choice”. It also acknowledges a changing demographic that is more family-focused and diverse. Future growth should take those factors into account. The Plan notes the past growth and development and mentions community debate about adding additional townhome communities to the Town.

The Future Land Use map acknowledges the existing development pattern along Washington Street. It varies from the Zoning Map in that the Zoning Map indicates two parcels being zoned R-2, medium density residential where the Land Use Map indicates the future use should be low-density residential.









There are several areas located along East Locust Street, Poplar Lane, Union Street, and West Locust Street that are currently planned and zoned for low-density residential use. If desired those areas could be considered for in-fill/redevelopment. However, page 20 of the Plan speaks to the need for housing development to be closely monitored to maintain the current balance of affordable, mid-level, and luxury level residential choices. *“As for the areas outside the Historic District, the Town should seek to limit the expanded use of current residential areas so as to ease the strains on the community’s transportation networks.”* These statements imply that future increases in density should be limited and provide adequate areas for parking and pedestrian connectivity to minimize traffic impacts.

# Town of Occoquan, VA Future Land Use Map



For more information on Zoning, please refer to the Town Code, Chapter 157.

Zoning update June 12, 2014

Zoning District Designation	
 Low Density Residential	 Mixed Use Overlay
 Medium Density Residential	 Park and Open Space
 Med-High Density Residential	 Street
 High Density Residential	 Historic District

## ZONING:

The Zoning Map of the Town (below) shows the area of Washington Street primarily being encompassed by R-3, general residential, high-density zoning. The zoning density generally decreases as you travel north on Washington Street towards the Historic District with R-1, limited residential – low density and R-2, general residential, medium density. The applicable residential zoning districts allow for the following forms of development:

**R-3** – Single family detached dwellings, duplex dwellings, townhouse dwellings, and multi-family dwellings. The minimum lot size of single family detached dwellings is 6,000 square

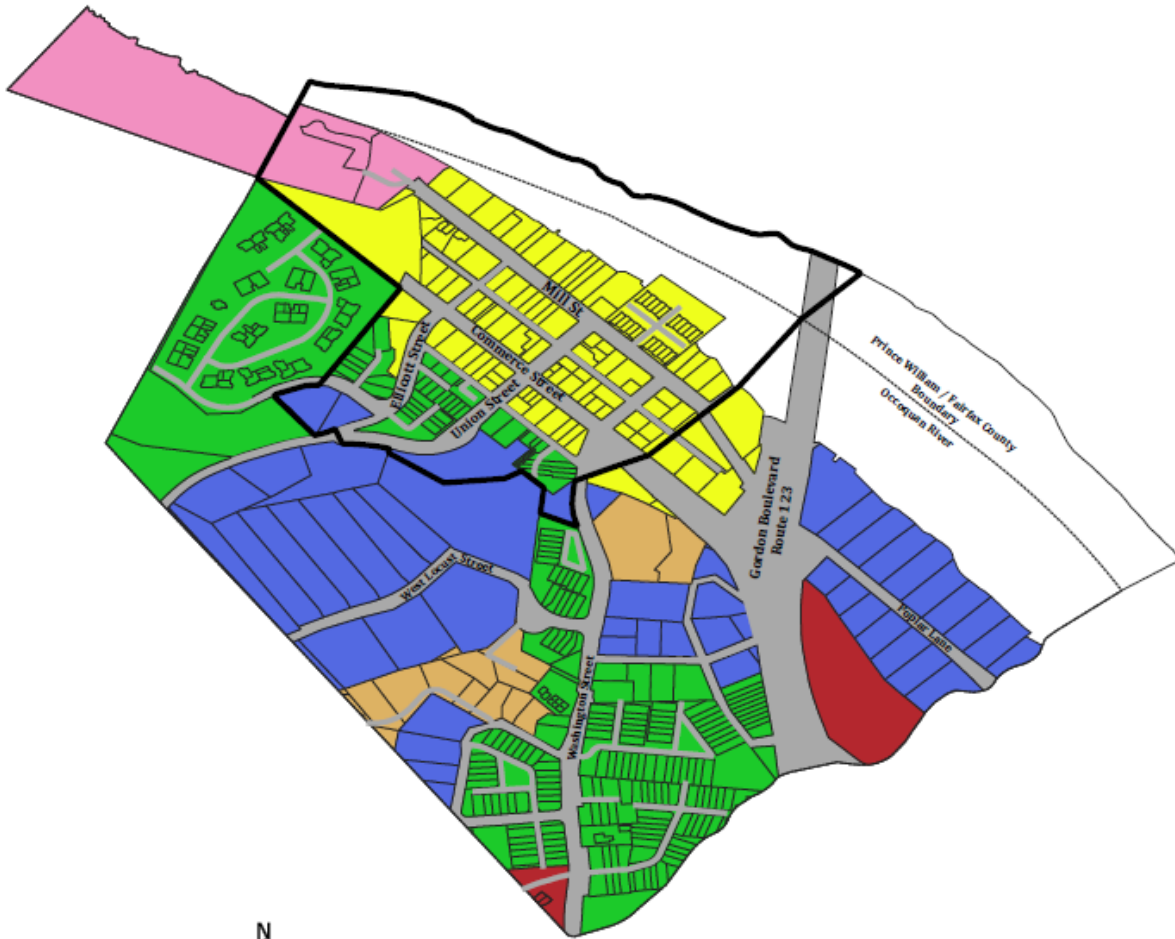
feet. The minimum lot size of duplex dwellings is 12,000 square feet. The minimum lot width and requirement for 40% open space dictate the lot yield for townhouse developments. Multi-family dwellings can be built at a maximum density of 16 units per acre on a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet with a minimum 30% open space.

**R-2** – Detached single family dwellings and duplex dwellings. The minimum lot size of single family detached dwellings is 10,000 square feet. The minimum lot size for duplex units is 12,000 square feet.

**R-1** – Single family detached dwellings with minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet. The minimum lot width is 70 feet.

Other areas of the town, outside the historic district, are zoned R-1 and R-4. The R-4 district is exclusive to multi-family housing. R-4 zoned properties are located at the periphery of town. All these residential zoning districts limit building heights to a maximum of 35 feet. As such, all dwellings are two or three stories at most depending on the type of construction.

# Town of Occoquan, VA Zoning District Map



250 500 750 1,000 ft



Scale in Feet

For more information on Zoning, please refer to the Town Code, Chapter 157.

Zoning update March 7, 2023

## Zoning Districts

R-1	B-1
R-2	PPU
R-3	Street
R-4	Historic District

## **ANALYSIS:**

Considering the guidance of the Comprehensive Plan, current zoning scheme, and topography of the town, there appears to be limited potential for significant in-fill/redevelopment. The Comprehensive Plan reflects the current conditions in town and does not have any direct recommendations for increased development densities. The current zoning scheme is suburban in scale with substantial lot sizes, significant setbacks, and limited building height. Areas located outside the historic district are characterized as a plateau and hillside overlooking the Occoquan River. Zoning regulations limiting development on steep slopes and the practicalities of developing on those slopes also limit new residential development potential without tear-down and rezoning.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

In keeping with the spirit of the Comprehensive Plan and the current zoning scheme, there are a few tools that can be considered to allow a limited increase in residential development in the town. Those items are:

1. Consider reducing the minimum lot size for single family detached homes in the R-1 and R-2 zones to 6,000 square feet. This would allow a uniform lots size in town where single family homes are permitted. It could also retain the feeling of being located in a town if connecting sidewalks are constructed.
2. Consider allowing flag or stem lots. This allows for limited road frontage but gives a separate driveway access to the new home.
3. Adopt zoning changes to allow for cluster development. The intent of cluster development is to reduce lot sizes to preserve open space. It is permitted per Sec. 15.2-2286.1. <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title15.2/chapter22/section15.2-2286.1/> Given the small sizes of parcels in the Town, a change in permitted dwelling unit types or density may be necessary.
4. Permit the use of accessory dwellings. An accessory dwelling is essentially an apartment in a dwelling or detached structure that is smaller in size and scale than the primary dwelling.
5. Consider relaxing the slope restriction for land areas exceeding 20% slope.

If the Planning Commission is inclined to consider an amendment to Comprehensive Plan to increase development densities the following considerations are recommended to be part of the decision-making process to adjust the Future Land Use Map:

1. Consider higher density development along roadways that are not gateways to the historic district. Over-building in gateways to the historic district may detract from its sense of place.
2. Consider areas where pedestrian connectivity can be achieved to minimize traffic congestion and promote the sense of small-town community.
3. Consider areas where the traffic volume on existing streets can accommodate the increase in vehicles associated with new development.

4. Consider promoting small lot detached, attached, and semi-attached dwelling unit types as additional housing options to achieve density goals and desired scale of development.
5. Consider higher density areas to be located near existing or planned parks and playgrounds. This will promote social interaction and a sense of community.
6. Consider increasing maximum building heights where appropriate. Increased building height should not detract from the viewshed of the historic district.

Thank you for the time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey A. Harvey". The signature is stylized with large loops and a cursive font.

Jeffrey A. Harvey, AICP  
Assistant Zoning Administrator

JAH/bar

cc: Adam C. Linn, Town Manager