



TOWN OF OCCOQUAN
Town Hall - 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125
MEETING DATE: 2018-11-28

MEETING TIME: 6:30 PM

Present: Ann Kisling, Jenn Mathis, Eliot Perkins, Ryan Somma

Absent: none

1. Call to Order

The Planning Commission Public Hearing was called to order by Eliot Perkins on 2018-11-28, at 6:41 p.m.

Secretary for Meeting

Ryan Somma took minutes for the meeting.

2. Citizen Comments

There were no citizens comments.

3. Approval of Minutes of October 23, 2018

Jenn Mathis noted two grammatical errors in the minutes that needed correcting.

Ann Kisling moved to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes of 2018-10-23 with the amendment that the errors be corrected. Jenn Mathis seconded the motion. The motion carried by poll vote, unanimously.

4. Approval of Parking Study Recommendation Report

Eliot Perkins opened the discussion by noting that the Draft Parking Study Recommendations were written before the Commission knew about the significant new residential and commercial development coming to town. As a result, he felt an update to the document to provide additional parking options, such as timed and paid parking, that will encourage parking space turnover, push commercial employees to town-owned parking, and accommodate increased future demand. He presented Commission members with a draft document that was informed by a conversation he had with John Reilly of JMT who co-authored the parking study and recommended adding the document as an addendum to the Commission's report. Jenn Mathis noted that the intention of the policy should be to encourage people to enjoy the town but not stay all day.

Chris Coon noted that per recent Town Council meetings, that there was the potential to repaint the town spaces and make them wider, which would further reduce the number of spaces. Ann Kisling noted that, additionally, with AirBnb, more people would be parking overnight.

Eliot Perkins requested that additional pros and cons be added to the document regarding making Commerce street two way, such as reducing traffic to restaurants in town. Chris Coon added that removing two stop signs for commuters cutting through town could encourage more cut-through traffic.

Chris Coon provided an update on VDOT improvements to Mill Street that were moving forward, would bring intersections up to ADA compliance, and allow for stripping in crosswalks for pedestrian safety. There was also a possibility of setting up raised crosswalks at a later point, but not with VDOT funding. Jenn Mathis requested that Chris Coon contact VDOT to determine if the town could install raised sidewalks at the same time other improvements were being made to the intersections to save money.

Ryan Somma took as action items to update the recommendations report to include JMT-specific language, additional considerations for two-way Commerce Street, and the provided addendum.

5. Annual Report Discussion / CIP Budget Discussion

Ryan Somma provided members with print outs of the Comprehensive Plan Action Item Tracking from the 2017 Annual Report. Chris Coon explained that the Annual report articulates who is on the Planning Commission, what Comprehensive Plan (CP) action items have been accomplished, and what are the main and secondary priorities for next fiscal year. Eliot Perkins requested members chime in and recommend items from the CP.

Jenn Mathis noted that #9 "Based on the parking study, the Town should work on an improved parking management and execute the plan. Courses of action should be developed to improve commercial district and nearby residential area parking rules." was already in progress with the PC Parking Study Recommendations as part of having a plan and executing a plan. Ryan Somma noted that #12 "Encourage use of business-owned vacant land for commercial parking." complimented this as part of recommendations for timed parking.

Jenn Mathis also recommended #20 "The Town will pursue designation of Tanyard Hill Road as a State scenic byway as one way of preserving its character," #21 "The Town should plan in its CIP for how to implement and finance improvements to the Town's gateways." and #36 "Encourage stewardship of the Town's natural resources through increased awareness of environmental impacts from daily activities." As part of a coordinated set of action items that would focus on town beautification. Noting that #36 could involve coordination with groups like Friends of the Occoquan and encourage in-Town grass-roots efforts like "Adopt a Road" for Tanyard Hill to get residents involved with VDOT providing safety measures. Chris Coon noted that this could involve the development of a "Community Plan," where residents could define what they think is important to Occoquan. Eliot Perkins recommended #18 "The Town should conduct a community study to improve and expand the use of brick sidewalks to the Town center. The study should also incorporate streetscaping, beautification, and woodland protection." as complimenting these community-driven efforts of improving the Town's appearance. Jenn Mathis noted that this would also include #50 "Beautification and landscaping efforts should enhance the aesthetics of the Town." Ryan Somma added #42 "Occoquan will work with PWC and LRPA in order to maintain a woodland preserve buffer and scenic bypass along Tanyard Hill Road." as falling into both beautification and town gateway improvement efforts.

Eliot Perkins noted that all recommendations would need to be framed in terms of budgetary priorities.

As part of efforts to promote the town, Jenn Mathis proposed #37 "Planning Commission will meet with representatives from both Prince William County and Fairfax County Planning Commissions in order to agree on a mutually beneficial and cooperative growth plan for the town and its shared surrounding areas." and #38 "Create a dialogue with LRPRA and the Lorton Work House Arts Center in order to enhance town goals that promote the coordination of our surrounding residential areas and neighboring artistic commercial enterprises." Ryan Somma noted that complimenting this was a Planning Commission item #58 "Pursue designation as Main Street America community." which former PC member Heather Ozuna had previously pursued but had not been completed.

Additional items raised for consideration were #55 "Develop a Green Business Recognition Program to highlight and encourage eco-friendly business practices and initiatives. Businesses to be recognized that have received a Green Certificate from a third-party organization." and #57 "Participate in VML's Green Government Challenge. Obtain at least 100 'Green points' to obtain 'Green Government' certification."

6. Chair/Town Council Report

Eliot Perkins provided an update on the Jennings Mills development that the next step will be for the developer to provide an initial site plan that the Town Staff will review.

7. Adjournment

With the December holidays, the Commission scheduled to meet next on Monday, December 17, 2018.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Eliot Perkins
Chair, Planning Commission

Submitted by Ryan Somma, Planning Commission Secretary