

Planning Commission

Regular Session

March 7, 2006

7:30 P.M.

At approximately 7:30 p.m. on March 7, 2006, Vice-Chairman Joan Natali called to order the regular session of the Planning Commission. In addition to Vice-Chairman Natali, also present were Cela Burge, Bruce Evans, Eileen Cobb, Town Planner Jason Pruitt and Town Clerk Joy Pelletier. Ken Kuttler arrived at approximately 7:45 p.m. Absent were Chairman Tom Bonadeo, and Karen Jolly Davis.

A moment of silence was observed and all recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

No one from the Public was present

Consent Agenda

Motion made by Bruce Evans, seconded by Cela Burge and unanimously approved to amend the agenda format by moving item B of Old Business to be the last item discussed under Old Business. Cela Burge recused herself from Item B of Old Business.

Motion made by Bruce Evans, seconded by Eileen Cobb and unanimously approved to accept the minutes of February 7, 2006 as modified.

Report Presentations

A. Town Council

Jason Pruitt quickly briefed the Commissioners on the items reviewed with the Town Council at their February 14, 2006 meeting. These items included an update on Tree Preservation, an approved Conditional Use Permit Application for 718 Randolph Ave., revisions to the Subdivision Ordinance, Board and Commission vacancies, the Rosenwald School, a possible boundary line adjustment and the revision to the water systems usage rate.

B. Northampton County Joint Local Planning Commission

Jason Pruitt introduced the March 1, 2006 Northampton County Joint Local Planning Commission agenda and deferred to Commissioner Evans for a synopsis of the meeting. Commissioner Evans stated there were several variances on the agenda, all of which were recommended to be denied. He also reported the County Planning

Commission was in the process of rewriting the subdivision ordinance. He also mentioned as related to the subdivision ordinance, buffers between the road and the subdivision and buffers for wildlife migration were discussed.

Old Business

A. Trees Preservation – Zoning Ordinance Section 8.18 A, Section 4.4

Mr. Pruitt reviewed with the Commissioners the actions that had taken place to this point. Conversation revolved around removing the tree preservation verbiage from the Historic District Overlay of the Zoning Ordinance. Also discussed was the role of the ad hoc Tree Committee. Section 4 of the Zoning Ordinance was then dissected and debated.

Motion made by Ken Kuttler to recommend to Town Council we amend the wording of section 8.18 by removing the words “or significant trees shall” and by inserting the word “or” before structures. Secondly, strengthen the wording in section 4.4 to further protect removal of trees and move that forward to Town Council as a recommendation.

The motion died for lack of a second. It was agreed to meet March 14, 2006 at 3:30 to finalize the language.

B. Subdivision Proposal from Randy Keck

Mr. Pruitt quickly reminded the Commissioners of the subdivision proposal from Mr. Keck that had been presented at the February 7, 2006 meeting. He then reviewed a revised four lot subdivision proposal with the group. In the latest revision, Mr. Keck proposed running the water line to the subdivision splitting the cost of doing so with the Town. However, he kept the idea of using private septic tanks. In speaking with the Town attorney it was determined that Section 7.1 (the exception section of the subdivision ordinance) was not the appropriate method of dealing with this matter. The attorney, Mike Sterling, indicated that an exception is meant to be a slight deviation from the subdivision regulation and should not be something that takes the matter completely out of the box. He stated pursuing such an idea would create a precedent. In light of this information, Mr. Keck may decide to again revise his proposal making a denser development on that property so that running the water lines would become more financially feasible. Well and septic systems along 184 were discussed as well as septic systems being installed near the wells. Discussion then reverted to proposed boundary adjustments.

C. Comprehensive Plan Draft Section – Public Utilities

Jason Pruitt introduced the current draft section of the Comprehensive which included the public water system, the wastewater treatment system and the storm water sewer system. All the Commissioners thanked Mr. Pruitt for the quality of work involved in developing this draft portion. Minor discussion over wells took place. It was also pointed out the storm water system actually belongs to VDOT as the storm water system is in the VDOT right of way.

D. Population Study Status Report

Jason Pruitt gave a progress report on the population study survey and welcomed anyone interested to poll the blocks which had not yet been worked.

- E. Historic District Demolition Regulations – Zoning Ordinance Section 8.21
The Commissioners reviewed the draft created in December and the revisions as suggested by the Town’s attorney. Mr. Pruitt related the Historic District Review Board had also looked at the proposed revisions and that all the members were in support of the intent of the changes. A concern was expressed over the number of appraisals required and the cost of such. It was suggested to include a term such as “Board Certified” in relation to the appraisers. It was also proposed that those people outside the Historic District be included in the petitioning process.

Motion made by Eileen Cobb seconded by Ken Kuttler to take the proposed revisions to public hearing.

- F. Historic Landmark Preservation – Rosenwald School
Mr. Pruitt informed the group the current owner of the property stated she did not want the property included in the Town’s Historic District nor does she want it designated as a historic landmark. He further stated the Department of Historic Resources is unable to process a request for a landmark designation without the property owner’s signature. A public forum to garner local interest was discussed along with continued research.

Look at other areas that may have run into same problem. Could schedule public hearing

- G. Projections in Setbacks – Heating and Cooling Equipment; Patios
Mr. Pruitt indicated Chairman Bonadeo had contacted Tom Saunders at Bay Creek to inform him of the proposed changes. At this point, the Town staff is waiting for further feedback from Bay Creek.

New Business

None

Announcements

- A. Waterfront Design Guidelines and Master Plan Public Input Session
March 28, 2006, 6:30pm to 9:00pm, at the Palace Theatre
- B. Historic Preservation Weekend
Mr. Pruitt announced tickets for the workshops were still available.

Motion to recess the meeting until March 14, 2006 at 3:30 p.m. in Town Council Chambers was made by Bruce Evans, seconded by Ken Kuttler and unanimously approved.

Vice-Chairman

Clerk