



# Planning Commission

## Regular Session

May 1, 2007

7:30 P.M.

At approximately 7:30 p.m. in Town Council Chambers, Chairman Tom Bonadeo called to order the Regular Session of the Planning Commission. In addition to Chairman Bonadeo, present were Joan Natali, Ken Kuttler, Cela Burge, Karen Jolly Davis and Eileen Cobb. Also present were Town Planner Jason Pruitt, Town Clerk Joy Pelletier and approximately six members of the public.

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

### Public Comments

Bud Baxter – Project Manager for Gallagher and Assoc.

Mr. Baxter commended Tom Bonadeo as the Chairman of the Planning Commission for the presentation to Town Council at their recent retreat. He remarked the presentation was precise and to the point while covering a topic of grave significance.

Mr. Baxter then congratulated Town Planner Jason Pruitt for his acceptance into Law School. He commented on the loss to the Town and how Mr. Pruitt would be missed. He then told a “lawyer” joke insisting he should be the first to initiate Mr. Pruitt into the cruel world of lawyer jokes.

**Motion made by Cela Burge, seconded by Karen Davis and unanimously approved to move item 7C until the end of the session and to move item 6 D to a separate work session.**

**Motion made by Joan Natali, seconded by Eileen Cobb and unanimously approved to accept the minutes with corrections to the work session of April 18, 2007.**

**Motion made by Joan Natali, seconded by Ken Kuttler and unanimously approved to accept the minutes of April 3, 2007 as presented.**

### Report Presentations

A. Town Council

Mr. Pruitt highlighted the items covered by the Council. In particular he mentioned the Council had adopted the Master Tree Plan and Ordinance and that the Council had decided to appoint a steering committee for the Harbor Architectural Standards.

B. Northampton County Joint Local Planning Commission

See agenda – No comments

### Old Business

A. Comprehensive Plan/Population Study Status Report

Mr. Pruitt took the floor by announcing that Commissioner Natali had updated and E-mailed the implementation section. As he was distributing the hard copies, Karen Davis asked questions concerning adding items to the Capital Improvement Plan. Chairman Bonadeo verified that a list should be prepared by the Planning Commissioners which should then be passed on to Council.

Mr. Pruitt had provided the raw data of the population status report for the Commissioner's review. He indicated the data would be summarized for the meeting in June. Compliments were handed all around for the work accomplished.

**B. Harbor Area Architectural Design Standards Status Report**

Mr. Pruitt updated the Commissioners on the progress of the item. He stated an RFP had been advertised which closed as of May 1, 2007, and that five proposals had been submitted. He stated the Steering committee would be setting interviews in the near future. He then reported the members of the Steering Committee were: Bruce Evans, Tom Bonadeo, Russ Dunton, Steve Bennett, Marianne McDevitt, and Jason Pruitt. Based on a recommendation made by Bruce Evans, a third member of the Planning Commission would be added to the committee.

Chairman Bonadeo outlined the process the Steering Committee would take as follows: 1) interview prospects; 2) award the post; 3) guide the vendor thru the process of putting pattern book together. He stated the book did not need to be elaborate but needed to be firm in design concept and standards for materials that are not identified in the zoning ordinances. It was reported the Town had applied for a grant to help with the cost of the pattern book.

Joan Natali agreed to join the Steering Committee.

**C. Harbor District Revisions**

Mr. Pruitt summarized specific items of the plan that had been decided on during the last work session.

Chairman Bonadeo introduced Thomas Beck of Becker, Morgan Architectural Group and asked for his input.

Thomas Becker stated he had served for 14 years on a planning and zoning commission and worked in the past with Tom Gallagher and with Bay Creek, and that he was currently retained by Creative Property Development. Mr. Becker remarked on height of the buildings being ambiguous; that the group should concentrate on good design. He stated pushing the developers and their designers for good design would make for better results. He said trying to regulate good design is next to impossible that good design was difficult to put into documentation form.

On the height issue, Mr. Becker stated the key would be to decide where the measurement starts. Also be careful of ornamentation.

After Mr. Becker closed his statements, set-backs were discussed. "Water's edge" was a question. Tom Gallagher was asked for input. Maps were displayed for visual effect. Mr. Gallagher indicated about 7 acres of land would be taken out to develop a

marina. A hard bulkhead would be developed and may be used as the “water’s edge” for set-back issues.

Further discussion encompassed breakwaters and bulkheads for protection of the Harbor area. Mr. Gallagher expressed an interest to work co-operatively with the Town in building these barriers. Chairman Bonadeo stated an RFP had recently gone out for an engineering firm to look at what would be necessary to protect that end of the Harbor. The understanding was there may be grant money available to help with the project.

A work session was scheduled for May 14, 2007 in anticipation of completing this segment and going to Public Hearing.

- D. Historic Town Entrance Corridor Overlay District - to be discussed at a separate work session.

## 7. **New Business**

- A. Expansion of Historic District Review Board Membership

Commissioner Davis questioned the need to expand the Historic District Review Board Membership if, in fact, the HDRB would not be reviewing applications for the new Harbor District. Chairman Bonadeo responded that it would be easier to get a quorum if someone is out. He further stated there was a desire to get additional people with different perspectives on board and that additional training was being set up for the HDRB.

Jason Pruitt elaborated by announcing a workshop had been scheduled for the last Tuesday in June at 1:00 and would be presented by Camille Baughman from the Virginia Historic Resources. The workshop would be dedicated to types of materials used in Historic Districts. Mr. Pruitt invited anyone interested to attend.

The modification to the existing Zoning Ordinance was briefly discussed.

**Motion made by Karen Davis, seconded by Cela Burge and unanimously approved to move to Public Hearing amendments to section 8.7 and 8.8 of the Historic District Overlay.**

- B. Historic Harbor Area Overlay District

Jason Pruitt responded to the Planning Commissioner’s request to pursue a historic district for the harbor area by offering two options. The first option would be to extend the existing historic district to encompass the harbor area; the second would be to create a new historic district. Due to the differences in architecture surrounding harbors, creating the new district would be a more streamlined approach. Mr. Pruitt had provided a draft of the Historic Harbor Area Overlay District. The creation of this draft was based on the existing Historic District Overlay with a few minor revisions. Mr. Pruitt stated additional revisions would be necessary.

Mr. Pruitt explained the Historic Harbor Area Overlay District would overlay other zoning districts. The overlay would require a Certificate of Appropriateness for architectural design while the underlying Harbor District zone would regulate features such as site layout and would require the Harbor Development Certificate. He further explained in some instances, only one Certificate would be required, while in other instances, both would be required. When both were required, the applications

would be reviewed simultaneously as the Harbor Area Review Board would be overseeing both processes.

Amendments were made to the document provided by Mr. Pruitt.

C. Fence Regulations

Chairman Bonadeo mentioned there had been a recent incident involving a new fence in town. Jason Pruitt explained that a number of fence situations had been brought to the attention of the Town Council, one in particular had been built outside of stated regulations, but was brought closer to guidelines by increasing the grade of the property. Due to this circumstance, questions were raised over whether the current regulations were adequate.

Traditional style and materials was discussed as well as the fact that the guidelines as written are specific in only items such as barbed wire.

Tom Bonadeo suggested the Commission report to Town Council that a better defined measurement point for fences be created and Town Council should review the scope of review procedures of the Historic District Review Board.

Chairman Bonadeo asked the Commissioners to go look at three fences: Tazewell across from the Library, corner of Randolph and Peach, and Bay Avenue with ropes.

D. Planning Commission Regular Session Meeting Time

**Motion made by Karen Davis, seconded by Ken Kuttler to move to Public Hearing changing the meeting time to 6:00 p.m.**

**Announcements**

- A. Multi-Use Trail Public Input Meeting with Land Studio  
Mr. Pruitt announced the meeting would be on May 16, 2007 at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers.

**Motion made by Karen Davis, seconded by Ken Kuttler and unanimously approved to recess the meeting until May 14, 2007.**

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Chairman

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Town Clerk