

**CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 22, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.**

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA. WAS HELD AT CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN HALL, 100 EAST MAIN STREET, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA, ON SEPTEMBER 22, 2015 AT 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor D. Michael Barber; Vice-Mayor R. Cord Hall; Samuel M. Bishop; Steve Huppert; Henry D. Showalter; Bradford J. Stipes; James W. Vanhoozier. ABSENT: None.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Barry Helms; Assistant Town Manager Randy Wingfield; Clerk of Council Michele Stipes; Town Attorney Theresa Fontana; Finance Director/Treasurer Val Tweedie; Aquatics Director Terry Caldwell.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Town Council's intention to adopt an ordinance in regards to a rezoning request by George Smith, agent for Peppers Ferry Investments, L.L.C. for property located at 915 Peppers Ferry Road, N.W. (tax parcel 434 – ((A)) – 16) from R-2 Two-Family Residential to B-3 General Business. The property contains 1 acre and is scheduled as residential in the Future Land Use Map of the Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. Applicant George Smith of 1744 Willis Hollow Road, Shawsville, explained his intent to sell the former rental property after it is rezoned; property located on both sides of the 1-acre lot are currently zoned B-3 General Business. Mr. Smith was present at the Planning Commission Public Hearing to explain his request and answer questions. Town Manager Helms reported that the Town has received no public comments regarding the request.
2. Request by Montgomery County for a boundary line adjustment on Cinnabar Road. Town Manager Helms explained that the request is to adjust the county / town boundary line so that the property that is to be the future site of the new Montgomery County dog shelter is entirely outside of Town limits. According to Town Manager Helms, the Town has no need for the small portion of land involved in the request, and the adjustment would simplify the county's process of obtaining necessary construction permits.

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR BARBER.

II. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Council Meeting Minutes of September 8, 2015
2. Monthly Bills

Councilman Hall made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye; Vanhoozier – Aye.

III. RECOGNITIONS:

1. Help Save the Next Girl Foundation. Mayor Barber introduced to Council Dan and Gil Harrington, parents of Morgan Harrington, a Virginia Tech student who was abducted and murdered in October 2009. In response to their daughter's death, the Harringtons founded the Help Save the Next Girl Foundation, a non-profit organization designed to educate the public on the importance of keeping young girls safe, and to educate young girls on the importance of safety awareness. Also present with the Harringtons was Kenny Jarels advocate for the campaign. Mayor Barber then presented the Harringtons with a resolution in recognition of their efforts through Help Save the Next Girl, and the difference they are making in communities nationwide through chapters on high school and college campuses. Mayor Barber proclaimed the month of October as Help Save the Next Girl Month in

Christiansburg, with October 17th designated as Help Save the Next Girl Day. Banners notifying the community of the proclamation have been placed along Main Street and will remain through the month of October, and the Police Department will have an information booth for Help Save the Next Girl campaign at its fall festival on October 17th.

Town pins and a key to the Town were presented to the Harringtons in honor of their daughter. Gil Harrington said she was overwhelmed with the generosity of the Town and the support that has been given to them and to Help Save the Next Girl. She talked briefly about the movement to resist complacency regarding violence against women, especially on college campuses, and she has seen success as attitudes and behaviors change, and laws are changed. Mrs. Harrington stressed that the movement would not be possible without the support from every day people that have decided that young people are worth the time and effort to educate and protect. She expressed her gratitude for the eighty students who make up the Christiansburg High School chapter of Help Save the Next Girl, and her appreciation for the support of the Town.

IV. CITIZEN'S HEARING:

1. Tourism update by Lisa Bleakley, Executive Director of Tourism. This matter was rescheduled for October 13, 2015.
2. Citizen comments:
 - a. Reverend Robert Berghuis of 1713 Lions Drive addressed Council on behalf of his church, Asbury United Methodist, regarding the recent picketing near Christiansburg High School over the suspension of several students who were in violation of school policy concerning the Confederate flag on school property. Reverend Berghuis said the situation has created an atmosphere of fear in Christiansburg and has become a public safety issue that has brought negative press to the Town. He invited Council to attend a prayer vigil at Asbury UMC on September 30, 2015 to discuss the issue.
 - b. John Jaroma of 605 Gold Leaf Drive spoke of his support for the school officials at CHS who suspended several students for violating school policy. Mr. Jaroma spoke of the importance of school policies designed to prevent disruptions among students, and he spoke out against the picketers using the parking lot of the Holy Spirit Catholic Church as a gathering place.
 - c. Tacy Newell-Foutz of 425 Arrowhead Trail expressed her concerns with the negative press the Town has received over the recent student suspensions at Christiansburg High School, and she questioned the legality of some of the actions of the demonstrators. She acknowledged that the school is within the jurisdiction of the county, but wondered if Town law enforcement could get involved with calming the situation, since it provides the school resource officer.

V. STAFF REPORTS: None.

VI. DISCUSSIONS BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS:

1. Council action on:
 - a. A Conditional Use Permit request for a Planned Housing Development in the R-3 Multi-Family Residential District. This matter is a carryover item from September 8, 2015; the Public Hearing was held August 25, 2015. Councilman Vanhoozier made a motion to approve the Conditional Use Permit request by Stateson Homes including the conditions set forth in the resolution of the Planning Commission recommending approval, and also including the voluntary self-imposed condition offered by the applicant to contribute twenty-five percent, up to \$175,000, of the cost of designing and installing a traffic signal at the intersection of Quin W. Stuart Boulevard and Peppers Ferry Road, payable to the Town specifically for such purpose prior to the first building permit being issued for the property subject to the Conditional Use Permit. Councilman Huppert seconded the motion. Town Manager Helms reported that the engineering staff has studied the concerns of Council regarding Stafford Drive that were discussed during the September 8, 2015 Council meeting, and has determined that the pavement and road width are sufficient to handle an increase in traffic volume that may result from the Planned Housing Development. Town Manager Helms spoke about the traffic relief the anticipated stoplight would bring to the area and briefly commented on the anticipated future improvements to Stafford Drive. Council was satisfied with the information provided by Town Manager Helms and was polled on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye; Vanhoozier – Aye.

- b. The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). The Public Hearing was held September 8, 2015. Councilman Hall made a motion to approve the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) as presented during the Public Hearing. Councilman Vanhoozier seconded the motion and Council was polled on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye; Vanhoozier – Aye.
 - c. Request by Montgomery County for a county / town boundary line adjustment on Cinnabar Road. Councilman Vanhoozier made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Councilman Stipes. Council was polled on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye; Vanhoozier – Aye.
2. Council to set the personal property tax relief percentage at 38% as required by the Personal Property Tax Relief Act. Council must set the personal property relief percentage each year. Councilman Stipes made a motion to set the Personal Property Tax Relief Percentage at 38% as required by the Personal Property Tax Relief Act. Councilman Showalter seconded the motion and Council was polled as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye; Vanhoozier – Aye.
 3. Council to discuss the need for a grant writer (Showalter). Councilman Showalter asked Council to consider discussing the possibility of hiring a grant writer, or assigning the position to an existing employee, who would be proactive in seeking out and applying for grants for Town projects. Councilman Showalter noted that many grant opportunities have been lost to the Town simply because there is no one on staff who actively fills the role of grant writer. Council expressed an interest in discussing the idea, with Councilman Vanhoozier suggesting that Town Manager Helms survey surrounding localities to gather information on various options for handling the grant writing process, and to get an idea of what the return might be between the cost of a grant writer and the amount of grant funding secured by that person. Councilman Huppert expressed support for cross-training an existing employee, and Councilman Hall agreed that a trained employee, whether existing or new, would be of benefit to the Town through the probable increase in the amount of grant funding secured through that position. He pointed out that a trained grant writer would also be knowledgeable on grant variables. Councilman Stipes agreed that a grant writer would be beneficial to the Town in maximizing grant funding, and he noted that the New River Valley Regional Commission provides that type of service to its members, and has assisted the Town with grant writing in the past. Councilman Stipes recommended Town Manager Helms contact the commission's director, Kevin Byrd, to talk about what it would involve for the commission to provide grant writing services to the Town. Mayor Barber turned this matter over to Town Manager Helms to study, and requested that he be prepared to provide information for Council consideration at the November 10, 2015 Council meeting.
 4. Street Committee Recommendation/Report – Councilman Stipes and Councilman Vanhoozier:
 - a. Boundary Line Relocation Plat for Cambria Crossing, LLC; containing 5 lots; located on Dewdrop Lane, N.W. Councilman Stipes reported that the request involves lot line adjustments at Cambria Crossing that reconfigures five existing lots. The Street Committee has reviewed the request and found it to be in conformity with the subdivision ordinance. Councilman Stipes made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Councilman Vanhoozier. Council was polled on the motion as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hall – Aye; Huppert – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Stipes – Aye; Vanhoozier – Aye.

VIII. COUNCIL REPORTS

- a. Councilman Hall reported that the next Recreation Advisory Commission meeting will be held on October 5. He thanked those who attended the reception at Christiansburg High School in honor of Help Save the Next Girl, and spoke briefly of the CHS Chapter. In response to an earlier citizen comment about recent negative press involving Christiansburg, Councilman Hall said the Town has also received positive press in recent weeks concerning the Police Department and aquatic center involvements within the community.
- b. Councilman Bishop suggested Council consider holding work sessions to address old matters on Council's follow-up task list. Mayor Barber said an updated list will be provided to Council for discussion at the October 13 regular Council meeting.
- c. Councilman Huppert reported on the Wilderness Trail Festival held September 19, 2015.
- d. Councilman Showalter reported on the first official meeting of the Central Business Advisory Board, held prior to tonight's Council meeting, noting that members Karen Drake and Tacy Newell-Foutz would serve as co-chairs. He

then commended Bill Aldridge on his efforts to ensure that Main Street was clean and orderly after the Wilderness Trail Festival, and reported that Town Manager Helms visited the owners of InVision to recognize decorative improvements made to the outside of their downtown storefront; the Central Business Advisory Committee also commended them on the improvements. He then spoke to the concerns voiced regarding tension at Christiansburg High School over recent student suspensions. Councilman Showalter said numerous Police Officers, in addition to the school resource officer, were present at the school during the situation, and he was confident that they would keep the situation under control and the students safe. Lastly, he briefly reported on the recent eight-mile Huckleberry Trail Bridge Run/Walk that was part of the bridge and bench dedications on September 11th. The run/walk was well-organized and hosted approximately seventy participants. He asked that Town Manager Helms pass along his compliments to the staff of the Recreation Department. Councilman Huppert pointed out that Councilman Showalter ran the entire eight-miles of trail.

- e. Councilman Stipes expressed his regret in missing the Huckleberry Trail Bridge dedication due to an out-of-state family funeral. He thanked Council for its efforts in working together to make the trail extension and bridge a reality. He then reported that an employee of the Corporate Research Center (CRC) in Blacksburg asked him if the Town would be willing to offer a participation discount at the aquatic center for CRC employees. He has already spoken with Councilman Vanhoozier, council liaison to the aquatic center advisory commission, who has agreed to discuss the request with the commission.
- f. Mayor Barber reminded Council of upcoming events: · Fourth annual downtown Food Truck Rodeo on September 25, sponsored by Downtown Christiansburg, Inc. · Cooking From Around the World fundraiser event hosted by Christiansburg Institute Alumni Association to be held in October at the recreation center. · Annual fall festival hosted by the Christiansburg police, fire, and rescue departments on October 17th, at the NRV Mall. He then reported that he received a letter from VML requesting a voter representative at the VML business meetings on the afternoon of October 6th during the annual conference. Mayor Barber is planning to attend, but asked for a Council alternate to fill in for him should something prevent him from attending. Councilman Hall agreed to serve as alternate.

IX. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORTS:

1. PROGRESS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- The Planning Department recently sent out letters to election candidates asking them to stay in compliance with the Town's sign ordinance by keeping political signs out of right-of-ways and off Town-owned property.
- The Town is currently waiting on final approval from VDOT before advertising for Phase 2E of the Huckleberry Trail extension. The initial environmental study expired, which has caused the delay in extending the trail past Lions Gate.

X. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 8:15 P.M.

Michele M. Stipes, Clerk of Council

D. Michael Barber, Mayor