

**Christiansburg Planning Commission**  
**Minutes of July 17, 2017**

**Present:** Harry Collins  
David Franusich  
Catherine Garner  
Hil Johnson  
Jeananne Kries  
Craig Moore, Chairperson  
Ann Sandbrook  
Andrew Warren, Secretary Non-Voting

**Absent:** Matt Beasley  
Mark Curtis  
Jennifer D. Sowers, Vice-Chairperson

**Staff/Visitors:** Will Drake, staff  
Jared Crews, staff  
Max Wiegard, Gentry Locke (representing Shentel)  
David Moore, 1140 Glen Court  
Steve Huppert, Town Council

Chairperson Moore called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Christiansburg Town Hall at 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia.

Mr. Warren announced staff received an updated boundary survey from the Montgomery County Economic Development Authority (EDA) in regards to the rezoning request for the Cox Family Farms LLC property. Mr. Warren stated the survey revealed the boundary of the property is not correctly recorded by the County's property records and as a result, the request was not properly advertised and not all adjacent property owners were mailed written notice. Mr. Warren stated the Town Attorney recommended re-advertising the request and the Planning Commission will re-hear the public hearing on August 14, 2017.

**Public Comment**

Chairperson Moore opened the floor for public comment. With no comments, Chairperson Moore closed the floor for public comment.

**Approval of Planning Commission Minutes for July 5, 2017 Meeting**

Chairperson Moore introduced the discussion. Commissioner Franusich made a motion to approve the July 5, 2017 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion, which passed 5-0. Commissioners Collins and Sandbrook abstained, as they were not present for the previous meeting.

Public Hearing to receive public comments concerning a proposed sign ordinance amending Chapter 42 – Zoning of the Town Code for the purpose of regulating the time, place, and manner of displaying signs in the Town of Christiansburg.

Chairperson Moore opened the public hearing. Mr. Warren stated the sign ordinance amendment is necessary in order to comply with the Supreme Court decision in *Reed v. Town of Gilbert Arizona*, which found a sign ordinance must be content neutral. Mr. Warren noted the update has provided an opportunity to streamline and modernize the existing ordinance.

Commissioner Collins questioned whether political signs can be regulated so as not to be put up before a particular date. Mr. Warren stated the current ordinance regulates when political signs must be taken down but not when they can be put up and noted this issue is addressed in the new ordinance.

Mr. Warren stated work on the proposed ordinance began in the spring of 2016 with a draft being prepared by the Town Attorney and staff. Mr. Warren stated staff met with the Development Subcommittee five times, along with businesses, property owners and the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Warren stated the draft ordinance was provided to several local sign companies and noted they have been generally supportive.

Mr. Warren stated the draft ordinance introduces an appeal process by moving it into the Zoning Ordinance of the Christiansburg Town Code. Mr. Warren stated the new ordinance would allow temporary signs to be displayed for 90 days and noted there would be a differentiation between temporary and portable signs based on material. Mr. Warren stated the format of the proposed ordinance has been streamlined and duplicative terms have been removed from the definition section.

Mr. Warren stated the new ordinance would increase the permitted area of a permanent ground sign in the B-3 General Business district from 50 square feet to 75 square feet. Mr. Warren stated some businesses, especially national retailers, have found the current ordinance too restrictive. Mr. Warren stated the increase in sign area for the B-3 District would distinguish it from the other business zoning districts within town. Mr. Warren also noted the draft ordinance has introduced an interstate ground sign type to permit a ground sign of 150 square feet and 75 feet tall for B-3 properties within a 1,000 foot radius around the interchanges at I-81 for exits 118C and 114 for increased visibility on the interstate.

Mr. Warren requested the Development Subcommittee review the language of the draft ordinance relating to nonconforming signs.

With no further comment, Chairperson Moore closed the public hearing.

Discussion/Action for a Conditional Use Permit request by Jeff Holland of Network Building + Consulting, LLC (representing Shentel), agent for Schaeffer Memorial Baptist Church, for a monopole-style communications tower at 570 High Street, N.E. in the R-3 Multi-Family Residential District.

Chairperson Moore opened the discussion. Mr. Warren explained the Planning Commission could take action on the waiver requests and conditional use permit request in separate motions or on all three items together. Commissioner Johnson made a motion to address all three items of the request together. Commissioner Franusich seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

Mr. Warren presented a letter from Gentry Locke stating the tower could be designed to fall within a 50-foot radius and would thus fall within the setback area of adjacent properties to the north.

Commissioner Kries asked if the applicant could replace the pole at the same height and location but with different material without a conditional use permit. Mr. Warren stated the replacement of the pole would likely be considered a significant change and warrant a conditional use permit.

Commissioner Kries asked for clarification on Schaeffer Memorial Baptist Church's knowledge of the request. David Moore, 1140 Glen Court, S.E., stated he was a deacon and trustee of the church. Mr. Moore stated Shentel provided information to him, as the representative for the church about the tower, and it was discussed at several church meetings. Mr. Moore stated the only concern brought to his attention from the community was in regards to the radio frequency from the tower.

Max Wiegard, Gentry Locke, stated the tower has been redesigned to fall within a 50-foot radius. Mr. Wiegard stated the tower would be designed to collapse on itself and it would not fall on any structures or in any area where principal structures could be placed. Mr. Wiegard stated 58 feet of the tower would remain standing in the event of a collapse and that it would be possible for the top 50 feet to fall against the tower. Mr. Wiegard stated none of their towers in the area had collapsed.

Commissioner Franusich suggested the design of the tower to fall at 50 feet or less be added to the conditions of the conditional use permit.

Chairperson Moore read the proposed conditions:

- 1) The structure is limited to 110 feet in total height from the immediate adjacent grade.
- 2) The structure is to be a monopole design and designed to fall within a radius of no greater than 50 feet from the pole location.
- 3) The communications tower is to save one total space for E-911, Public Works, Police Department, or other public use and offer the use at no charge to the town including no installation cost.

Discussion/Action for a Conditional Use Permit request by Jeff Holland of Network Building + Consulting, LLC (representing Shentel), agent for Schaeffer Memorial Baptist Church, for a monopole-style communications tower at 570 High Street, N.E. in the R-3 Multi-Family Residential District – (continued).

- 4) The structure and site are to be developed in substantial conformance with the presented drawings South Radford Christiansburg 68803/RN208 by Mead and Hunt Dated May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017.
- 5) Engineering plans, signed and sealed by a licensed engineer in the state of Virginia, shall be submitted to and approved by the building official prior to issuance of a building permit.

Commissioner Johnson stated future issues with code compliance and safety may be eased with a steel tower instead of wood. Commissioner Franusich stated the tower would be largely covered by trees. Mr. Warren stated there was no intention to remove trees according to the application. Chairperson Moore suggested a condition be added to ensure no large trees would be removed. The Planning Commission agreed to add the following condition:

- 6) No trees shall be removed during construction of the replacement tower unless coordinated and approved by the Planning Director.

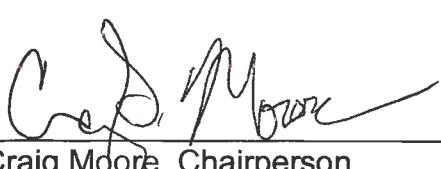
Commissioner Franusich made a motion to recommend Town Council approve the conditional use permit with the two waivers requested by the applicant and the six conditions as drafted. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion, which passed 7-0. With no further comment, Chairperson Moore closed the discussion.

Other business.

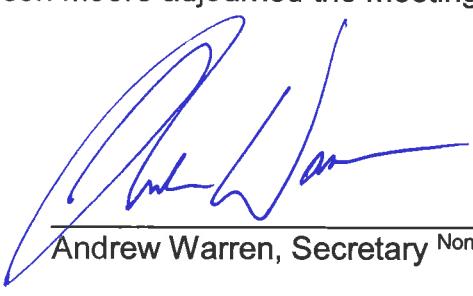
Chairperson Moore introduced the discussion. Commissioner Collins presented the Planning Commission with information on the history of Christiansburg and requested the material be added back into the comprehensive plan.

Councilman Huppert stated Town Council voted to deny the recent code change request to permit clubs and lodges in the I-2 district with a conditional use permit because the use did not fit with the purpose of the district. Councilman Huppert stated there was likely a better location in Christiansburg for the Moose Lodge. Commissioner Collins stated industrial parks are for manufacturing goods.

There being no more business, Chairperson Moore adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m.



Craig Moore, Chairperson



Andrew Warren, Secretary Non-Voting