

**Christiansburg Planning Commission
Minutes of January 29, 2018**

Present: Catherine Clifton
Harry Collins
Mark Curtis
Hil Johnson, Vice-Chairperson
Jeananne Kries
Craig Moore
Ann Sandbrook
Jennifer D. Sowers, Chairperson
Andrew Warren, Secretary Non-Voting

Absent: Matt Beasley

Staff/Visitors: Will Drake, staff
Jared Crews, staff
John Elmore, 720 Peppers Ferry Road, N.W.
Gwen Leonard, The Big Event

Chairperson Sowers called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Christiansburg Town Hall at 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia.

Public Comment

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

Approval of Planning Commission Minutes for January 16, 2018 Meeting

Chairperson Sowers introduced the discussion. Commissioner Collins made a motion to approve the January 16, 2018 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Kries seconded the motion, which passed 8-0.

Discussion/Action for a Rezoning request by John Elmore, agent for Donald and Rachel Wood, for an approximately 1.15 acre portion of tax parcel 435-A-20, located at 840 Peppers Ferry Road, N.W. from A, Agricultural to B-3, General Business. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Chairperson Sowers opened the discussion.

Mr. Warren stated the Town received a proffer statement affirming that only mini-storage and contractor storage would occur on the property. Mr. Warren noted a Conditional Use Permit would be necessary for contractor storage to occur on the property. Mr. Warren explained Mr. Elmore intended to seek an amendment to the rezoning of the adjoining property in the near future to amend the proffer to allow mini-storage and contractor storage by Conditional Use Permit.

Commissioner Moore motioned to recommend Town Council approve the rezoning request with the proffer as stated. Vice-Chairperson Johnson seconded the motion, which passed 8-0. With no further comment, Chairperson Sowers closed the discussion.

Discussion/Action for a Town Code Amendment request, submitted by the Montgomery County Economic Development Authority to amend Chapter 42 "Zoning" of the Christiansburg Town Code to allow for research, experimental, or testing laboratories including animals in the I-2, General Industrial District, with a Conditional Use Permit.

Chairperson Sowers opened the discussion.

Commissioner Moore stated additional changes to Town Code regarding allowances in the I-2 District may be sought by the Planning Commission in the future.

Mr. Warren stated the Development Subcommittee voted 6-0 to recommend approval of the code amendment. Mr. Warren stated the committee reviewed a report on how other localities addressed animal testing laboratories and noted the localities examined did not address animal testing directly. Mr. Warren explained most localities appeared to view animal testing as an allowed laboratory activity. Mr. Warren noted the City of Roanoke had recently approved a facility that allows animal testing and officials viewed animal testing as an allowed laboratory use.

Commissioner Moore motioned to recommend Town Council approve the Code Amendment as presented. Commissioner Curtis seconded the motion, which passed 8-0. With no further comment, Chairperson Sowers closed the discussion.

Contingent on the above item, discussion/action on a Public Hearing for a Conditional Use Permit request by the Montgomery County Economic Development Authority for a research, experimental, or testing laboratory including animals at 145 Technology Drive, S.E. (tax parcel 559-1-7) in the I-2, General Industrial District. The property is designated as Industrial on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Chairperson Sowers opened the discussion. Commissioner Clifton abstained from the discussion as she is an employee of Montgomery County.

Mr. Drake stated the Development Subcommittee discussed possible conditions addressing the outdoor storage of animals, excessive odor or noise, site cleanliness, and on-site sales.

The Commission discussed excessive noise and odor and determined the condition would apply to noise or odor discernible at the property line. Mr. Warren noted noise and odor would be considered in relation to adjacent property owners but not occupants of the subject property.

Mr. Warren explained Federal and State legislation regulates the treatment of laboratory animals.

The following conditions were drafted:

- 1) There shall be no outdoor keeping of any animals.
- 2) The property shall be kept in a clean, sanitary, and sightly manner.
- 3) There shall be no excessive noise or odor discernible at the property line.
- 4) There shall be no on-site retail sales.

Commissioner Moore made a motion to recommend Town Council approve the Conditional Use Permit with the conditions as drafted. Vice-Chairperson Johnson seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

Review of Planning Commission 2017 Annual Report

Chairperson Sowers opened the discussion.

Mr. Warren explained the report includes a list of Planning Commission and subcommittee meetings and a list of rezoning requests, code amendments, and Conditional Use Permit applications reviewed by the Commission in 2017. Mr. Drake displayed a map showing the properties which requested Conditional Use Permits and rezonings in 2017. Mr. Warren stated upon review of the report, the Commission would be asked to provide a letter with the completed report to Town Council.

Review of Planning Commission 2017 Annual Report – (continued).

Commission Collins asked about the Commission's ability to review previously approved Conditional Use Permits. Mr. Warren stated there were two cases currently being reviewed by staff for noncompliance with the conditions of the permits. Mr. Warren stated Town Council has the ability to revoke Conditional Use Permits for noncompliance, but noted no permits have been revoked in the last two years.

Mr. Drake noted the report contained a table displaying the cases heard by the Commission in 2017. The Commission asked staff to include the recommendation by Planning Commission and the action taken by Town Council within the table.

Mr. Warren stated the application period for Planning Commissioners ended on January 26, 2018. Mr. Warren noted three applications were received and Town Council would decide how and when to move forward. Mr. Warren noted Commissioner Beasley's term would end at the beginning of February and Mr. Beasley did not intend to continue as a member of the Planning Commission at this time.

Vice-Chairperson Johnson thanked staff for the annual report. Chairperson Sowers suggested adding language to acknowledge the support of planning staff.

Chairperson Sowers made a motion to approve the Annual Report with the changes discussed. Commissioner Knies seconded the motion, which passed 8-0.

Other business.

Chairperson Sowers opened the discussion.

Mr. Warren announced the New River Valley Planning Commissioner Training would be held on April 19, 2018 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the New River Valley Business Center in Fairlawn, Virginia. Mr. Warren stated Mike Chandler would facilitate a mock Planning Commission meeting to simulate possible scenarios commissioners might encounter. Mr. Warren stated commissioners from Blacksburg, Floyd, Radford, Pulaski, Dublin, Giles, and Montgomery County would attend.

Mr. Warren announced Land Use Education training was available for newer commissioners. Mr. Warren noted the 93rd class would be held in Short Pump in February and the 94th class would be held in the Shenandoah Valley in June.

Mr. Warren announced the Town Noise Ordinance would be amended and Town Council has requested the Planning Commission to hold a public forum in February or early March to address the ordinance change. Mr. Warren explained there is currently no system in place for permitting or exempting certain noises but issues encountered by the Town could be addressed in the amended ordinance.

Other business – (continued).

Commissioner Moore noted some localities allow exemptions for noise caused by private construction during evening hours to mitigate traffic issues. Mr. Warren stated allowances for private construction at night were not currently being considered. Commissioner Collins suggested having a work session with Town Attorney Theresa Fontana. Mr. Warren stated information on the noise ordinance would be provided at the work session.

Gwen Leonard stated she is a hospitality major at Virginia Tech and Co-Director of Communications for Virginia Tech's The Big Event.

Ms. Leonard explained The Big Event serves both Blacksburg and Christiansburg and is currently seeking 10,000 volunteers to complete 1,300 projects on April 7, 2018. Ms. Leonard stated citizens can apply for projects at homes, businesses, and schools. Ms. Leonard noted The Big Event will have enough volunteers for most suggested project with the exception of those requiring power tools.

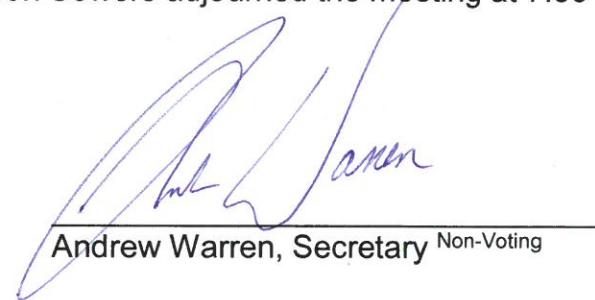
Commissioner Collins suggested The Big Event could assist in creating a project designed to link Christiansburg Town Council and Christiansburg High School students as well as a project to renovate downtown Christiansburg. Ms. Leonard stated high school students could volunteer for The Big Event and noted a representative of The Big Event would attend the February 13, 2018 Town Council meeting.

Chairperson Sowers commended the work of The Big Event at the Christmas Store in downtown Christiansburg. Commissioner Moore noted volunteers had been used in the past to label stormwater drains.

Mr. Warren stated the next Commission meeting would be held Tuesday, February 20, 2018 because Town Hall will be closed February 19 in observance of Presidents Day. With no further business, Chairperson Sowers adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m.



Jennifer D. Sowers, Chairperson



Andrew Warren, Secretary Non-Voting