

**Christiansburg Planning Commission  
Minutes of April 30, 2018**

**Present:**

Ashley Briggs  
Catherine Clifton  
Harry Collins  
Jessica Davis  
Hil Johnson, Vice-Chairperson  
Craig Moore  
Ann Sandbrook  
Jennifer D. Sowers, Chairperson  
Andrew Warren, Secretary <sup>Non-Voting</sup>

**Absent:**

Mark Curtis  
Jeananne Knies

**Staff/Visitors:**

Will Drake, staff  
Jared Crews, staff  
Arthur Hamrick, 2150 Palmer Street  
Chris Waltz, 1370 Rigby Street  
Jay McGuire, Hurt & Proffitt  
Stephon Crawford, Safe Haven Family Services

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

**Public Comment**

Chairperson Sowers opened the floor for public comment.

Arthur Hamrick, 2150 Palmer Street stated he has had issues with zoning and inspections within the Town. Mr. Hamrick stated the Appalachian Power Company substation on Palmer Street was built on top of a cave and too close to both the gas line and railroad in the area. Mr. Hamrick furthered explained his concerns with the location of the substation and further stated he believed there should have been a public hearing to allow the construction of the substation. Following up on the Commission's request, Mr. Warren stated Town staff would bring the issue up with the Town Engineering Department to find out additional information.

Chris Waltz, 1370 Rigby Street, stated he believed the sound consultant had changed his position on measuring noise levels between the noise ordinance public

hearings for the Planning Commission and Town Council. Mr. Waltz also expressed what he believed to be an inconsistency on the subject of the noise ordinance enforcement and how it was explained between the two hearings. Mr. Waltz stated Town officials should place consideration on the information and counsel they receive.

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

#### Approval of Planning Commission Minutes for April 16, 2018 Meeting

Chairperson Sowers introduced the discussion. Commissioner Sandbrook made a motion to approve the April 16, 2018 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Moore seconded the motion, which passed 6-0. Commissioners Johnson and Briggs abstained as they were not present at the April 2, 2018 meeting.

#### Public Hearing on a Conditional Use Permit request by Safe Haven Family Services, Inc., agent for Quorum Holding Corporation for a single-family residential dwelling at 2175 Palmer Street, N.E., tax map no. 266 - A – 17 in the B-3, General Business Zoning district. The property is designated as Business/Commercial on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Chairperson Sowers opened the public hearing.

Mr. Crawford stated the residence would be used as a group home. Mr. Crawford noted the property was used as a group home prior to its commercial use. Mr. Crawford explained elderly women would be housed at the residence and the location would be useful due to its proximity to Carillion, the Town Recreation Center, and the Aquatic Center. Mr. Crawford stated he operated another group home into Town behind the mall. Mr. Crawford added neighbors have not voiced any concerns with the group home use and he did not anticipate any issues arising. Mr. Crawford stated the property is currently being furnished and three women are waiting to occupy the dwelling.

Commissioner Johnson pointed out the house has three bedrooms, one bathroom and is 1,123 square feet in total area. Mr. Crawford added there is area downstairs in the home that can be used as an additional bedroom.

Mr. Warren explained the home is existing but has had commercial uses most recently. Mr. Warren noted the Conditional Use Permit would allow a single-family dwelling use for the property. Mr. Warren noted group homes are protected by State Law and are required to be treated as single-family dwellings if there are less than 8 occupants.

Mr. Warren stated the home would need to be licensed by the State as a group

home. Mr. Warren added there would be no restrictions for the dwelling at the local level so long as the home met the standards set by the State.

Vice-Chairperson Johnson asked whether there were any traffic concerns for the area surrounding the property. Mr. Warren stated there is no proposed crosswalk at this location and pedestrian traffic would cross North Franklin further up. Mr. Warren explained Palmer Street has no direct connectivity to North Franklin Street so the home would be shielded from the heavy traffic. Commissioner Moore stated limited-access fencing is also in place separating the property from North Franklin Street.

Mr. Warren stated no conditions were proposed by staff. Commissioner Moore stated the residential use for the property may be sensible as the location may not be attractive for commercial uses.

Commissioner Moore motioned to recommend Town Council approve the Conditional Use Permit. Commissioner Clifton seconded the motion, which passed 8-0.

With no further discussion, Chairperson Sowers closed the public hearing.

Presentation and Discussion of Trail Planning Study FY 2015 – FY 2016, by Jay McGuire of Hurt & Proffitt.

Mr. McGuire stated Hurt & Proffitt was commissioned by the Town in 2015 conduct a trail study within Christiansburg. Mr. McGuire provided an overview of the existing Huckleberry Trail as well as the upcoming extension of the trail. Mr. McGuire used the Google Earth application to look at various areas discussed.

The following items were presented:

- A proposed extension for North Franklin Street along Arbor Drive to Peppers Ferry road near Lowes. Mr. McGuire proposed the extension occurring on the north side of the roadway as there is some existing sidewalk on that side and a graded shoulder equipped for sidewalk is already in place. Mr. Warren added sidewalk connection may happen at Market Street in conjunction with the Market Street Plaza revitalization.
- A sidewalk extension on Ponderosa Drive as well as connectivity to the existing trail system across US-460.
- A 1,000 foot extension from Cambria Street Northwest to Sleepy Hollow road. Mr. McGuire noted two options are available: installation of sidewalk and a bike lane, or installation of an 8 foot asphalt trail with a 5 foot grass buffer. Mr. McGuire noted the trail option is safer while the sidewalk and bike lane option would be cheaper.
- An extension along Cambria Street Northeast to Downtown Cambria. Mr. McGuire noted the wideness of Cambria Street would allow for traffic lanes to

be narrowed and allow for pedestrian travel. Mr. McGuire added there was some existing sidewalk but a trail system would be safer.

- A trail system from Downtown Cambria along Depot Street to Roanoke Street.
- An old spur line running almost to Kiwanis Park that may be vacated by Norfolk Southern which could be utilized as a trail.
- Extension of sidewalk from the entrance of Kiwanis Park along the south side of Roanoke Street down to Robert Street.
- An extension of the Huckleberry trail from Independence Boulevard to Golf Leaf Drive and the installation of a crosswalk at the intersection of Independence Boulevard and North Franklin Street. Mr. Warren noted funds may be available to extend the trail to Scattergood Drive where a small parking lot could be provided at the Christiansburg Institute.
- Usage of the North Franklin Street Bridge for pedestrian and bike travel. Mr. McGuire noted two options were available: extension of the existing bridge to create a separated area for pedestrian and bike travel or the construction of a separate bridge that would extend over the railway. Mr. McGuire explained the goal of this extension would be to provide access to the Aquatic Center and the future passenger rail system and stated the cost of a separate bridge would be approximately 1.5 million dollars.
- The option to extend the trail to go under the North Franklin Street Bridge. Mr. McGuire explained retaining walls would need to be put in place and noted the bridge is currently in good condition and it could be 15 to 20 years before any work on it occurs.
- The installation of a trail segment from Mill Lane that would run behind the Aquatic Center, the skate park, and Kroger and would connect to Depot Park. Mr. Warren added a bridge connecting Depot Park to the skate park would be installed in the next fiscal year.
- Future trail connection into Downtown. Mr. McGuire stated existing sidewalk on Depot Street at Depot Park could connect to the North Franklin Street entrance to Downtown. Mr. McGuire noted trail installation would be difficult on Depot Street due to road width and conditions.

Mr. Warren noted the trail study began in 2015/16 and some projects covered had moved forward already while others are still being considered.

Commissioner Collins asked how much a bridge across North Franklin Street at Independence Boulevard might cost. Mr. McGuire stated the cost would likely be 500,000 dollars but stated issues with elevation would limit the ability to place a bridge in this area. Mr. McGuire stated the stoplight at the Independence Boulevard and North Franklin Street intersection is currently the safest point for crossing North Franklin Street.

Mr. McGuire reviewed a table summarizing the costs of the proposed projects to the Commission.

Chairperson Sowers thanked Mr. McGuire for the information provided.

Other business.

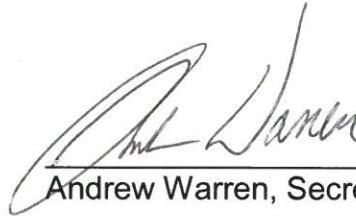
Chairperson Sowers opened the discussion.

Mr. Warren stated a Comprehensive Plan subcommittee meeting would need to be scheduled in order to look over the draft language for the "technology section" of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Warren stated he would be reaching out to potential subcommittee members to schedule the meeting.

With no other business, Chairperson Sowers adjourned the meeting at 7:57 p.m.



Jennifer D. Sowers, Chairperson



Andrew Warren, Secretary Non-Voting