

**Town of Christiansburg  
Planning Commission**

100 East Main Street  
Christiansburg, Virginia 24073-3029  
Telephone: (540) 382-6128  
Fax: (540) 382-7338

**DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE**

**AGENDA**

Monday, August 3, 2020  
Administrative Conference Room  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Town Hall  
6:00 PM

1. Call to Order
2. Items for Discussion
  - a) Discussion on potential amendments to Chapter 42, "Zoning" of the Christiansburg Town Code for the purpose of clarifying the allowance of architectural projections such as roof eaves, chimneys, windows, stoops, patios and decks into minimum required yards.
3. Other Business
4. Adjournment

## Development Subcommittee Meeting Notes – July 20, 2020

### Attendees:

Ashley Briggs  
Felix Clarke Jr.  
Johana Hicks  
Hil Johnson  
Jeananne Knies  
Jennifer Sowers  
Jude Cochran (Staff)  
Jared Crews (staff)  
Will Drake (staff)  
Amy Southall (staff)

### Items for discussion:

1. Discussion on potential amendments to Chapter 42, "Zoning" of the Christiansburg Town Code for the purpose of clarifying the allowance of architectural projections such as roof eaves, chimneys, windows, stoops, patios and decks into minimum required yards.

### Projections

- Mr. Drake gave an overview of the current ordinances regarding setbacks, projections and an explanation of the suggestions provided by citizens and developers working in the Town.
- Mr. Drake provided example code language from adjacent municipalities that address typical projections.
- Mr. Drake illustrated several scenarios depicting different types of setback projections.
- The Committee expressed concern with the ambiguity regarding the current code.
- Mr. Drake and the Committee discussed the intent to address allowances for existing and new development.
- The Committee discussed the different types of projections (porches, stoops, chimneys, sunshades, bay windows, eaves, etc.) and how they might be impacted by current and future code interpretations.
- Commissioner Briggs questioned grandfathered legal non-conforming structures. Mr. Drake stated alterations to existing legally non-conforming structures can be replaced, but cannot increase an existing nonconformity.
- Mr. Drake suggested staff draft the proposed allowances and the Committee can review and provide more specific input.
- Commissioner Briggs questioned the interpretation of stairs and ramps in regard to setbacks. Mr. Drake stated current code allows stairs to encroach into setbacks and that accessible ramps are permitted to encroach into all setbacks.



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## Planning Department Staff Report

TO: Development Subcommittee  
SUBJECT: Building Projections  
DATE: July 31, 2020

### **Purpose**

Planning Commission is asked to evaluate potential amendments to Chapter 42, "Zoning" of the Christiansburg Town Code for the purpose of clarifying the allowance of architectural projections such as roof eaves, windows, porches and decks into minimum required yards.

A proposed code section addition and definitions have been drafted by staff and are provided to the Planning Commission's Development Subcommittee to facilitate discussion of the topic.

### **Background**

The attached draft code language would set parameters for the projection of structural features into required yards. The language is applicable to both lots conforming to minimum yard requirements of the Zoning Ordinance as well as lots with nonconforming yards that were legally established (i.e. a home was constructed prior to the yard requirements of the Zoning Ordinance or the yard requirements have changed since construction).

The draft code language aims to accomplish the following:

- Establishing the distance roof features (eaves, gutters) and architectural features (bay windows, chimneys, fireplaces) may project into any yard and requiring a minimum yard width to remain.
- Establishing the distance awnings, canopies, porches, and decks may project from the existing building face and requiring a minimum yard width to remain.
- Allowing for a 2-foot overhang over an entryway.
- Providing clear and distinct definitions for awning, canopy, deck, eave, and porch.

Please note the following:

- With the exception of the allowance for a two-foot overhang for entryways, all permitted structural projections will have a minimum yard width that must be maintained, regardless of the distance of the projection.

- The newly drafted definitions make a distinction between porches, which are covered structures, and decks, which are uncovered structures.
- Decks are allowed to project further into side and rear yards than into front yards. This is based on the current allowances in which decks (uncovered) adhere to setback requirements for accessory structures (three feet from side and rear property lines).
- Enclosed porches will be treated as additions to the main dwelling and will adhere to the base setback requirements for a home.

Attachment included with staff report:

1. Draft Code Language – dated 7/31/2020

**Sec. 42-15. - Permitted structural projections into required yards.**

- (a) For any yard, including front yards, either as required by this chapter or as currently existing and legally established on a lot, the following structural projections shall be permitted, provided applicable sight distance and fire safety requirements are met and maintained:
1. Awnings or canopies projecting no more than eight (8) feet from the building face, provided that such projection does not reduce the side yard to less than five (5) feet or front or rear yard to less than ten (10) feet.
  2. Overhanging eaves or gutters projecting no more than four (4) feet from the building face, provided that such projection does not reduce the side yard to less than three (3) feet or front or rear yard to less than ten (10) feet.
  3. Architectural features such as bay windows, chimneys, fireplaces, or the like projecting no more than three (3) feet from the building face, provided that such projection does not reduce the side yard to less than five (5) feet or front or rear yard to less than ten (10) feet.
  4. Decks projecting no more than ten (10) feet from the front building face, provided that such projection does not reduce the front yard to less than ten (10) feet. Decks projecting into a side or rear yard provided that such projection does not reduce the width of a rear or side yard to less than three (3) feet.
  5. Porches projecting no more than ten (10) feet from the building face, provided that such projection does not reduce the width of a side yard to less than five (5) feet or front or rear yard to less than ten (10) feet.
  6. Protective hoods or overhangs over a doorway projecting no more than 2 feet from the existing building face.
- (b) For lots with street frontage along more than one public street, any yard adjoining a public street right-of-way shall adhere to the front yard requirements set forth in section 42-15(a).

**Definitions**

*Awning* means a permanent roof like structure that projects from the wall of a building, covered with any material designed and intended for protection from the weather or as a decorative embellishment including those types which can be retracted, folded, or collapsed against the face of the supporting building.

*Canopy* means a structure made of permanent construction without pillars or posts, which is totally or partially attached to a building for the purpose of providing shelter to patrons or motor vehicles, or as a decorative feature on a building wall. A canopy is not a completely enclosed structure and cannot be raised or retracted.

*Deck* means a structure with an elevated floor and no solid roof usually attached to or part of and with direct access to or from, a building.

*Eave* means the underside of the projection of a roof beyond the outer wall of a building.

7/31/2020

*Porch* means a roofed open area usually attached to or part of and with direct access to or from, a building.