

**Christiansburg Planning Commission  
Minutes of July 20, 2020**

Present: Thomas Bernard  
Ashley Briggs  
Felix Clarke Jr.  
Mark Curtis  
Jessica Davis  
Johana Hicks  
Hil Johnson, Chairperson  
Jeananne Kries, Vice - Chairperson  
Ann Sandbrook  
Jennifer D. Sowers  
Will Drake, Secretary Non-Voting

Absent:

Staff/Visitors: Jude Cochran, staff  
Jared Crews, staff  
Lisa Dalton, 30 Weddle Way  
I-Ping Fu, 50 Weddle Way  
Tommy Kranz, Montgomery County Public Schools  
Bryan Rice, 2440 Hitching Post Dr.  
Steve Semones, Balzer & Associates, Inc.  
Warren Rosborough, 107 College Street  
Kenneth White, 50 Weddle Way

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

Approval of Planning Commission Minutes for the June 22, 2020 Meeting

Vice-Chairperson Kries made a request to amend the June 22, 2020 Planning Commission meeting minutes to clarify her proposal to have a member of Dialogue on Race speak to the Planning Commission. Mr. Bernard made a request to amend his question to Mr. Kranz, stating how MCPS allocates \$0.29 per square foot for facility maintenance, where most commercial businesses allocate \$1.50 per square foot, how would they maintain the building? Mr. Kranz's response was funds would be reallocated to other projects to make up the difference.

Commissioner Briggs made a motion to approve the June 22, 2020 Planning Commission meeting minutes as amended. Commissioner Hicks seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.

Approval of Planning Commission Minutes for the June 29, 2020 Meeting

Commissioner Curtis made a motion to approve the June 29, 2020 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Sowers seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.

Discussion/Action a Rezoning request by the Montgomery County School Board (applicant/owner) for an approximately 16.66 acre property located at 208 College Street NW (tax map no. 526- A – 175). The request is to rezone the property from the R-2, Two-Family Residential District to the B-3, General Business District. The property is designated as Downtown/Mixed-Use on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion/Action on a Conditional Use Permit request – contingent on the preceding item - by the Montgomery County School Board (applicant/owner) for a commercial garage/maintenance shop and contractor storage yard on property located at 208 College Street NW (tax map no. 526- A – 175) in the B-3, General Business District. The property is designated as Downtown/Mixed-Use on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Chairperson Johnson opened the discussion.

Mr. Drake noted the update to the staff report included a brief overview of the MCPS site visit on July 13, 2020. Additionally, Mr. Drake noted staff provided possible conditions for the Commission to discuss based on the conceptual site plan provided by the applicant and typical conditions associated with commercial garages and contractor storage yards.

Commissioner Hicks stated she was unable to attend the July 13, 2020 site visit due to a Proposed Park PPEA Committee Meeting, but was able to take a tour the following day.

Commissioner Sandbrook stated her intention to abstain from discussion and action due to possible conflict of interest.

Commissioner Bernard noted his concern that the number of buses proposed on the site has differed multiple times. Additionally, Commissioner Bernard noted his

concern of the purchase of additional buses in the future. Commissioner Clarke stated no more buses will be parked on site than the parking spaces provided.

Commissioner Bernard noted the Town's Compressive Plan and how this proposed zoning change would not follow its intent. Commissioner Briggs noted the age of the Comprehensive Plan and the possibility of it being outdated for current needs. Commissioner Bernard agreed that the Comprehensive plan needs to be reviewed, but stated that its age does not necessarily mean the property's future land use designation would have been changed.

Commissioner Hicks stated her concerns and noted that there are alternative locations for the proposed bus garage that are not in the middle of the downtown area.

Vice-Chairperson Kries noted the tough decision the Commission has to make and whatever the decision may be, it will have both positive and negative outcomes for the Town and its residents.

Chairperson Johnson reminded the Commission of the Conditional Use Permit and the School Board must follow all conditions attached to the permit. Commissioner Briggs stated the Commission can be opposed the proposal and vote no or can work on discussing conditions to get to a comfortable agreement with the School Board.

Commissioner Curtis noted the property is currently in good condition and a bus garage would not be the best use of its potential.

Commissioner Hicks noted other locations in the town that could be better suited for a bus garage than the proposed location.

Commissioner Clarke noted the condition of current schools in the town and that the savings of the proposed bus garage would financially benefit the needs of the schools.

Commissioners Hicks and Curtis discussed the potential of the gymnasium being used for educational purposes rather than a bus garage. Chairperson Johnson stated his interest in investing into current schools rather than retrofitting the gymnasium.

Chairperson Johnson stated he had previously not heard complaints of bus traffic until this proposal was brought up, even though buses have been going to the site for years.

The Commission discussed the potential conditions.

Commissioner Hicks questioned stormwater management at the site. The Commission and Mr. Drake noted the site will be subject to town and state stormwater requirements.

The Commission discussed adding a condition to review the site in one year after approval.

Commissioner Sowers motioned to recommend approval of the rezoning. Commissioner Briggs seconded the motion, which passed 5-4.

The following conditions were drafted:

1. The site shall be developed and used in conformance with the Overall Master Plan, "Old Christiansburg Middle School Redevelopment Master Plan" prepared by OVPR Architects and Engineers, dated February 14, 2020.
2. An 8-foot tall, dark-colored pvc-coated chain link fence shall be installed around the perimeter of the parking area to the extent and location as shown on the Overall Master Plan. Privacy slats shall be installed and maintained along the entirety of the fence.
3. A staggered, double-row of evergreen screening trees shall be installed around the perimeter of the parking area to the extent and location as shown on the Overall Master Plan. The trees shall be a minimum of 6-feet tall at the time of planting. Each row of trees shall be planted on 12-foot centers, with a staggered, equal planting distance maintained between the two rows.
4. The location of garage doors/service bay doors into the bus garage structure shall be limited to the southwest side of the bus garage, as shown on the Overall Master Plan.
5. The property shall be maintained in a clean, sanitary, and sightly manner.
6. Mechanical work shall be done inside the building and not outside.
7. All parts, including faulty parts, tires, etc. shall be kept inside the garage or a fully enclosed building (including a roof) until disposal.
8. All waste petroleum products and/or chemicals shall be disposed of properly and are not to accumulate upon the premises. Provisions are to be made for the capture of leaking petroleum products and/or chemicals.

9. This permit shall be subject to review by the Planning Commission in one year and is subject to revocation for noncompliance with any local, state, or federal regulations.

Commissioner Briggs motioned to recommend the approval of the conditional use permit with the conditions as drafted. Sowers seconded the motion, which passed 5-4.

With no further comment, Chairperson Johnson closed the discussion.

Discussion/Action on a Rezoning request by Caldwell Construction (applicant) for an approximately 4.52 acre property owned by Sandra Hawks and Janice Blevins et al, located between the eastern and western terminus of Vinnie Avenue NW (100 Vinnie Avenue NW, tax map no. 435 -A - 45). The request is to rezone the property from the R-1A, Rural Residential District to the R-1, Single-Family Residential District with proffers. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion/Action on a Conditional Use Permit request – contingent on the preceding item - by Caldwell Construction (applicant) for a planned housing development to consist of single-family homes at a density of development not to exceed 4.3 units per acre for property owned by Sandra Hawks and Janice Blevins et al, located at the eastern and western terminus of Vinnie Avenue NW (100 Vinnie Avenue NW, tax map no. 435 – A – 45) in the R-1, Single-Family Residential District. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Chairperson Johnson opened the discussion.

Mr. Drake noted the applicant provided updated plans for the Commission. Mr. Drake noted the change of the side yard setbacks along the Carma Heights Subdivision, the reduction to the maximum allowable density of development, and the addition of two new proffers. Mr. Drake provided an update on street connectivity with a brief history of Vinnie Ave.

The Commission discussed the road connectivity.

Mr. Semones provided a brief overview of the changes to the proposal.

Vice-Chairperson Knies requested a brief overview of topics from the previous meeting due to her absence. The Commission updated her on the public's setback and stormwater concerns.

Commissioner Hicks requested feedback from the adjacent property owners and asked if their concerns have been adequately satisfied. The adjacent property owners stated they were satisfied with the fruit trees being replaced if removed, but would still like the developers to install a privacy fence along the property. Mr. Semones noted a public utility easement runs along the property line, making it difficult to install a privacy fence.

Commissioner Hicks questioned the removal of existing trees on the site. Mr. Rice stated the number of existing trees to remain would be determined by how much grading would need to be completed, but the trees in question would be replaced if removed.

Commissioner Hicks questioned the grading of the site. Mr. Rice noted Ms. Dalton's home will be above the subject property.

The Commission discussed the traffic flow through the proposed connection of Vinnie Ave.

Commission Sandbrook noted she would like to see the property be rezoned to a residential use rather than a business use. Additionally, Commissioner Sandbrook recognized the traffic restrictions and the density in the area.

Commissioner Briggs expressed her opposition towards the density, lot sizes, and the space between dwellings. Mr. Rice noted the space between dwellings is larger than some similar developments in the town.

Commissioner Hicks questioned whether or not the sidewalk would connect to Weddle Way. Mr. Semones stated the developers haven't reached that level of design yet and that they would need to discuss it with town engineers.

Commissioner Briggs stated her concern that the proposed sidewalk only runs along one side of the street rather than both. Mr. Rice noted the developers tried to match the Slate Creek development. Commissioner Briggs noted pedestrians would have to cross the street to reach the sidewalk to walk down Vinnie Ave.

Commissioners Sandbrook and Briggs noted their concerns with the density increasing along Peppers Ferry Rd. Vice-Chairperson Knies noted the current plan for that area, based on the comprehensive plan, is high density residential use.

Commissioner Sowers noted the demand of patio homes and that the demographic purchasing the proposed homes matches the demographics of the adjacent neighborhoods. Mr. Rice noted there are only a few single level homes on the market at this time, two of which are currently being built. Additionally, Mr. Rice noted

roughly 60 single level homes have sold in the last year. Mr. Semones stated the development has been designed to transition from the Carma Heights development to the Slate Creek development.

Commissioner Hicks questioned whether or not a Home Owners Association would exist within the development. Mr. Semones stated there would be a Home Owners Association to take care of maintenance of the development.

The Commissioners discussed possible conditions.

Commissioner Briggs expressed the need for a condition to ensure sidewalk is installed along both sides of Vinnie Ave.

Commissioner Hicks expressed concern with the connection of Vinnie Ave. with the roadway narrowing in width on the eastern side. Mr. Semones stated the roadways would connect seamlessly.

The following proffers were provided:

1. The property shall be developed in substantial conformance with the masterplan submitted dated May 6, 2020 and revised July 14, 2020.
2. The property proposed for R-1 Zoning shall only be utilized for single family detached residential use.
3. Any proposed residential unit on Lot 1 as shown on the masterplan shall locate outdoor areas such as patios or decks located along its western property line between proposed Lot 1 and Lot 2.
4. Any existing fruit trees as shown in the northeast portion of the property on Sheet Z2 that are removed during construction shall be replaced at a one to one ratio upon final construction of the proposed home on Lot 11.

Commissioner Briggs motioned to recommend approval of the rezoning with the updated proffers provided by the applicant. Commissioner Sowers seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.

The following conditions were drafted:

1. The presented "Rezoning Application and Conditional Use Permit Application for Vinnie Avenue Patio Homes Planned Housing Development" dated May 6, 2020, revised July 14, 2020 and "Vinnie Avenue Patio Home Master Plan" dated May 6, 2020, revised July 14, 2020 shall be considered the conditions of approval.

2. Sidewalk shall be installed by the developer along both the north and south sides of the proposed public road extension of Vinnie Avenue and connect to existing sidewalk segments on the western section of the existing Vinnie Avenue.

Commissioner Sandbrook motioned to recommend the approval of the conditional use permit with the conditions as drafted. Commissioner Hicks seconded the motion, which passed 9-1.

With no further comment, Chairperson Johnson closed the discussion.

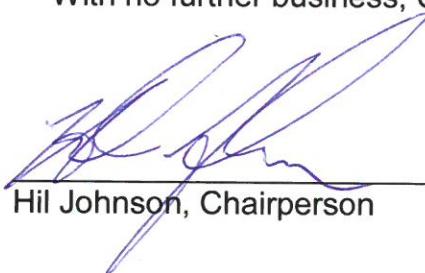
Other Business

Chairperson Johnson opened the discussion.

Mr. Drake and Chairperson Johnson noted the intention to have staff from the Regional Commission present the findings of the regional housing study.

Commissioner Briggs questioned commissioner certification training during the Covid-19 pandemic. Mr. Drake noted an upcoming training in Richmond, but for safety reasons it is not expected of the Commissioners to attend.

With no further business, Chairperson Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:58 p.m.



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Hil Johnson, Chairperson



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Will Drake, Secretary Non-Voting