

**Christiansburg Planning Commission  
Minutes of September 28, 2020**

**Present:**

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

**Absent:** Thomas Bernard  
Hil Johnson, Chairperson

**Staff/Visitors:** Jude Cochran, staff  
Jared Crews, staff  
Russell Crockett, 350 Teel St.  
John Neel, Gay & Neel, Inc.  
Ricky Plemmons, 340 Teel St.

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

**Public Comment**

Vice-Chairperson Kries opened the floor for public comment. With no comments, Vice-Chairperson Kries closed the floor for public comment.

**Approval of Planning Commission Minutes for the September 14, 2020 Meeting**

Commissioner Sowers made a motion to approve the September 14, 2020 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Clarke seconded the motion, which passed 8-0.

Public hearing for a Rezoning request by Gay and Neel, Inc., on behalf of Golden Triangle Development LLC (applicant), for an approximately 9.56 acre property owned by the Lina C Devore Estate, C/O Kenneth Devore Jr., Exec., located east of the terminus of Simmons Road, N.E. (tax map no. 499-1-5A, 6, 7, 8, 9) and at 390 Teel Street, N.E. (500-5BK2-46, 47, 48, 49). The request is to rezone the property from A, Agricultural and R-2, Two-Family Residential to R-3, Multi-Family Residential with proffers. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Public Hearing for a Conditional Use Permit request – contingent on the preceding item - by Gay and Neel, Inc. on behalf of Golden Triangle Development LLC (applicant), for a planned housing development to consist of single-family homes at a density of development not to exceed 6.37 units per acre for property owned by the Lina C Devore Estate, C/O Kenneth Devore Jr., Exec. located east of the terminus of Simmons Road, N.E. (tax map no. 499-1-5A, 6, 7, 8, 9) and at 390 Teel Street, N.E. (500-5BK2-46, 47, 48, 49) in the R-3, Multi-Family Residential District. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Vice-Chairperson Kries opened the discussion.

John Neel, Gay and Neel, on behalf of Golden Triangle Development, gave an overview of the proposed development, with details including:

- A brief overview of the developer and their previous developments in the Town of Christiansburg.
- Overview of the proposed developments location, zoning, adjacent property uses, as well as, routes of ingress and egress of the proposed development to the Roanoke Street corridor.
- A site plan and project details.
- An overview of proposed open space and stormwater management facility.

Commissioner Hicks asked why no road was included to connect the proposed development to Teel Street. Mr. Neel stated no ingress or egress has been designed through Teel Street since it is a developed neighborhood.

Commissioner Curtis questioned if Simmons Road would need to be widened to accommodate the increase in traffic. Mr. Neel stated the developer did not feel roadway widening would be needed along Simmons Road based on the traffic studies.

Commissioner Clarke asked about the width of the proposed street. Mr. Neel stated the street would have 30 feet of pavement along with three feet of curb.

Commissioner Briggs questioned if there would be sidewalk along both sides of the new street. Mr. Neel stated sidewalk is proposed throughout the entire development, but only along one side of the street.

Russell Crockett, 350 Teel Street, stated drainage is inadequate along Teel Street, noting he has had years of stormwater runoff issues. Mr. Crockett stated the proposed development would create additional issues for Teel Street. Mr. Crockett provided several photographs depicting drainage issues in his neighborhood. Additionally, Mr. Crockett requested a fence be installed between the proposed

development and his property to provide him with separation from the development's green space and stormwater pond.

Ricky Plemmons, 340 Teel Street, stated he had concerns of potential flooding due to runoff from the proposed development and noted Simmons Road width is too narrow to accommodate traffic from Hubbell Lighting and new residential traffic.

Mr. Neel explained the proposed stormwater management plan and system, adding that the stormwater plan for the proposed development would likely improve the current drainage conditions on Teel Street.

Commissioner Briggs requested further information regarding the Teel Street pump station. Mr. Neel noted he had discussed future evaluation of the pump station with Town Engineering staff. Mr. Neel stated the Town Engineering Department has selected a firm which will provide an analysis of the Teel Street pump station as part of a Capital Improvement Project. Mr. Neel stated Town staff would inform the developer of the results of that evaluation, noting the developer would likely contribute toward any required improvements.

Mr. Clarke questioned the change in elevation of the proposed development. Mr. Neel noted the elevation change is roughly 40 feet but he did not have a definite figure. Commissioner Briggs questioned if the property will be graded. Mr. Neel said the property would be graded to slope towards the retention pond.

Commissioner Hicks noted several citizens were unaware of the proposed development and suggested letters be sent out to additional property owners in the surrounding areas.

Mr. Drake stated that due to a mailing error, one property owner adjoining the proposed development had not been notified of the hearing. Mr. Drake explained an additional public hearing would need to be held at the October 19, 2020 Planning Commission meeting, but noted this would not affect the overall schedule for the request.

The Commission discussed minimum requirements for drainage of stormwater runoff. Mr. Neel showed the Commissioners the stormwater drainage path in the area surrounding the proposed development. Commissioner Briggs questioned water flow across the proposed property. Mr. Neel stated the stormwater pond will be designed to capture the water from the proposed development.

Vice-Chairperson Kries requested information from the developer regarding drainage of the development and adjacent properties to be provided at the next public hearing.

Commissioner Briggs stated she felt the proposed density for the development is too high and requested the applicant to provide the minimum density of development the developer would be comfortable with. Mr. Neel stated he would speak with the developer regarding this request.

Commissioner Clarke questioned the target sale price of the proposed dwellings. Mr. Neel stated the homes would range from 1600 to 2200 square feet and would be priced between roughly \$250,000 and \$300,000.

Mr. Neel stated he would provide the Commission with a drainage map prior to the October 19, 2020 Commission meeting.

Commissioner Sandbrook questioned if rezoning the property to residential is the best use of the land, noting it is surrounded by Industrial properties.

Commissioner Briggs questioned if plans have been made to review the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map have been made. Mr. Drake noted Town Council was supportive of a review of the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Drake noted an additional public comment submitted earlier in the day will be added to the agenda packet for the next meeting.

With no further comment, Vice-Chairperson Kries closed the discussion.

#### Discussion on potential Planning Commission mentorship.

Vice-Chairperson Kries opened the discussion. Vice-Chairperson Kries noted the goal of the programming would be instilling interest in local government into students.

Dominique Bell, junior at Christiansburg High School, gave a brief introduction of herself and her experience in a similar program offered through a municipality in Georgia. Ms. Bell provided information regarding the program's structure, the multiple departments involved, and the overall experience.

Commissioner Hicks how program Ms. Bell had attended lasted. Ms. Bell stated the program was a summer program but noted would like to see this program be a yearlong experience.

Commissioner Sowers questioned the number of students in the program Ms. Bell had attended. Ms. Bell stated 20 students were selected out of roughly 300 applicants.

Vice-Chairperson Kries stated the proposed program's intention would be to serve as a several month-long mentorship with one student. Vice-Chairperson Kries stated she hoped to learn through the first mentorship and build a program for Ms. Bell and future students to gain experience in local government. Ms. Kries explained the Commissioners would collaborate with Ms. Bell to create the most fruitful experience possible.

Vice-Chairperson Kries opened the discussion up to the Commissioners and staff to regarding direction of the proposed mentorship. Mr. Drake stated Planning Commission and staff would need to start small and build a program from scratch. Vice-Chairperson Kries agreed and added the mentorship should be self-sustaining and have goals to work towards. Mr. Drake noted mentorship or shadowing will have value for both the student and the Commissioners

Commissioner Hicks noted the potential for collaboration with Montgomery County or other municipalities in the future. Commissioner Hicks pointed out programs such as the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives for scholarships and similar opportunities. Commissioner Clarke stated his support for the proposed mentorship.

The Commission reviewed the a draft of the purpose and expectations for the mentorship. Vice-Chairperson Kries explained the intentions, the length of time, possible experiences, potential candidates of the mentorship, noting one Commissioner would serve as the lead contact for the student.

Commissioner Briggs noted reviewing the comprehensive plan would be a good experience for a student. Commissioner Briggs suggested the Commission could hold a mock public hearing to provide experience for the participant and keep them involved and engaged. Commissioner Curtis noted the end goal should be or promoting the mentorship program to local high school students. Commissioner Sandbrook noted she had been a part of a similar experience as a student and stated that it was positive experience.

Ms. Bell stated she was excited for the proposed programming. Vice-Chairperson Kries stated she would work to finalize the programming and noted Commissioners could share any suggestions.

Discussion on potential adoption of Planning Commission policy on virtual meeting attendance.

Vice-Chairperson Kries opened the discussion.

Mr. Drake provided an overview of the possible options for virtual meeting attendance through electronic communication means under specific circumstances.

Mr. Drake presented a slideshow referencing Virginia Code 2.2-3708.2, which provides an allowance for remote participation in meeting for medical or personal reasons as well as a permittance of electronic meetings during states of emergency.

Mr. Drake noted required actions for the Planning Commission would include reviewing draft Electronic Meeting Policy and possibly amending the Planning Commission By-Laws to include the Electronic Meeting Policy. Mr. Drake noted A 2/3 majority of members (7 persons) would be required to amend the Planning Commission By-Laws.

Commissioner Briggs questioned whether the Planning Commission would be able to enact a policy stricter than what is prescribed by the State regarding deadlines for notifying the Commission of an absence or the number of absences permitted within a year. Mr. Drake said he would reach out to the Town Attorney with the questions.

With no further discussion, Vice-Chairperson Knies closed the discussion.

#### Other Business

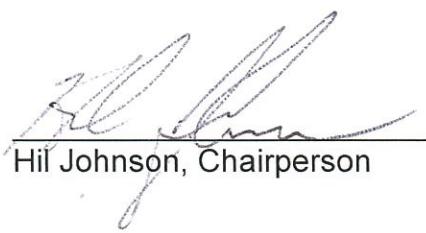
Vice-Chairperson Knies opened the discussion.

Commissioner Briggs noted the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Depot Park pedestrian bridge would be taking place the Thursday, October 1 and the Bikeway/Walkway Committee would be meeting Friday October 2 at 7:30 a.m.

Commissioner Hicks stated she would like the Town to use CARES Act funding for the installation of restrooms at Town parks and asked for Planning Commission support for these amenities.

Commissioner Clarke questioned if planning commissioner training is available online. Mr. Drake noted no further mention of Commissioner training was brought to his attention, but that he would investigate the matter.

With no further business, Vice-Chairperson Knies adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.



Hil Johnson, Chairperson



Will Drake, Secretary Non-Voting