

CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL  
CHRISTIANSBURG, MONTGOMERY CO., VA.  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
AUGUST 22, 2023 – 7:00 P.M.

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA. WAS HELD AT CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN HALL, 100 EAST MAIN STREET, CHRISTIANSBURG, VIRGINIA, ON AUGUST 22, 2023, AT 7:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor D. Michael Barber; Vice-Mayor Samuel M. Bishop; Johana Hicks; Tanya Hockett; Casey Jenkins; Henry Showalter; Tim Wilson

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Town Manager Randy Wingfield; Assistant Town Manager Andrew Warren; Town Attorney Reid Broughton; Clerk of Council/Executive Assistant Tracy Heinline; Director of Engineering Mike Kelley; Finance Director Valerie Tweedie; Public Relations Director Christina Edney; Chief of Police Mark Sisson; Major Chris Ramsey; Executive Assistant to the Police Chief Debbie Elkins; Captain Carson Altizer; Captain Derek Altizer; Sergeant Chad Cannon; Detective Sergeant Michael Vallejo; Officer Victor Campos; Sergeant Allen Klein; K-9 Officer Heath Hyatt; Detective Sergeant Jon Gunter; Officer Matthew Cooper; Sergeant Ben Cronk; Lieutenant Randy Bonds; Lieutenant Terry Osbourne; Lieutenant Dwayne Hale; Officer Chris Roop; Officer Mike Nelson; Officer Chandler Scott; Officer Ethan Robinson; Officer Nathan Lucas

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Moment of Reflection
- B. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Wilson.

II. ADJUSTMENT OF THE AGENDA

None

III. OATH OF OFFICE OF NEWLY APPOINTED OFFICIAL

- A. Oath of Office for recently appointed Police Chief Chris Ramsey by Montgomery County Clerk of Circuit Court Tiffany M. Couch

Mayor Barber explained that Police Chief Mark Sisson would be retiring August 31, 2023, and Major Chris Ramsey would take over his position beginning September 1<sup>st</sup>. Mrs. Couch proceeded to administer the oath of office to Major Ramsey.

Mayor Barber recognized Town Council candidates Wendy Glass and Mike Scarry, both running for Town Council this year.

#### IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Conditional Use Permit request by NRV Marketplace LLC, property owner, and Balzer and Associates, applicant, to allow a revision of the Comprehensive Sign Plan, approved September 24, 2019, and associated with addresses 2505 – 2785 Market Street, NE. The current CUP request is to allow building signage larger than 200 sq. ft. for a new tenant in Marketplace. The current CUP request is associated with properties located at 2505 – 2580 and 2700 – 2785 Market Street, NE (Tax Parcels 406 – ((7)) – E and K and 436 – ((5)) – 1, F, I, and M; Parcel IDs 027970, 250259, 250260, 250261, 250262, and 250263) zoned B-3 General Business. The property is designated as Business/Commercial on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

Steve Semones, Balzer and Associates, addressed Council and explained that the request was essentially for an additional square footage of building wall signage. Mr. Semones explained that the proposed 322.6 square footage was more than what was allowed per Town Code. He noted that the amendment to this Conditional Use Permit would impact the new Academy Sports building only and would not affect other buildings in the Marketplace area.

#### V. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes of August 8, 2023
- B. Monthly Bill List
- C. Task Order with Century Engineering, LLC., for Construction Engineering and Inspections for the North Franklin Street/Wades Lane and South Franklin Street/First Street Pedestrian Improvement Projects in the amount of \$128,382.70.

Councilwoman Hicks inquired if the Pedestrian Improvement Project was part of a grant or supplied solely by Town funds. Town Manager Wingfield explained that it was an 80/20 partial grant (80% supplied by VDOT and 20% by the Town).

Councilwoman Hicks made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye

#### VI. INTRODUCTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

None

## VII. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Charles Dickerson spoke to Council concerning his mother's property at 2200 Peppers Ferry Road and expressed concern for her recent high-water bill. Mayor Barber explained that water rates increased by \$1 for the first 1,000 gallons from \$9 to \$10 and from \$11 for each 1,000 gallons to \$12. He added that outside rates for water, sewer, and garbage had increased 150% of inside rates to 200% of inside rates.

Steve Semones, Balzer & Associates, spoke on behalf of the proposed 21 townhome development off Church Street, NE and Lucas Street, NE by DAJ Ventures LLC and explained he had updated drawings to the project. Mr. Semones noted there were four new site components for the project since hearing concerns from the area residents. Mr. Semones explained there would be a "No Outlet" sign placed at the intersection of Norwood Street and Montgomery Street as well as a "Private Road/No Thru Traffic" sign at the end of Montgomery Street. Mr. Semones noted that a speed table or a speed bump would be installed to negate some of the vehicles coming through and explained that on the project side, leaving the townhomes parking lot, there would be an "Emergency Vehicles Only" sign to discourage residents from using Montgomery Street.

## VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### A. Street Committee Report – Bishop, Hockett

1. Plat of Subdivision of Tax Parcel 527 – ((15)) – 1 and 527 – ((15)) – 2 at 301 and 303 Park Street, NE (creating one additional lot)

Councilwoman Hockett explained the plat of subdivision at 301 and 303 Park Street was to adjust the lot lines on both properties. Mrs. Hockett noted that the two parcels were both owned by the same property owner and would create a third parcel at the back end of the property.

Councilwoman Hockett made a motion to approve the recommendation by the Street Committee to allow one additional lot at 301 and 303 Park Street, seconded by Councilman Bishop. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Aye; Wilson – Aye.

## IX. DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

- A. Conditional Use Permit request by DAJ Ventures LLC, property owner, to allow 21 townhouses on approximately 2.149 acres located at the western end of Montgomery Street, NE between the south side of Church Street, NE and the north side of Lucas Street, NE (Tax Parcels 496 – ((3)) – 2 and 496 – ((3)) – 3; Parcel IDs 260024 and 260025) zoned B-3 General Business. The property is designated as Residential on the Future

Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. the Public Hearing was held August 8, 2023.

Mayor Barber noted that the Planning Commission had voted unanimously in favor of the Conditional Use Permit request by DAJ Ventures, LLC. Councilman Showalter asked if the "Emergency Vehicle Only" signs were a requirement on Montgomery Street. Mr. Wingfield explained that the signs were not required by Code, but rather a placement for emergency vehicles to have secondary access. Mayor Barber noted that he had asked Chief Hanks for his opinion on the signs, and he expressed the signs were helpful in case of a road blockage during an emergency. Councilman Showalter inquired if a sign was needed on Lucas Street as well. Mr. Semones explained that from an infrastructure standpoint, making that connection would be harder on Lucas Street. He noted that they had pulled some of the previous units on the property and faced them towards Lucas Street so they would not backup to Montgomery Street properties.

Councilman Showalter asked about snowplows in the winter and questioned if there would be an issue with the speed table or speed bump and removing snow. Mr. Wingfield explained that the design company had backed the speed bump/speed table to 5-feet off the property line and the "Private Property/No Trespassing" sign at the property line would help Public Works drivers know where the property line was. Councilwoman Hicks expressed that it was important to have connectivity for any subdivision but did understand the concerns of the current residents and was grateful for the amendments from Balzer and Associates. Councilwoman Hockett also expressed that she was glad to see the addition of a speed table or a speed bump for Montgomery Street and the efforts made to address the residents' concerns.

Norma Jean Landis spoke to Council on behalf of her mother and thanked Mr. Semones for listening to their concerns. Ms. Landis questioned where the private road sign would be placed on Montgomery Street. Mr. Semones explained the sign would be placed at the property line and the residents in the new townhomes would see the "Emergency Vehicles Only" signs facing their area. Mrs. Landis also questioned the purpose of the "No Outlet" sign and continued to express concern that vehicles would ignore the signs.

Councilman Bishop made a motion to approve the Conditional Use Permit request with recommended conditions including the new verbiage added from Balzer and Associates, for the property at the western end of Montgomery Street, NE between the south side of Church Street, NE and the north side of Lucas Street, NE to allow the construction of 21 townhomes, seconded by Councilwoman Hockett. Council voted as follows: Bishop – Aye; Hicks – Aye; Hockett – Aye; Jenkins – Aye; Showalter – Nay; Wilson – Aye.

B. School Resource Officers (Hicks and Showalter)

Councilman Showalter questioned why the County had not responded to the Town's School Resource Officer agreement that Council had agreed to previously. Police Chief Sisson explained that Sheriff Partin had advised him that he would not sign the agreement due to a mutual response agreement already existing between the County and the Town. Mr. Sisson added that the Town has placed three Town officers in three

different schools and that Sheriff Partin has made two conditional hires for the Montgomery County Christiansburg strand schools. Town Manager Wingfield expressed that he had spoken with Sheriff Partin and that the conditional offers were pending background checks and added that the Sheriff's office had received three new applications recently. Mr. Wingfield added that Sheriff Partin had increased the sign-on bonus to \$5,000 for new Resource Officers (up from \$2,500 for general deputy/patrol positions). Councilman Showalter expressed that Council had spent a great deal of time and funds discussing Resource Officers and added that he hoped Council did not have to spend additional time in the future on the subject. Councilwoman Hicks echoed Councilman Showalter's concerns and added that if the Town had not placed Resource Officers in the three schools, she felt they would not have had protection at the beginning of the school year. Mrs. Hicks commended Chief Sisson for his diligence on the subject.

Councilman Wilson noted that the Resource Officer position is one of the hardest positions to hire for and there were several requirements that had to be met to become qualified. Mr. Wilson expressed that the hiring process takes time and felt that Sheriff Partin was doing what he had been asked. Councilman Showalter reminded Council of the decision to have officers in all schools by the beginning of the school year, but there were several schools without SROs. Mr. Showalter noted that after hearing from Chief Sisson he felt more confident that the SROs would be placed but was still concerned for future placements by the County. Chief Sisson expressed that the County was close to placing School Resource Officers in schools but in July of this year the Sheriff's Department had lost five deputies and the department had to backfill those positions. He noted that hopefully the positions would be filled by early October.

#### X. STAFF REPORTS

- A. Town Manager Wingfield reported to Council that the Christiansburg Huckleberry Park ribbon cutting would be held September 8<sup>th</sup> at noon. He added that the Dialogue on Race would be held Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. Mr. Wingfield reminded Council that Police Chief Mark Sisson's retirement celebration would be August 30<sup>th</sup> and his last day would be August 31<sup>st</sup>.
- B. Town Attorney – no report
- C. Other Staff

Finance Director Valerie Tweedie reported that the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors would meet soon and there would be a presentation concerning a potential change to tax exempt levels for elderly and totally disabled. Mrs. Tweedie advised Council to watch the meeting since it could affect the Town's exemptions for 2024.


#### XI. COUNCIL REPORTS


Mayor Barber noted that street paving on Roanoke Street would begin the week of September 25<sup>th</sup>.

XII. OTHER BUSINESS

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Barber adjourned the meeting at 7:57 p.m.

  
Tracy Heindl, Clerk of Council

  
D. Michael Barber, Mayor