

**Christiansburg Planning Commission
Minutes of December 29, 2008**

Present: Steven C. Simmons, Chairperson
Dan R. Canada
Steve Huppert
Lance Terpenny, Secretary Non-Voting

Absent: Wayne E. Booth
Michael Byrd
Ann H. Carter
Craig Moore, Vice-Chairperson

Staff/Visitors: Barry Helms, staff
Ernie Wade, Town Council
Jim Vanhoozier, Town Council
Clay Goodman, Montgomery County Administrator
Ron Bonnema, Montgomery County Engineer
Jack Murphy, Thompson & Litton
Tacy Newell-Foutz
Carol Lindstrom

Chairperson Simmons called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. in the Christiansburg Town Hall at 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia to discuss the following items.

A Conditional Use Permit request by the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors for property located at the intersection of First Street and Pepper Street, S.E. (tax parcels 527 – ((A)) – 85 and 97) for a parking garage in the B-2 Central Business District. The Public Hearing is set for January 6, 2009.

Chairperson Simmons introduced the request. Jack Murphy, architect with Thompson & Litton, showed the Planning Commission a rendering and plan view of the proposed Courthouse and parking garage. Mr. Murphy discussed the overall parking plan and stated that the project would have 340 parking spaces total available including 64 at the Social Services building. Commissioner Canada inquired if they had considered an additional floor on the parking structure and Mr. Murphy responded that they had looked at the possibility, but that soil conditions would require caissons and drive the price per space considerably higher.

Commissioner Canada stated that he thought it was important to blend the new structures in with the downtown enhancement project improvements. Mr. Murphy stated that they have looked at this and are trying to tie the new structures in with the downtown improvements and added that they have had discussions of using baskets on light poles instead of trees on the parking structure. Commissioner Huppert inquired if the old Courthouse will model the new one and Montgomery County Administrator Clay Goodman stated that they have not done redesign for the current Courthouse yet but that he did not anticipate a change. Commissioner Canada inquired about handicapped parking and Mr. Murphy indicated locations on the drawings.

An ordinance amending Chapter 3 "Advertising" of the Christiansburg Town Code in regards to provisions for digital and electronic signage.

Chairperson Simmons introduced the discussion and stated that he had taken pictures of different electronic signs. Chairperson Simmons discussed the many different types of electronic signs and asked what the Planning Commission wanted to control. Commissioner Canada stated that safety was the first priority and that the Planning Commission needed to consider flashing signs. Chairperson Simmons stated that the Planning Commission had talked about enforcement and how far the Town would need to go on restrictions. Councilman Wade stated that the Town should act as soon as possible. Councilman Vanhoozier stated that the Town cannot turn down an application for electronic signs if they meet all other requirements unless there is a moratorium.

There was discussion on requiring Conditional Use Permits and the present Advertising Ordinance being separate from the Zoning Ordinance. Chairperson Simmons asked that Planning Director Randy Wingfield continue to look for other localities that regulate electronic signs. Carol Lindstrom stated that having the Advertising Ordinance in the Zoning Ordinance would have several advantages. Tacy Newell-Foutz spoke about her experience on the Board of Zoning Appeals.

There being no more business Chairperson Simmons adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m.



Steven C. Simmons, Chairperson



R. Lance Terpenny, Secretary Non-Voting