Christiansburg Planning Commission
Minutes of July 9, 2012

Present: Barry Akers
Ann H. Carter
Harry Collins
M. H. Dorsett, AICP
Steve Huppert
Craig Moore, Chairperson
Ashley Parsons
Joe Powers, Vice-Chairperson
Jennifer D. Sowers
Randy S. Wingfield, Secretary Non-Voting
Nichole Hair, (New) Secretary Non-Voting

Absent: None

Staff/Visitors: Nichole Hair, staff
Kali Casper, staff
Missy Martin, staff

Chairperson Moore called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Christiansburg Town Hall at 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia to discuss the following items:

Public Comment.

Chairperson Moore opened the floor for public comment. No public comments were made.

Approval of meeting minutes for June 11, 2012.

Chairperson Moore introduced the discussion. Chairperson Moore noted the addition of the most recently adopted Conditional Use Permit for a planned housing development. The approved CUP will be made part of the meeting minutes. Commissioner Dorsett made a motion to approve the June 11, 2012 meeting meetings. Commissioner Carter seconded the motion. No further discussion was present and the meeting minutes passed unanimously, 9-0. Commissioner Huppert asked about Kevin Conner and such on the list of subcommittees and he inquired if the list will be updated. Mr. Wingfield noted the list was from the initial setup of the subcommittees and this item is on the agenda for Planning Commission discussion.

Consideration of appointment of Planning Commission Secretary.

Chairperson Moore introduced the discussion. Mr. Wingfield noted Ms. Hair's promotion and that Secretary can be changed for the Planning Director to serve in the role. Commissioner Collins recommended Ms. Hair as the Planning Commission Secretary. Commissioner Dorsett seconded the motion which passed 9-0. Mr. Wingfield turned the meeting over to Ms. Hair.

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Update on Town Council adoption of Zoning Ordinance Overall Rewrite.

Chairperson Moore introduced the discussion. Ms. Hair noted Town Council made one change, to keep the requirement at two parking spaces for multi-family uses. Chairperson Moore noted that the Development Subcommittee worked on this rewrite. Commissioner Powers noted that subcommittee will be reviewing parking including downtown parking. Commissioner Powers stated he will update the Planning Commission later on in the meeting on the Development Subcommittee.

Review of 2012 Legislative changes pertaining to Land Use.

Chairperson Moore introduced the discussion. Ms. Hair noted amendments to proffers require a public hearing and notification to all affected parties. Ms. Hair added Urban Development Areas are no longer mandatory for localities. Ms. Hair stated there are there are regulations for historic districts. Commissioner Collins asked what it means for the Town. Ms. Hair noted UDAs are optional where they had been required before. Commissioner Dorsett noted that funding may be tied to the adoption of UDAs. Ms. Hair agreed this could be true. Ms. Hair added if the Planning Commission can forward questions to her for the attorney to answer if desired. Commissioner Dorsett asked about the TMDL meeting and if anyone attended. Mr. Wingfield was present at the beginning of the meeting. Commissioner Dorsett asked about a parking lot that drains down to Crab Creek. Chairperson Moore asked if it had been concreted. Commissioner Dorsett stated that it was originally grass and has been paved over. Chairperson Moore asked if Ms. Hair will check with the Engineering Department regarding thresholds for land disturbance. Commissioner Powers asked if the level is 10,000 square feet. Mr. Wingfield noted that it would be 10,000 square feet disturbed area for Town regulations to kick in. Commissioner Dorsett stated there must be some environmental regulations for paving a parking lot that drains to a creek. Chairperson Moore noted there are certain thresholds. Commissioner Dorsett asked if it might fall under the TMDL regulations. Commissioner Powers asked if the property is under Conditional Use Permit. Ms. Hair stated the property is not.

Chairperson Moore inquired if improvements to the interchange are proffered, do they have to notify property owners if the proffer is amended. Ms. Hair stated that currently falls under State Code. Mr. Wingfield added that the Town has always required a public hearing to amend proffers. Commissioner Powers asked staff to review these changes and compare to Town Code. Ms. Hair stated she has reviewed the changes for compliance. Ms. Hair stated in regards to Historic Districts, changes may be required if those districts are adopted in the Town Ordinance.

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Discussion of Planning Commission Subcommittees.

Chairperson Moore introduced the discussion. Chairperson Moore stated Development Standards Subcommittee will continue to meet. Commissioner Powers will continue to Chair the committee with Commissioners Sowers and Carter as designated members. Commissioner Parsons stated she does not wish to be designated to the subcommittee. Commissioner Collins expressed desire to participate but would need to request a later meeting time. Commissioners Sowers, Powers, and Carter agreed with a later time. The Development Subcommittee agreed to meet the 4th Wednesday of the month at 4:30 p.m.

Chairperson Moore stated the Historic Preservation Subcommittee designated members are Commissioners Dorsett, Carter and Akers. Chairperson Moore inquired about keeping the subcommittee. Ms. Hair stated the formal nomination process has begun with the consultant. Chairperson Moore suggested the subcommittee meet quarterly. Commissioner Parsons requested being an official member of the Historic Preservation Subcommittee. Commissioner Akers will continue to Chair the committee. Commissioner Parsons will also be official member of the subcommittee.

Chairperson Moore stated the Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee is composed of Commissioner Dorsett as Chair, with Commissioner Parsons, Powers and Collins. Commissioner Dorsett requested a Co-Chair to assist with the subcommittee. Chairperson Moore asked Commissioner Parsons if she would like to co-chair. Commissioner Parsons asked what the role of co-chair entails. Chairperson Moore stated the co-chair would basically keep the meeting moving, on-track, handle cancellations and other similar duties. Commissioner Parsons accepted the role as co-chair. The Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee will continue to meet the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 4:30 p.m.

Chairperson Moore noted the limited budget for these subcommittee meetings. Chairperson Moore commented the budget may run out before the fiscal year ends. Chairperson Moore added the subcommittees may need to work for free if the funds run out. Commissioner Dorsett asked about Commissioner Huppert being part of the subcommittees. Commissioner Huppert responded he would be unable to participate because he participates in various Town Council committees, but he would like to have an updated list of subcommittees with the meeting times. Commissioners Powers asked about Chairperson Moore being compensated for attending Town Council meetings. Mr. Wingfield noted this has not been done in the past, but the request for that would need to be made to Town Council. Chairperson Moore suggested waiting until a later date to consider this item. Commissioner Powers asked about including it in the next budget cycle. Chairperson Moore asked if Planning Commission subcommittee compensation was a separate budget item. Mr. Wingfield responded it is not. Commissioner Huppert stated he would like to make Town Council aware of the Chairperson not being compensated for attending Town Council meetings. Commissioner Powers noted Montgomery County has done this compensation before.

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Discussion of Planning Commission Subcommittees – (continued).

Chairperson Moore asked if anyone who is already on a subcommittee would like to be added to any additional committees. Commissioner Huppert requested to be added to the next Town Council agenda to discuss Planning Commission subcommittees. Ms. Hair stated she would be sure to have the item added.

Chairperson Moore noted the use of subcommittees does reduce the number of Planning Commission meetings and allows staff to meet during business hours.

Commissioner Dorsett noted that Depot Days is this weekend and she wished to include Comprehensive Plan maps for display. Commissioner Powers added the map showing the age of different buildings from Heritage Day would be nice.

Commissioner Powers stated the Development Subcommittee had a citizen interested in amateur radio towers. Commissioner Powers added the subcommittee will consider the radio tower issue as well as transportation/traffic impact analysis with another Zoning Ordinance update. Chairperson Moore stated creating a threshold for developers for traffic impacts will be very useful. Chairperson Moore stated a good outcome of the subcommittee meetings is certain issues are given more attention.

There being no more business Chairperson Moore adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

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Craig Moore, Chairperson Nichole Hair, Secretary Non-Voting

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