

**Christiansburg Planning Commission**  
**Minutes of February 11, 2013**

Present: Ann H. Carter  
Harry Collins  
M. H. Dorsett, AICP  
David Franusich  
Jonathan Hedrick  
Steve Huppert  
Craig Moore, Chairperson  
Ashley Parsons  
Joe Powers, Vice-Chairperson  
Jennifer D. Sowers  
Nichole Hair, Secretary <sup>Non-Voting</sup>

Absent: None

Staff/Visitors: Kali Casper, staff  
Missy Martin, staff  
Cindy Disney, Montgomery County Planning Commission Liaison  
Jeremy White

Chairperson Moore called the meeting to order at 7:00 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. Chairperson Moore closed the floor for public comment.

Approval of meeting minutes for January 22, 2013.

Chairperson Moore introduced the discussion. Commissioner Collins made a motion to approve the January 22, 2013 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Sowers seconded the motion which passed 8-0 with Commissioner Dorsett and Chairperson Moore abstaining.

Public Hearing on Conditional Use Permit request by Cary W. Hopper for residential use at 970 Radford Street (tax parcel 525-((A))-20) in the B-3 General Business District.

Chairperson Moore opened the public hearing. Mr. Jeremy White introduced himself as the representative for Mr. Cary Hopper, as he is out of town. Commissioner Dorsett asked what Mr. Hopper plans to do with the property. Mr. White responded he would like to turn the house into a three bedroom, two bathroom single-family dwelling unit and the outparcel will be a two bedroom, two bathroom single-family dwelling unit. Commissioner Powers asked to see the outparcel on the map.

Public Hearing on Conditional Use Permit request by Cary W. Hopper for residential use at 970 Radford Street (tax parcel 525-((A))-20) in the B-3 General Business District – (continued).

Ms. Hair noted that there are two existing units on the property. Commissioner Collins asked what they are currently being used for. Mr. White responded the buildings used to be the Christiansburg Daycare Center but are currently empty and they are renovating them. Commissioner Sowers asked if they were bought at auction in the last month or so. Mr. White responded yes. Commissioner Dorsett noted the applicant wants to take them back to the original use. Commissioner Dorsett added it will not be a high-rise development. Mr. White responded no just two single-family units. He added the plan may be to reclaim the front parking lot as yard in front of the house. Commissioner Powers asked if outparcel was built as separate classrooms for the daycare. Mr. White said yes the building is approximately 65 feet by 18 feet and was separated into three rooms with two bathrooms in the back. Commissioner Powers asked what that area will be. Mr. White responded that it will be a two bedroom, two bathroom single unit. Commissioner Dorsett noted it will have a primary structure and essentially a mother-in-law unit and asked if it would be a rental unit. Mr. White responded yes. Commissioner Sowers asked if both units will be rentals. Mr. White responded yes. Commissioner Powers asked if there were other conditional use permits for residential uses in any of the other surrounding B-3 area. Ms. Hair noted there are a couple new residences nearby on Radford Street. She added there is a single-family home behind the property. Commissioner Powers noted the house to the west of it has a for sale sign with B-3 indicated.

Commissioner Huppert asked about the exact location. Mr. White responded 970 Radford Street. Commissioner Huppert asked about landmarks nearby. Commissioner Sowers responded HY-Co, the asbestos removal business was next door to the right. Mr. White noted the property is directly across the street from Robert's Muffler.

Chairperson Moore noted this is a public hearing and to allow other speakers and then come back to the applicant. No other public comments were made. Chairperson Moore closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Dorsett asked if this area was discussed for a mix of commercial, residential, and industrial in the draft of the Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Powers responded it was business along the road and industrial with residential behind. He added this is use of the existing buildings not a new building with multiple units. Commissioner Dorsett noted she thought it would be a mixed use area. Commissioner Parsons said she thought it would be a cluster of residential, business, and industrial. Commissioner Dorsett noted the inclusion of workforce housing. Commissioner Parsons thinks there were three or four zones like that throughout Town.

Public Hearing on Conditional Use Permit request by Cary W. Hopper for residential use at 970 Radford Street (tax parcel 525-((A))-20) in the B-3 General Business District – (continued).

Commissioner Carter stated it was great to re-use the existing building. Commissioner Carter asked about placing conditions on the request. Ms. Hair responded she would recommend the request be limited to single-family homes. Commissioner Powers added that it would be limited to the two single-family homes discussed. Ms. Hair responded she will draft this as a condition.

Commissioner Huppert asked about the length of vacancy of the building. Mr. White responded that he did not know but has been at least four weeks. Commissioner Sowers responded one to two years. Commissioner Collins asked about zoning of the rest of homes on Radford Street westward. Ms. Hair responded B-3 but there is a mix of residential and business uses.

Work Session – Comprehensive Plan

Chairperson Moore opened the discussion.

Commissioner Dorsett moved that the Planning Commission go into work session. Commissioner Carter seconded the motion which passed 10-0.

The work session on the Public Safety chapter of the Comprehensive Plan Update was held, no action was taken.

Commissioner Dorsett moved that the Planning Commission close the work session. Commissioner Sowers second the motion which passed 10-0.

Other Business

Ms. Hair noted the Town Council is looking for a representative to the New River Valley Planning District Commission to attend the meetings on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month at 6pm. Commissioner Franusich asked if it was the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday. Ms. Hair responded yes. Chairperson Moore asked what time. Ms. Hair responded 6pm. Commissioner Dorsett volunteered to serve. Commissioner Huppert noted that Councilman Showalter has been the representative so he can update on the topic.

Ms. Hair noted the public input meeting for the Department of Historic Resources (DHR) is Wednesday from 5-7pm in the Administrative Conference Room. She added that she will be here with Sherry Wyatt and Mike Pulice regarding the proposed downtown historic district. Commissioner Carter asked when the meeting is. Ms. Hair responded this Wednesday from 5-7pm. Chairperson Moore noted that Town Council is meeting on Wednesday as well. Ms. Hair noted that Town Council meets at 6:30pm and historic districts will meet in the Administrative Conference Room. Commissioner Powers asked if notice has been sent regarding it. Ms. Hair noted that it has been in the paper and that DHR has sent notice to property owners, Montgomery County and Town administrations and elected officials.

Other Business – (continued).

Ms. Hair noted for tax information, a 1099 is only received if the amount is over \$600. She added no one meets that threshold but to speak to Sherry Hunter for total wages.

Commissioner Huppert noted the Town Council meeting is at 6:30pm and it is a closed meeting. Commissioner Sowers noted that the agenda link did not work today for the Town Council meeting.

Chairperson Moore asked about any CUPs coming up for the next meetings. Ms. Hair noted that something may come for the Moose Lodge but has not been received yet. Commissioner Powers stated there will be another chapter of the Comprehensive Plan to look at. Ms. Hair responded the Planning Commission will continue to do work sessions for chapters as they are ready.

Commissioner Dorsett asked if the Moose Lodge is being sold to an Indian tribe and will become a casino. Ms. Hair responded no.

Ms. Hair introduced Ms. Cindy Disney as the liaison from the Montgomery County Planning Commission.

Commissioner Franusich asked if the Bikeway Walkway map was added to the Transportation Plan. Ms. Casper responded the map is not ready yet. She added the data from the PDC does not match up with Town data. She noted that the Transportation Plan was submitted to VDOT last week and the Bikeway Walkway map will be added when it is ready.

Commissioner Collins requested that the Planning Commission continue workshop Comprehensive Plan chapters. Ms. Hair responded yes.

Chairperson Moore asked if Ms. Disney has any comments. Ms. Disney thanked the Planning Commission for the opportunity to participate.

Chairperson Moore moved that the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Collins seconded the motion.

There being no more business Chairperson Moore adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

---

Craig Moore, Chairperson

---

Nichole Hair, Secretary Non-Voting

# Resolution of the Town of Christiansburg Planning Commission

## *Conditional Use Permit Application*

WHEREAS the Christiansburg Planning Commission, acting upon a request by the Christiansburg Town Council to study a request made by Cary W. Hopper for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for property located at 970 Radford Street, N.W. (tax parcel 525 – ((A)) – 20) for residential use in the B-3 General Business District, has found following a duly advertised public hearing that the public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practices (**permit / do not permit**) the issuance of a CUP to Cary W. Hopper for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for property located at 970 Radford Street, N.W. (tax parcel 525 – ((A)) – 20) for residential use in the B-3 General Business District.

THEREFORE be it resolved that the Christiansburg Planning Commission (**recommends / does not recommend**) that the Christiansburg Town Council approve the Conditional Use Permit with the following condition(s):

1. The development will be limited to two, single-family residences.

Dated this the 25th day of February 2013.

---

Craig Moore, Chairperson  
Christiansburg Planning Commission

The above Resolution was adopted on motion by Dorsett seconded by Collins at a meeting of the Planning Commission following the posting of a public hearing notice upon the property and a duly advertised public hearing on the above request on February 11, 2013. Upon a call for an aye and nay vote on the foregoing resolution, the Commission members present throughout all deliberations on the foregoing and voting or abstaining, stood as indicated opposite their names as follows:

<u>MEMBERS</u>	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Ann H. Carter				
Harry Collins				
M. H. Dorsett, AICP				
David Franusich				
Jonathan Hedrick				
Steve Huppert				
Craig Moore, Chairperson				
Ashley Parsons				
Joe Powers, Vice-Chairperson				
Jennifer D. Sowers				

---

Craig Moore, Chairperson

---

Nichole Hair, Secretary Non-voting

## Government

Christiansburg operates under a Town Manager-Town Council form of government. The Town Council is comprised of six voting members and a Mayor who votes only in the event of a tie. Council members are elected to four-year terms, with three seats being open for election every two years. The Mayor's seat is filled every four years by general election and all members of Council serve at-large.

The Council appoints a Town Manager to act as administrative head of the Town. The Town Manager carries out policies established by Council, directs business procedures, and has hiring and termination authority over all Town employees except the Chief of Police, Town Clerk, Town Treasurer, and Town Attorney, who are also appointed by the Council. The Town Manager is responsible for preparing, submitting, and administering an annual operating budget, advising Council on Town affairs, enforcing the Town Code, and directing and supervising all Town Departments. The Town Departments include: Administration, Aquatic Center, Building Inspections, Engineering, Fire, Human Resources, Information Technology, Parks and Recreation, Planning and Zoning, Police, Public Relations, Public Works, Rescue, and Treasury/Finance.

The Council, in its legislative role, adopts resolutions and ordinances and establishes the general policies of the Town. The Council also sets the real estate tax rate, approves and adopts the annual operating budget, and is responsible for the appointment of citizens, staff, and Council members to the following boards and commissions: Aquatic Advisory Board, Board of Zoning Appeals, Building Code Board of Appeals, Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, and Planning Commission. The Town also has representatives on the following boards, commissions, and committees: Blacksburg-Christiansburg-VPI Water Authority, MBC Development Corporation, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Commission, Montgomery County Transportation Safety Commission, Montgomery Regional Economic Development Corporation, Montgomery Regional Solid Waste Authority, New River Valley Agency on Aging Board of Directors, New River Valley Airport Commission, New River Valley Emergency Communication Regional Authority, New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization, New River Valley Planning District Commission, NRV Development Corporation, Tourism Council, Virginia Tech-Montgomery Regional Airport Authority, and Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facility Authority. \*\*\*\*<What about these groups: Armory Control Board for the National Guard Armory, Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library, Local Emergency Planning Committee, Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce?>\*\*\*\* Town Council has representatives on the following Virginia Municipal League Committees: Community and Economic Development Policy, Environmental Quality Policy, Finance Policy, General Laws Policy, Human Development and Education Policy, and Transportation Policy.

Detailed information on these boards, commissions, and committees and their membership is available on the website and in the [appendix](#).

### Primary Government Goal

Promote open, responsive, accountable, and fiscally responsible government while maintaining strong revenue streams to sustain high-quality service delivery.

## **Budget and Financial Management**

The budget for the Town of Christiansburg reflects four different funds, the general fund, a permanent fund, a special revenue fund and an enterprise fund. The General Fund is used for all revenues and expenditures of the Town that are not designated or required to be accounted for in another fund. The Permanent Fund is used to account for the activity of the Sunset Cemetery. Generally accepted governmental accounting principles requires that this be accounted for in a permanent fund because it will be required to have funds set aside for perpetual care in a separate fund balance from the general fund and will exist in perpetuity for the maintenance of the cemetery. The Special Revenue Fund is used to account for grants and contracts and donated funds that are restricted as to the use of the funds received as mandated by law, contract, or donor requirements and the revenues derived from the activity are the primary funding source. The Proprietary or Enterprise Fund is used to account for the activity of the water and sewer operations of the town.

In 2011, Town Council adopted a Fund Balance Policy in order to provide a stable financial base for the Town at all times. It is essential that the Town maintain adequate levels of unassigned fund balance to mitigate financial risk that can occur from unforeseen revenue fluctuations, unanticipated expenditures that may result from emergency situations, provide cash flow liquidity for general operations, and maintain investment grade bond ratings and good credit standing.

### **\*\*\*\*Approximate operating budget \*\*\*\***

The Town's main sources of revenue include taxes on real estate, sales, business licensing, lodging, and meals and utility service fees. The Town's main sources of expenditure include public works, water and waste water, public safety, and parks and recreation. In addition, the Town continually pursues grant funding opportunities to minimize project costs. The Town also utilizes public private partnerships, when appropriate, to develop projects in a timely cost-effective manner.

## **Priority Based Budgeting**

With assistance from the Center for Priority Based Budgeting of Denver, Colorado, the Town has developed a prioritization process that is used to help the Town better understand the programs and services it provides to the community, the true cost of providing these services, and the best way to allocate funds as the Town strives to spend within its means. This course of action is intended to help focus the Town's decision-making process by basing priorities on outcomes.

The concept behind prioritization of services is that it creates an objective and transparent decision-making process, one that ensures programs of higher value to citizens -- those that achieve the organization's objectives most effectively -- can be sustained through adequate funding levels, regardless of the economic conditions. This strategic approach to managing the current fiscal environment will also help ensure the Town's long-term fiscal wellness.

Council members and representative citizen advisors facilitated a discussion to help define and refine Christiansburg's results, or overall objectives and strategic goals. Using Town Council's

Vision 2020 as a base, the group determined the Town's overall objectives as follows (in alphabetical order):

- Clean, Healthy, Safe Place to Live
- Everyone's Hometown with Well-Informed and Engaged Citizens
- Good Governance (Sound Financial Entity)
- Green, Well-Planned Community
- Interconnected Community
- Recreational, Cultural, and Entertainment Mecca
- Retail, Commerce, and Tourist Destination

Some programs, services, or initiatives offered by the Town (such as transportation) are so important, that they help meet multiple objectives in Christiansburg's desire to make the Town a great place to live, work, and visit.

Town staff also diligently worked to create an inventory of all services and programs currently provided to its citizens. This inventory was then graded in terms of how each program or service rates specifically to each of the six overall Town objectives listed above (Good Governance excepted). The overall cost of each program was also determined. The Town incorporated a Citizen \$100 Exercise into the process, where those who live and work in Town were asked to prioritize the goals and objectives that the Town is striving to achieve for the community. This citizen input was factored into the weighting of the individual goals/objectives. The final list of all services and programs, broken down by quartile, is available on the Town website.

Priority Based Budgeting is a key component in the budgeting process, with Town Council and staff using its results to determine the best way to allocate available resources. In addition to assisting in the determination of what services and programs contribute directly to the Town's overall objectives, the process also helps in evaluating any new programs or services being considered.

### **Budget and Financial Management Goal**

Manage fiscal affairs in a professional and fiscally responsible manner. Provide Town Council and citizens with sufficient information and analysis on which to make good fiscal decisions that result in an affordable tax structure and reasonable service costs and fees.

#### **Implementation Strategies**

- Enhance the use of priority based budgeting.
- Adhere to the adopted Fund Balance Policy.
- Maintain transparency in the budget process to keep citizens informed about the Town's operations and activities.
  - Continue to produce a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.
- Develop a Capital Improvement Program to anticipate future facilities and infrastructure and size them to support future growth and development.
- Evaluate opportunities for regional cooperation and collaboration that may offer greater efficiency and effectiveness when dealing with issues of mutual interest.
- Evaluate opportunities for using private contractors.

## **Communications**

Christiansburg's Public Relations Department serves as a liaison between citizens, the media, and the Town's many departments. The Public Relations Department responds to requests for public records according to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) which guarantees citizens of the Commonwealth and representatives of the media access to public records held by public bodies, public officials, and public employees. FOIA's purpose is to promote an increased awareness by all persons of governmental activities.

In addition to FOIA request responses, the Town utilizes numerous methods to keep the public updated on Town information and activities. As stated in the Town of Christiansburg Strategic Communications Plan (SCP), the Town's communications mission is:

The Town of Christiansburg will proactively provide citizens, members of the media, employees, and other audiences with accurate and timely information regarding upcoming events, announcements, services, policies, and project plans that may be of interest or have an effect on these stakeholders.

The SCP identifies the demographics of the primary and secondary target audiences for the Town. The SCP details the current communication methods and considers possibilities for future growth and progressive outreach while considering the audiences. Current communication methods include:

- Town website including news and announcements, Town calendar with public meetings, events, and holidays, agendas/minutes for Town Council and other board and commission meetings, and online forms
- 'Notify Me' subscription service that allows audience members to receive notification including updates to the news and announcements page and public meetings
- Facebook and Twitter
- Press releases, interviews, editorials/letters to the editor, magazine articles, public information meetings, public service announcements, surveys, fliers/brochures, public presentations, written notifications to citizens, internal communication, and special events
- Utility bill messages which are short messages included on the utility bills as well as utility bill inserts which allow for longer messages to utility service customers
- CodeRED which allows audience members to opt-in to receive information in the event of emergency or critical situations such as health alerts, water main breaks, and law enforcement emergencies
- Town Council meeting videos
- Citizens Academy in partnership with Montgomery County for citizens to learn through a nine week program addressing various aspects of local government

The SCP includes an action plan that addresses current communication methods and provides specific timely objectives and strategies to achieve the mission statement. The SCP aims to raise the Town's community profile through improved communications, streamlined access to information, increased positive media coverage, and contact with citizens, business owners, and other key constituents. Communication efforts will foster two-way communication and facilitate expression of thoughts, opinions, information, rationale, and/or decisions by Town Council members and Town staff to internal and external constituents. Through effective communication

and educated decision-making, community pride and buy-in for Town programs and services will increase, as will a positive identification with the Town.

### **Communications Goal**

Promote open and responsive government that actively communicates with residents and works to increase citizen participation in all phases of Town government.

#### **Implementation Strategies**

- Implement Strategic Communications Plan as prepared by Public Relations Office.
  - Update Strategic Communications Plan as improving communication is an ongoing process that needs to be revisited as circumstances change and goals are achieved.