Christiansburg Planning Commission
Minutes of February 25, 2013

Present: Ann H. Carter
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 Non-Voting

Absent: Harry Collins

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

Chairperson Moore called the meeting to order at 7:02 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 February 11, 2013.

Chairperson Moore introduced the discussion. Commissioner Dorsett made a motion to approve the February 11, 2013 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Sowers seconded the motion which passed 9-0.

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 discussion. Chairperson Moore read the drafted Conditional Use Permit with one condition stating “the development will be limited to two, single-family residences”. Commissioner Carter made a motion to recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit with the one condition. Commissioner Franusich seconded the motion. Commissioner Carter noted she is happy to see it going back to use instead of sitting vacant and it is a good use of a property that is already there. The motion passed 9-0.

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Work Session – Comprehensive Plan

Chairperson Moore opened the discussion. Commissioner Dorsett asked the work session be postponed for two weeks.

Other Business

Chairperson Moore explained the subcommittees for the new Planning Commission members. Chairperson Moore asked Ms. Hair if the Historic District Subcommittee is currently meeting. Ms. Hair responded no. Chairperson Moore asked about the meeting times for the Development Subcommittee. Commissioner Powers responded it is meeting once a month on the fourth Wednesdays. Chairperson Moore added that new members could serve on these subcommittees. Chairperson Moore asked about meeting time for the Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee. Commissioner Dorsett responded the subcommittee meets at 4:30pm. Ms. Casper added first and third Wednesdays of each month at 4:30pm. Chairperson Moore noted the Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee is working on the finer details to bring before Planning Commission. Commissioner Dorsett added after the full Comprehensive Plan is finished, work on neighborhood plans will begin. Commissioner Franusich asked about the meeting time for the Development Subcommittee. Commissioner Powers responded the committee meets at 9:30 in the morning on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Both committee chairs welcomed the new Commission members to join either subcommittee. Chairperson Moore noted the Planning Commissioners are compensated for these meetings. Ms. Hair added compensation is $25 per meeting. Chairperson Moore added the compensation is limited to full meetings (30 minutes or more). Commissioner Franusich asked about the time and location for Development Subcommittee. Ms. Hair responded the committee meets at 9:30 a.m. in the Administrative Conference Room in Town Hall. Chairperson Moore indicated the new Commissioners could try out the committees but would like a commitment by the Commissioners before compensation is granted and the Chairs of the committees need to be aware of the membership. Commissioner Hedrick asked the location of the Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee meeting. Commissioner Dorsett responded the meeting is held in the conference room. Commissioner Powers noted different subjects are discussed each week for the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Franusich asked if they could simply show up for the meeting. Ms. Hair responded yes.

Commissioner Powers asked Ms. Hair to speak about the Historic District meeting. Ms. Hair indicated the public hearing for the proposed Downtown Historic District was held two weeks ago and there was a great turnout from local property owners in the proposed district. She added the State public hearing will be March 21st in Charlottesville and the local Salem representative will present. She added the Town should know something by the end of March hopefully. Commissioner Franusich asked about a map of the area. Ms. Hair noted there is a map on DHR's website but not yet on the Town's website. Chairperson Moore asked if the Town will have someone at the state public hearing. Ms. Hair responded no but the DHR representative Mike Pulice will present the application to the Board. She added the mayor has sent his recommendation that Council is in favor of the proposed district.

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Other Business (Continued)

Commissioner Huppert indicated that Town Council has been addressing a situation at Falling Branch Elementary. He noted Christiansburg is involved because Christiansburg kids go to Falling Branch. He added people are stopping for different buses including the Roanoke bus and the Megabus (Knoxville to DC). Commissioner Huppert stated the problems are that the parking lot is extremely small for the number of cars and people are parking on the grass. He added VDOT owns the parking lot and VDOT is very tight on money. He noted a portajohn has been put up and a bus shelter. He continued on stating people have been going to the school to go to the bathroom, to plug in their calculators and different things. He stated the school does not want people coming in to the school. He added one man was told not to come in and went all the way around trying to get in a back door. The discussion has involved the County, School Board, VDOT, and the Town. Commissioner Huppert noted that Council held a special meeting to discuss these issues. He indicated on a short term basis, there will be a police officer almost full time for the next three weeks. He added VDOT will try to put a fence around the parking lot and increase signage and increase police patrolling. In the long-term, it has been discussed to put a park and ride next to the Old Volkswagen place but that it will cost approximately $2-4 million. Commissioner Sowers asked about the location of the police officer. Commissioner Huppert said the officer does the DARE program and will be at the school anyway for the next three weeks. Commissioner Dorsett asked why the cost is so high for the park and ride. Ms. Hair responded VDOT may not own the entire property and may need to purchase property for bus access. Commissioner Huppert noted there is a portajohn currently but the new lot would need restrooms and covering. He added there have been some people camping out there when they get off the bus at 2am. Commissioner Franusich asked about discussion of acquiring a different lot that is currently available such as the Hardees' lot. Commissioner Huppert noted a lack of money would make that difficult. Commissioner Powers asked about using the lot for free for now in exchange for the business it would bring in from the bus travelers. Commissioner Hedrick asked if the cost of $2-4 million to re-establish the current lot. Commissioner Huppert responded would be a question for VDOT. He added the Megabus gets in at 3:30pm which is about the same time that school lets out and Megabus was asked if they would change the schedule but they will not.

Chairperson Moore asked Commissioner Huppert to remind Council to look at the Comprehensive Plan chapters as they are given to them. He added comments may be emailed to Ms. Casper as they arise as well. Commissioner Huppert indicated that he would.

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Other Business (Continued)

Commissioner Hedrick stated he has spoken with Todd Walters and that the community was invited to a community forum meeting last Tuesday at the mall center. He added there were VDOT reps, local businesses, and about forty residents. He indicated the meeting was very helpful to see what will happen on Route 114. Leaders settled on looking at the intersection of Route 114 and Quinn Stewart Blvd. after the road completion. Commissioner Hedrick added the residents believe they were promised a red light and he indicated that was likely not the case. He asked about the Zoning of the land across the street. Ms. Hair responded it is zoned Agriculture.

Commissioner Hedrick added Route 114 will be divided from the railroad tracks up to Domino's Pizza and there will be three lanes of traffic to cross. He noted the meeting lasted about 1.5 hours with most of the time devoted to discussion of the intersection. Commissioner Hedrick thanked Engineering. Commissioner Dorsett asked about a red light being installed as part of a proffer if commercial was developed on the Halberstadt property. Ms. Hair responded not that she is aware of but added development may kick in some of the warrants for a traffic light. Commissioner Dorsett asked if the proposed By-Pass might be across from Quin Stewart. Ms. Hair responded yes may be the alignment. Commissioner Powers asked about the agricultural land across the street. Ms. Hair responded it is for sale and it is the Truman Wilson property. Commissioner Powers asked about the size. Ms. Hair responded it is fairly large. Commissioner Powers noted a rezoning of the property would come before Planning Commission. Ms. Hair agreed. Commissioner Dorsett asked about the three large landowners out on Peppers Ferry; the Halberstadts and Wilsons. Ms. Hair noted the Ryplansky property. Commissioner Dorsett asked about karst features on the third property.

Commissioner Powers asked Ms. Casper if there is any news from VDOT regarding the transportation chapter. Ms. Casper responded that she was given confirmation today that the plan was received. Chairperson Moore asked who has received the document. Ms. Casper indicated David Clarke responded and that it was sent to Mr. Clarke and Mike Gray.

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

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Craig Moore, Chairperson Nichole Hair, Secretary Non-Voting

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