

**Christiansburg Planning Commission
Minutes of October 21, 2013**

Present: Matthew J. Beasley
Ann H. Carter
Harry Collins
Ashley Cowen
M.H. Dorsett, AICP
David Franusich
Jonathan Hedrick
Craig Moore, Chairperson
Joe Powers, Vice-Chairperson
Jennifer D. Sowers
Nichole Hair, Secretary ^{Non-Voting}

Absent: Steve Huppert

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

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 October 7, 2013.

Chairperson Moore introduced the discussion. Commissioner Dorsett made a motion to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Sowers seconded the motion, which passed 9-0. Commissioner Franusich abstained from voting due to his absence from the meeting.

Planning Commission discussion on Council's intention to adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 30 "Zoning" specifically, section 30-9 of the *Christiansburg Town Code* to address parking requirements for mixed use structures with apartments in the B-2 Central Business District; on-site parking requirements and off-site cooperative parking provisions; and grandfathered status in the B-2 Central Business District and sections 30-185, 30-186, 30-190, and 30-193 of the *Christiansburg Town Code* to clarify the requirements for final site plans, when preliminary and final site plans expire, and fees associated with the submittal of same. The Planning Commission Public Hearing was held on October 7, 2013.

Chairperson Moore asked for any comments. Commissioner Franusich stated he originally reluctantly agreed on the B-2 parking changes. Commissioner Franusich commented he had felt it was a step in the right direction but after thinking on it, he feels this is a half measure and will not help the downtown revive. Commissioner Franusich stated he would like to remove requirements for off-street parking in the downtown.

Commissioner Franusich discussed with the Commissioners his research on other localities and their parking requirements. The localities used for examples were Blacksburg, Staunton, Lynchburg, Roanoke, Asheville, N.C., Winchester and Lexington. Commissioner Franusich requested the parking ordinance amendment be voted on separately from the site plan amendment.

Commissioner Dorsett stated she would like to echo Commissioner Franusich's comments because there is no place in Cambria for off-street parking unless historic structures are removed. Commissioner Dorsett stated Cambria has only eight public parking spaces. Commissioner Dorsett would like to look at parking provisions for Historic Districts.

Commissioner Franusich stated he understands the fear of a parking war in the downtown. Commissioner Franusich feels if the lack of parking becomes an issue, he would be happy to deal with that because that means the downtown will be full of life.

Commissioner Powers responded to Commissioner Franusich's study of other localities' parking ordinances. Commissioner Powers stated there is a significant difference in these localities because Downtown Christiansburg parking is free. The other localities Commissioner Franusich mentioned all charge a fee for parking. Commissioner Powers added Downtown Christiansburg has limited public parking and the other localities mentioned have public parking decks or garages.

Commissioner Collins added his current employer has been looking to relocate in downtown Roanoke, but the monthly fees to park in a parking garage are too high. Commissioner Franusich added the localities have vibrant downtown areas that need to provide parking. Commissioner Franusich stated Christiansburg does not have the problem of no parking spaces; Downtown Christiansburg has parking that is not being utilized.

Planning Commission Public Hearing on Council's intention to adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 30 "Zoning" specifically, section 30-9 of the Christiansburg Town Code to address parking requirements for mixed use structures with apartments in the B-2 Central Business District; on-site parking requirements and off-site cooperative parking provisions; and grandfathered status in the B-2 Central Business District and sections 30-185, 30-186, 30-190, and 30-193 of the Christiansburg Town Code to clarify the requirements for final site plans, when preliminary and final site plans expire, and fees associated with the submittal of same - (continued).

Commissioner Franusich added when the food truck rodeo was held downtown, no one parked in the courthouse parking garage. Ms. Hair added the number one complaint from that event was the lack of parking. Commissioner Franusich stated another issue is the lack of signage for parking areas.

Commissioner Hedrick stated he has a different stance on this issue and disagrees that the Town is not vibrant. Commissioner Franusich provided an example of a business coming to Downtown. If that business wanted to make significant structural changes or change the use of a building, under the current parking requirements, the business must find parking spaces for the business. Commissioner Franusich feels businesses would not want to find parking spaces and this will be a road block to business prospects.

Commissioner Collins asked Ms. Hair how many businesses have come to the Town concerning B-2 parking regulations and the current ordinance has stopped the business from development. Ms. Hair replied she is aware of one business looking for office space but did not have ample parking. Commissioner Dorsett added Cambria has lost three potential buyers due to the parking regulations.

Commissioner Powers stated under the new proposed ordinance the Town would have the flexibility to deal with parking issues through a Conditional Use Permit process. Commissioner Dorsett added there is no parking within 900 feet of any business in the Cambria area. Chairperson Moore stated this is why the Planning Commission can address issues that may not be suitable to the proposed ordinance.

Commissioner Hedrick stated downtown businesses should not have to suffer because everyone can park on private property. He feels this will become an issue with the business owners. Commissioner Beasley stated the consequences could add more pedestrian traffic for the downtown businesses.

Commissioner Powers feels the Planning Commission agreed parking is needed to make the downtown function but the question is who will provide the parking. Commissioner Franusich added developers normally require parking to accommodate a development. Commissioner Powers replied in those cases restrictions and fees are probably added with the parking by the property owner.

Planning Commission Public Hearing on Council's intention to adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 30 "Zoning" specifically, section 30-9 of the *Christiansburg Town Code* to address parking requirements for mixed use structures with apartments in the B-2 Central Business District; on-site parking requirements and off-site cooperative parking provisions; and grandfathered status in the B-2 Central Business District and sections 30-185, 30-186, 30-190, and 30-193 of the *Christiansburg Town Code* to clarify the requirements for final site plans, when preliminary and final site plans expire, and fees associated with the submittal of same - (continued).

Commissioner Carter commented that she sees two separate issues; the Commissioners are only discussing businesses. Commissioner Carter stated the ordinance addresses mixed-use and structures with apartments, which are totally different than a business and need parking.

Chairperson Moore stated the proposed ordinance is a step toward dealing with downtown parking issues and it allows the Planning Commission to review waivers from the parking requirements. Chairperson Moore added a vote of no does not mean a vote against improving the downtown parking. Chairperson Moore stated the Planning Commission has made a reasonable compromise to move forward with this ordinance amendment.

Commissioner Collins asked if the Planning Commission were to vote in favor of Commissioner Franusich's changes, would the Town be responsible for providing the parking, would a garage need to be built and could taxes increase because of the garage. Chairperson Moore replied those are good questions. Chairperson Moore added it would be left up to owners of the individual lots to police parking.

Commissioner Cowen commented Cambria and Downtown are very different areas and she does not agree these areas should have the same regulations.

Chairperson Moore asked the Commissioners if they would like to vote on the parking changes separate and then the amendment to the site plan ordinance. All the Commissioners agreed.

Commissioner Collins asked for a brief summary of the ordinance amendment for site plans. Ms. Hair provided a summary. Chairperson Moore asked for a motion. Commissioner Dorsett made a motion to recommend adopting sections 30-185, 30-186, 30-190, and 30-193 of the *Christiansburg Town Code* to clarify the requirements for final site plans, when preliminary and final site plans expire, and fees associated with the submittal of same. Commissioner Carter seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.

Planning Commission Public Hearing on Council's intention to adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 30 "Zoning" specifically, section 30-9 of the *Christiansburg Town Code* to address parking requirements for mixed use structures with apartments in the B-2 Central Business District; on-site parking requirements and off-site cooperative parking provisions; and grandfathered status in the B-2 Central Business District and sections 30-185, 30-186, 30-190, and 30-193 of the *Christiansburg Town Code* to clarify the requirements for final site plans, when preliminary and final site plans expire, and fees associated with the submittal of same - (continued).

Chairperson Moore asked to review the proposed amendment in regards to parking. Ms. Hair reviewed the proposed changes. Chairperson Moore asked for a motion. Commissioner Powers made a motion to recommended approval of section 30-9 of the *Christiansburg Town Code* to address parking requirements for mixed use structures with apartments in the B-2 Central Business District; on-site parking requirements and off-site cooperative parking provisions; and grandfathered status in the B-2 Central Business District. Commissioner Hedrick seconded the motion. Chairperson Moore called for a vote by the raising of hands. The motion passed 7-2 with one abstention. Commissioners Franusich and Beasley voted against the motion. Commissioner Dorsett abstained due to a potential conflict.

Ms. Hair suggested if there is an increase in the number of requests to vary from the parking regulations through the Conditional Use Permit process, the Planning Commission may wish to revisit the parking regulations.

Other Business

Chairperson Moore asked for other business. Ms. Hair responded a request was made for the Public Relations Officer to do a presentation. Ms. Hair indicated Town administration will hold a FOIA training in January for the Planning Commission and Town Council.

Commissioner Powers added the Development Subcommittee will meet again in November an hour before the Planning Commission meeting.

Commissioner Dorsett added the Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee will not be meeting until November 20th.

Ms. Hair commented the next Planning Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 12th due to the Veterans' Day Holiday.

There being no more business Chairperson Moore adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

Craig Moore, Chairperson

Nichole Hair, Secretary Non-Voting

Revisions List for 2013 Comprehensive Plan

Cover Page

No changes made.

Acknowledgements

No changes made.

Table of Contents

Revised as necessary to reflect new page numbers.

i: Changed to “Location of the Town of Christiansburg Map”.

Introduction

I-2: Added sentence “Please note that usage of the words ‘support’ or ‘acquire’ does not necessarily create a financial obligation for the Town.”

I-2: Updated revision date. Revise to “As of November 8, 2013, all information in the Plan is up to date.”

I-3: Deleted space before Christiansburg Overview.

Government

II-5: Revised to “For Fiscal Year 2014, the Town’s operating budget is \$33,453,279 and the Town’s capital budget is \$12,060,557.”

II-5: Last paragraph, revised to “The prioritization of programs is based on the Town’s Vision 2020 objectives as follows (in alphabetical order):”

II-6: GOV 2.1 Changed to “Continue the use of priority based budgeting”.

Environment

III-1: Added 1985 as date for soil survey.

III-1: Revised to “The Town currently requires submission of shrink-swell soil testing results for all new construction for principal structures to ensure soil suitability”.

III-2: ENV 1.8 changed page number reference to IX-12.

III-2: ENV 1.10 Added “Continue to”.

III-2: ENV 1.11 Revised to “Encourage developers to consider methods to reduce development impacts”.

III-4: Revised to “The Town’s Floodplain Ordinance governs the uses, activities, and development of land within the floodplain.”

III-5: Added to map, “Note: The flood zones depicted on this map should only be used as a visual aid. Official FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps should be consulted for any other purpose.”

III-7: ENV 2.12 Added “Continue to”.

III-7: ENV 2.15 Added “Continue to”.

III-7: ENV 2.17B1 Revised to “Subdivisions”.

III-7: ENV 2.19 Added “Continue to”.

III-8: ENV 3.1 Revised to “Require dedicated open space for new developments and for changes in land use where appropriate”.

III-8: ENV 3.4 Revised to “Return greyfields to open space.”
III-8: ENV 3.7 Added “Develop methods to”
III-8: ENV 4.1 Added “Continue to”.
III-9: Added goal - ENV 4.2A Continue to review opportunities for noise-free railroad crossings.
III-9: Added “on public lands” to goal ENV 4.10.

Parks and Recreation/Aquatics

IV-1: Last paragraph, first sentence; revised to “The following map depicts selected existing and future publicly accessible parks and facilities serving Christiansburg residents and visitors.”
IV-2: Retitled map to “Select Publicly Accessible Recreational Areas Serving Christiansburg”. Revise parcel on 114 to parcel shown on FLU to show future commercial/non-park area. Updated trails included on this map.
IV-3: PR/A 1.10 Revised to “Require dedication of private land for publicly accessible open space and park space and create incentives for increased dedication where appropriate.”
IV-3: PR/A 1.14 Revised to “Create consistent design standards for public parks and facilities including signage, landscaping, lighting, benches, shelters, and restrooms.”
IV-4: PR/A 1.14A Revised to “Adhere to the appropriate design standards with development or redevelopment of public parks and facilities.”
IV-5: PR/A 2.5 Revised to “Encourage location of compatible small-scale cultural, recreational, and entertainment facilities in or near the Town.”

Infrastructure Services

V-8: IS 3.2A Replaced “pay-by-pound” with “pay-by-volume”.
V-8: IS 3.4 Revised to “Continue to participate in the development of the regional long-term plan for solid waste management”.
V-8: Revised to: “The Town operates this system in order to support public health, safety, and to protect the environment”.
V-9: Removed “continue” from second paragraph, second sentence.
V-11: IS 5.1 Changed “Ensure” to “Encourage”.
V-11: IS 5.3 Changed “Increase the diversity of” to “Encourage diversity for”
V-11: IS 5.4 Changed “Ensure” to “Encourage”.

Public Safety

VI-1: PS 1.5A Changed to “Maintain mutual aid agreements with local, state, and federal law enforcement”.
VI-1: Under Law Enforcement, struck “on an annual basis”.
VI-2: Added “PS 3.6 Encourage safe schools within Town.”
VI-8: PS 6.7 Revised to “Support the provision of training for emergency support and Red Cross volunteers”.
VI-8: PS 6.11 Changed “Ensure” to “Continually increase”.

Transportation

VII-2: Revised to “The New River Valley Planning District is comprised of the counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski; the City of Radford; the towns of Blacksburg, Christiansburg,

Floyd, Narrows, Pearisburg, Pulaski, and Rich Creek; and Radford University and Virginia Tech. It is financed by local, state, and federal funding.”

VII-6: Struck “the” before Community Transit.

VII-7: Struck TRN 1.2A1. Already existing in Zoning Code.

VII-7: TRN 1.6 Added “or VDOT”.

VII-7: TRN 1.6A Removed “schools”.

VII-7: TRN 1.6C Added “Work to”.

VII-8: Revised to “sidewalks are required for new development in Business and Mixed Use Districts”.

VII-10: TRN 2.1F Added “voluntary” before “utility bill round-up”.

VII-10: TRN 2.2A Added “Work to”.

VII-10: TRN 2.2B Revised to “Consider building new pedestrian facilities in existing neighborhoods”.

VII-10: TRN 2.2G Revised to “Develop feeder pedestrian systems to increase the potential for linkages with regional facilities such as Bisset Park, the Montgomery County Village Trails, the New River Trail, and the Roanoke River Greenway.”

VII-12: Changed order of street classifications on map.

VII-17: TRN 3.4B Added “where feasible”.

VII-17: TRN 3.5A Revised to “Limit cul-de-sacs and support the use of grid type patterns for increased connectivity”.

Community and Economic Development

VIII-2: Struck second sentence regarding VFRIFA.

VIII-4: CED 3.1 Revised to “Encourage diversity for commercial development within the regional business hubs”.

VIII-5: CED 3.3 Revised to “Create visually appealing gateways in the business hubs that draw both local customers and those from the larger region and beyond”.

VIII-5: CED 4.1 Revised to “Falling Branch Corporate Park”.

VIII-5: Removed hyphen from Interstate-81.

VIII-6: CED 5.1 Struck pending adoption.

VIII-7: Added “For more detail regarding Christiansburg’s history, please refer to Chapter II (Location and Historical Overview) of the Town of Christiansburg 2003 Comprehensive Plan”.

VIII-8: Revised table for dates, to reflect current uses, and for capitalization.

VIII-12: Added CED 8.9 “Encourage volunteerism throughout the community at all age groups”.

VIII-12: Added CED 8.10 “Continue to foster relationships with higher education institutions and support the provision of educational and cultural opportunities.”

Land Use and Planning

IX-2: Added to map: “Note: Data derived from Montgomery County tax parcels as of October 2013.”

IX-6: Adjusted table for 2010 Housing Units and Vacancy Rates.

IX-7: LUP 1 Replaced “Provide” with “Encourage the development of”.

IX-7: LUP 1.2 Replaced “Create and” with “Continue to”.

IX-7: LUP 1.5 Changed “Ensure” to “Encourage”.

IX-8: LUP 2.5 Revised to “Revise the current zoning designations of property in Town to better align with actual physical use while maintaining consistency with the adopted Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map.”

IX-8: LUP 2.7B Changed “Preserve” to “Encourage the preservation of”.

IX-8: LUP 2.9 Revised to “Continue to address”.

IX-9: LUP 2.13 Revised sentence two to “Future development of these should be in a manner consistent with and appropriate to the surrounding neighborhood.”

IX-11: Revised colors.

IX-12: Added “Note: The flood zones depicted on this map should only be used as a visual aid. Official FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps should be consulted for any other purpose.”

Glossary

X-1: Added “greyfield: underutilized development which may include paved parking areas, buildings, etc.”

Appendix A

XI-1: Added “Improve Betty Drive NW to include realignment for intersection of Wades Lane NW”.

XI-1: Revised “cand” to “and” under Working List of Transportation Projects.

XI-3: Revised boards, commissions, and committees to remove staff names.

XI-3: Revised to “The Town’s Planning Commission is comprised of not less than five nor more than fifteen members including a liaison from Town Council, and non-voting Secretary (Planning Director)”.

XI-5: Capitalized “city”.

XI-5: Revised to “The Water Authority is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of supplying clean water to the towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg, Montgomery County, and Virginia Tech.”

XI-6: Removed “Narrows” from list of VFRIFA.

XI-6: Changed website to www.vtmea.com.

XI-19: Updated revision date. Revised to “As of November 8, 2013, all information in the Plan is up to date.”

Appendix B

Revised to reflect changes to goals/strategies throughout plan.