



AMHERST COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING



MINUTES

July 20, 2023

Administrative Office Complex
153 Washington Street
Public Meeting Room
Meeting Convened - 7:00 PM

1. Call to Order

MEMBERS PRESENT: Catherine Gamble (Chair), Derin Foor (Vice Chair), Michael Martineau, Michael Bryant and Beverly Jones.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jim Thompson, David Pugh (Board Liaison Non-Voting Member), Dan Sweeney (EDA Non-Voting Member)

STAFF PRESENT: Tyler Creasy (Director of Community Development Director), Stacey Stinnett (Administrative Assistant) and Nate Young (Building Official).

Madam Chair Gamble called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Election of Officers

Planning Commission Recommendation:

Motion: Motion to elect Derin Foor as Chair

Motion made by: Gamble

Second: Martineau

Motion carried by a 4-0 vote. (Foor abstained)

Planning Commission Recommendation:

Motion: Motion to elect Beverly Jones as Vice Chair

Motion made by: Martineau

Second: Foor

Motion carried by a 4-0 vote. (Jones abstained)

Planning Commission Recommendation:

Motion: Motion to elect Tyler Creasy as Secretary

Motion made by: Foor

Second: Martineau
Motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was changed to add the Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance to the agenda after Approval of the Agenda.

Planning Commission Recommendation:

Motion to amend the agenda by adding the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance after #3 Approval of the Agenda.

Motion made by: M.Bryant

Second: Gamble

Motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

Chair Gamble led in prayer and then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Derin Foor took over the rest of the meeting as the Chairman.

4. Citizens Comments

There were none.

5. Public Hearing

A. 2023-316 Tim Wright (Special Exception)

Request by Tim Wright for a special exception in the RMU-1, Residential Mixed Use district. The purpose of the special exception is to allow a two-family dwelling that has an outward appearance of a single-family dwelling. The property is located at 160 Warwick Street and is further identified as tax map number 160A4-A-72.

Mr. Creasy presented the staff report and gave staff's recommended conditions.

1. Lighting: All outdoor lighting will be glare-shielded and directed so as to prevent illumination across the property lines.
2. Transportation: The applicant shall work with the Virginia Department of Transportation for an entrance permit.
3. The property shall connect to both water and public sewer.
4. Public safety: The owner shall meet all requirements set forth by the Director of Public Safety as it has to do with access to the property.

Since this property is currently a code enforcement case, Mr. Creasy had the Building Official,

Nate Young, answer the Planning Commission's questions regarding the structure.

Chairman Foor opened the public hearing,

Mr. Wright, the applicant, spoke in favor of the request and stated that he was scheduled to close on the property on July 21, 2023. Mr. Wright stated that as soon as he closes on the property, that he would be getting a demolition permit to demo the current structure.

There being no further questions, Chairman Foor closed the public hearing,

Planning Commission Recommendation:

Motion to approve special exception request 2023-316 for Tim Wright with staff conditions.

Motion made by: Jones

Second: Gamble

Motion carried by a 5-0 vote

B. Ordinance 2023-7 Amendment for Requesting Withdrawal of Public Hearing

The Board of Supervisors directed staff to propose a code change in the zoning ordinance that allows the applicant to withdraw a special exception or rezoning proposal only after it has been advertised and all costs have been paid by the applicant. This change does not allow the applicant to request an item to go back to the Planning Commission after it has already been advertised to the Board of Supervisors.

Chair Foor opened the public hearing.

No one spoke in favor or opposition, therefore, Chair Foor closed the public hearing.

The Planning Commission had a brief discussion with staff and staff answered questions.

Planning Commission Recommendation:

Motion to approve Ordinance 2023-7 with the addition of adding to the special exception application language stating this code change.

Motion made by: Martineau

Motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

6. Old/New Business

A. Ordinance 2023-6 Revenue Sharing Solar

Mr. Creasy stated that staff has worked closely with the County Attorney to determine how the County should pursue taxing of utility-scale solar farms. Currently, utility-scale solar farms

are taxed through the generic M&T tax. The ordinance attached proposes a code change to allow such facilities to be taxed through a revenue share.

Staff answered the Planning Commissions questions and concerns.

Mr. Creasy stated that due to staff training obligations, there would be no September Planning Commission meeting.

7. Site Plan Updates

A. Attachment

Mr. Creasy updated the Planning Commission on site plan reviews.

8. Approval of Minutes for May 18, 2023 & June 15, 2023

The Planning Commission Meeting Minutes for May 18, 2023 and June 15, 2023 could not be approved because a quorum was not present.

There was a consensus amongst the Planning Commission to table the minutes until the next Planning Commission meeting.

A. Minutes for May 18, 2023

B. Minutes for June 15, 2023

9. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Planning Commission Recommendation:

Motion to adjourn

Motion made by: Martineau

Second: Jones

Motion carried by a 5-0 vote.