



AMHERST COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING



MINUTES

June 15, 2023

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

1. Call to Order

MEMBERS PRESENT: Derin Foor (Vice Chair), Jim Thompson, Beverly Jones, Michael Martineau and David Pugh (Board of Supervisor Liaison-Non Voting)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Catherine Gamble and Michael Bryant

STAFF PRESENT: Tyler Creasy (Director of Community Development) & Stacey Stinnett (Administrative Assistant)

Vice Chairman Foor called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted.

Planning Commission Recommendation:

Motion: Motion to approve the agenda as submitted.

Motion made by: Jones

Second: Martineau

Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

3. Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

Ms. Jones led in prayer and then led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Citizens Comments

Mrs. Phyllis Maire stated that she had not yet heard back from CSX Railroad regarding her request to cross the railroad tracks for her request. Therefore, she stated that she was removing that area of land from her request. Mrs. Maire however, did state that if she does

get a response and they allow her to cross, then she will bring this request back to the Planning Commission to include that section of her property.

5. Public Hearing - Special Exception

A. 2023-234 Verna & Preston Sellers

Request by Verna and Preston Sellers for a special exception in the R-2, General Residential District. The purpose of the special exception is to allow a short-term tourist rental of a dwelling. The property is located at 1648 S. Coolwell Road and is further identified as tax map number 138-A-164B.

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 line.
2. Sewerage Facilities: The applicant shall follow all regulations prescribed by the Virginia Department of Health.
3. Parking: Guest shall be required to park on the property and not park on neighboring lots or on any right-of-way outside of their property unless they have written permission.
4. Transportation: The applicant shall work with the Virginia Department of Transportation for an entrance permit, if applicable.
5. 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.
6. Short Term Tourist Rental: The applicant shall meet all requirements of Section 916 which regulates short-term tourist rental of dwellings.

Vice Chairman Foor opened the public hearing.

Verna Sellers, the applicant, spoke in favor of the request. Mrs. Sellers stated that she wanted to provide a place where people could stay when they are visiting Amherst County.

There being no further speakers, Vice Chairman Foor closed the public hearing.

Planning Commission Recommendation:

Motion to approve 2023-234 Verna & Preston Sellers with staff recommendations.

Motion made by: Thompson

Second: Martineau

Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

6. Special Exception (Non-Public Hearing)

A. 2023-116 Phyllis Maire

Request by Phyllis Maire for a special exception in the A-1, Agricultural Residential District. The purpose of the special exception is to allow a photography venue and a special event place for weddings, tea parties, and other similar uses. The property is located at 2409 Riverville Road and is further identified as tax map numbers 130-A-21 and 130-A-21A.

Mr. Creasy reminded the Planning Commission due to the lack of information regarding the railroad crossing. The Commission tabled its recommendation for special exception 2023-116 at their May 2023 meeting. Since then, the applicant has submitted a letter and changed her application (attached) to remove the land across the railroad tracks from her special exception request. Mr. Creasy stated that staff recommends the following conditions:

1. Lighting: All outdoor lighting will be glare-shielded and directed so as to prevent illumination across the property line.
2. Sewerage Facilities: The applicant shall follow all regulations prescribed by the Virginia Department of Health.
3. Parking: Guests shall be required to park on the property and not park on neighboring lots or on any right-of-way outside of their property unless they have written permission.
4. Transportation: The applicant shall work with the Virginia Department of Transportation for an entrance permit, if applicable.
5. 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.
6. Dumpster: If a dumpster is proposed, it shall meet all screening requirements as required in the landscaping regulations.
7. Traffic: A parking attendant shall be directing traffic with events greater than seventy-five (75) guests.
8. The second dwelling shall be inspected by the Amherst County Building Office for compliance of a single-family dwelling and have it properly addressed by the Department of Public Safety.

Planning Commission Recommendation:

Motion to approve 2023-116 Phyllis Maire with staff recommendations

Motion made: Jones

Second: Martineau

Motion carried a 4-0 vote.

7. Site Plan Updates

A. Site Plan Review

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

8. Solar Workshop Meeting Dates

A. Attached Dates

The Planning Commission discussed dates for the Solar Workshop. There was a consensus amongst the Planning Commission to consider at the next meeting choosing one date out of the three dates given. Those three dates were July 24th, July 31st, and August 7th.

9. Youth Participant Discussion

A. Discussion

Mr. Creasy discussed with the Planning Commission about possibly having two youth positions. One would be an internship and the other would be a youth participant position on the Planning Commission. The intern would shadow staff in the office two to three times a week. Mr. Creasy reviewed the guidelines for tasks and projects that he would like to assign to these participants. Mr. Creasy stated that he would put together a flier and have it advertised on the County Website for youth interested in applying.

10. Old/New Business

A. Section 711 TND Changes

The Board of Supervisors at their June 6th meeting directed staff to look into two changes to ordinance no. 2023-4. These changes include setbacks of single-family attached/multi-family structures and allowable sizes of individual and mixed-use buildings in the neighborhood center.

Mr. Creasy discussed the following changes with the Planning Commission:

Setbacks for single-family attached and multi-family dwellings- staff will not be pursuing a code change and will be leaving the code as is:

1. Minimum: six (6) feet in the Neighborhood Center; ten (10) feet in Residential Neighborhoods.

2. Maximum: fifteen (15) feet in the Neighborhood Center; twenty-five (25) feet in Residential Neighborhoods, except no maximum setback for any residential lot of twenty thousand (20,000) square feet or greater.

Building sizes

1. Code proposed (6/6) - Individual buildings shall not exceed forty thousand (40,000) square feet of gross floor area, or 50,000 for mixed-use, multi-tenant buildings.
2. New code – Individual buildings shall not exceed twenty thousand (20,000) square feet of gross floor area, or eighty thousand (80,000) total square feet with 20,000 square feet per floor for mixed-use, multitenant buildings. (This thought is derived from trying to create a connection between the allowed building height of 4 stories). In addition, we would then make individual buildings over 20,000 square feet, and mixed-use, multitenant buildings over 80,000 square feet a special exception.

B. Potential Code Change: Postponement of Public Hearings

Mr. Creasy notified the Planning Commission about a code in the zoning ordinance that the Board of Supervisors proposed 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.

A code change in the zoning ordinance is being proposed 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.

11. Approval of Minutes for May 18, 2023

A. Minutes Attached

The minutes could not be approved and will be tabled until the next Planning Commission.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Planning Commission Recommendation:

Motion: Motion to adjourn.

Motion made by: Thompson

Second: Martineau

Motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

