



PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Cape Charles Civic Center
February 2, 2016
6:00 p.m.

At approximately 6:00 p.m. Chairman Dennis McCoy, having established a quorum, called to order the Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission. In addition to Chairman McCoy, present were Commissioners Andy Buchholz, Dan Burke, Joan Natali, Bill Stramm and Michael Strub. Commissioner Sandra Salopek was not in attendance. Also in attendance were Town Planner Larry DiRe and Town Clerk Libby Hume. There were no members of the public in attendance.

A moment of silence was observed which was followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments to be heard nor any written comments submitted prior to the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion made by Joan Natali, seconded by Dan Burke, to accept the agenda format as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Commissioners reviewed the minutes for the January 5, 2016 Regular Meeting.

Motion made by Joan Natali, seconded by Dan Burke, to approve the minutes from the January 5, 2016 Regular Meeting as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

REPORTS

Larry DiRe reported the following: i) The draft Tourism Zone Ordinance had been sent to the town's attorney for review. The town manager informed him that the attorneys had red-lined the documents but a copy had not yet been received; and ii) Staff prepared the Planning Department's FY 2017 operational budget and requested \$3,600 to purchase iPads for the Planning Commissioners, \$4K for legal review of certain sections of the Zoning Ordinance, and \$1K for technical support from the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC) for the Comprehensive Plan. If the Comprehensive Plan was adopted before June 30, 2016, the request for \$1K would be withdrawn.

OLD BUSINESS

A. *Planning Commission 2016 Work Plan*

Larry DiRe stated that in past years, the Planning Commission and staff devised annual work plans to effectively guide the Commission's activities. The most recent work plan was done in 2013. As several significant projects had transitioned from the Commission to the Town Council, this was an appropriate opportunity to set some work goals for the 2016 calendar year. Larry DiRe proposed several projects as follows: i) sign ordinance revisions for conformance to the *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* ruling; ii) revisions to sections of the variance process and subdivision ordinances; iii) development of current town zoning district and other maps (i.e., town-owned parcels, future land use, residential street parking usage); iv) development of procedures to review, update, phase-out previously produced reports, studies and plans; v) revision of the satellite ordinance to conform to federal standards; and vi) meeting with the Historic District Review Board to discuss the zoning ordinance and the

historic district guidelines. Larry DiRe asked the Commissioners for their ideas regarding other items which could be reviewed in 2016.

Andy Buchholz stated that with the number of tourism promotions and the proposed artisan's trail, the town did not have enough places for people to eat without having to wait two or more hours. People would leave the town to find another restaurant with a shorter waiting period. He felt that the topic of food trucks needed to be considered. There was much discussion regarding the current ordinance which stated that food trailers could not be within 150' of a restaurant and the possibility of a current restaurateur also operating a food truck/trailer during the tourist season. It was agreed that this issue needed further research and discussion and to include Code Official Jeb Brady and Police Chief Jim Pruitt in future discussion.

There was also much discussion regarding a dog beach to accommodate residents and visitors with dogs providing an area where they could legally bring their dog to the beach. There was some discussion regarding the dog committee which met last year and provided recommendations to the Town Council to modify the hours where pets could be taken to the beach vs. the creation of a dog beach. The Town Council reviewed the recommendations from the committee and opted not to change the hours when pets were prohibited at the beach (April 1 through Labor Day between the hours of 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.).

Motion made by Dan Burke, seconded by Michael Strub, to explore the possibility of creating a dog beach. The motion was unanimously approved.

Larry DiRe stated that he would add this item to the March agenda and would include the findings from the dog committee.

Andy Buchholz asked whether lifeguards at the beach were still being considered. Libby Hume stated that the item was still on the Capital Improvement Plan under Beach Safety and would be reviewed by the Town Council at their February 4th work session. There was some discussion regarding the issue and the cost to the taxpayers and whether the taxpayers would be willing to increase their taxes to pay for lifeguards. The discussion gravitated to the tax assessments which were provided by Northampton County and how long it took the County to update the assessments after renovations or a new building was constructed on a lot.

Joan Natali stated that there was a potential opportunity for the town to do some networking with the new Board of Supervisors and several staff members had retired and been replaced and it would be nice to meet with the new staff. The Town Council had instructed the town manager to attend the Board of Supervisors meetings. The town manager met with the new economic development director. Dan Burke volunteered to work with the county if needed. It was also suggested that Treasurer Deborah Pocock meet with the new Commissioner of Revenue to build the relationship between the town and county.

Michael Strub stated that more data needed to be collected regarding parking along Bay Avenue so the issue could be evaluated. Larry DiRe stated that in 1999, the police department conducted a parking study which he would scan and email to the Commissioners. Andy Buchholz stated that it was old data and traffic counts around the town had increased since 1999.

Bill Stramm asked about the boat tax. The town currently charged \$.01 per \$100 but the county charged \$.99 per \$100. Cape Charles was the largest town in the county and the high tax rate was a detriment to attracting slip holders.

B. Schedule Public Input Meeting for Draft Comprehensive Plan

Larry DiRe stated that the Commissioners reviewed the latest draft of the Comprehensive Plan at their January 5, 2016 meeting and voted to forward the draft document to the Town Council with the recommendation for adoption. Considering the additional review, input and revisions made since the November and December 2014 public input sessions, staff recommended an additional public input meeting be scheduled for February 22, 2016 to promote continuing transparency and responsible civic engagement. Ms. Elaine Meil from the A-NPDC was available to attend on February 22nd.

Motion made by Joan Natali, seconded by Dan Burke, to schedule a Comprehensive Plan Public Input Meeting on February 22, 2016. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

C. *Proposed Text Amendment to Zoning Ordinance Article III, Section 3.15.A*

Larry DiRe reviewed the current language of Article III, Section 3.15.A regarding the Open Space District and recommended the inclusion of language – “accommodate public gatherings” – to more accurately define the District’s uses currently being practiced.

Motion made by Michael Strub, seconded by Bill Stramm, to approve the modification of Section 3.15.A as proposed. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Bill Stramm asked about the proposed Strawberry Street Plaza and parking requirements for the project. Joan Natali stated that the parking for the retail establishments and residential dwelling units would be on the property vs. on street. There was some additional discussion regarding the proposed pedestrian plaza.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to review.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

Motion made by Joan Natali, seconded by Bill Stramm, to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Dennis McCoy

Town Clerk