



MINUTES

WYTHEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2023 AT 6:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 150 EAST MONROE STREET
WYTHEVILLE, VA 24382

1. RE: ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Vice-Chairman Brad Litton, Vice-Mayor Cathy Pattison, Mr. George Wittwer, Mr. David Schmidt, Ms. Lisa Anderson, Mr. Keith Jones

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Chairman John Jones

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mayor Beth Taylor, Assistant Town Manager Elaine HOLETON, Chief Deputy Clerk Brandi Jones, Planning Director John Woods, Kathy Laster, Don Laster, Denise Clay, Bradley Tate

RE: CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chairman Litton called the meeting to order.

2. RE: ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Vice-Chairman Litton established that a quorum of Planning Commission members was present.

3. RE: CONSENT AGENDA

Vice-Chairman Litton stated that he would like to welcome Mr. Keith Jones to the Wytheville Planning Commission.

Vice-Chairman Litton presented the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of March 9, 2023. He inquired of the Commission if there was a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Motion made by Mr. Wittwer, Seconded by Ms. Anderson.

Voting Yea: Vice-Chairman Litton, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Ms. Anderson, Mr. Schmidt, Mr. K. Jones, Mr. Wittwer.

4. RE: CITIZENS' PERIOD

Vice-Chairman Litton advised that the next agenda item is Citizens' Period. He stated there are two citizens listed on the sign-in sheet who noted that they wished to address the Planning Commission during Citizens' Period. Vice-Chairman Litton inquired if Ms. Kathy Laster would please come to the podium and state her name and address for the recording of the minutes.

Ms. Kathy Laster was recognized and stated that she resides at 440 Fairfield Lane. She advised that she is one of two property owners in the Fairfield-Glade Subdivision. Ms. Laster commented that she is attending the meeting on behalf of her neighbors while they are out of town. She noted that she believes they had sent an email to Town staff, however, she will read their statement to the Planning Commission, if necessary. Vice-Chairman Litton asked Ms. Laster to read their statement to the Commissioners. Ms. Laster reiterated that she is sharing this statement on behalf of her neighbors, Sharon and Dennis Hackler, and she continued to read their statement regarding smaller lot sizes with no minimum house size into the record as follows:

We are of the opinion that this should only be applicable to the future subdivisions, and not existing subdivisions of record. A developer should not be allowed to re-subdivide lots in existing subdivisions and make them smaller to allow for more density. Citizens have purchased lots in existing subdivisions based on plats that have been recorded in the courthouse. Also, lots have been purchased and existing homes built in a subdivision according to a minimum house size. An individual should not be able to construct a smaller home than is, currently, allowed in the existing subdivision of record. Again, lots were purchased with the assurance that under the existing subdivision that a certain size home would be required. Therefore, we request that the proposed changes not be applicable to existing subdivisions of record. For informational purposes we are located in Fairfield-Glade Subdivision, which is zoned R-3 Residential. Thank you for considering our comments.

Ms. Laster noted that, currently, Sharon and Dennis Hackler own Lot 25 in the Fairfield-Glade Subdivision. She thanked the Commissioners for allowing her to speak. Vice-Chairman Litton thanked Ms. Laster for her comments.

Ms. Denise Clay was recognized and stated that she resides at 545 Tremough Drive. She remarked that at the March meeting, Planning Director Woods stated that the Planning Commission should remove minimum square footage requirements in residential zoning areas. Ms. Clay commented that she feels as if this would be a losing proposition for the Town. She stated that smaller homes generate less taxes and that smaller homes would drive down the value of existing homes. Ms. Clay continued to express her concerns to the Commissioners. She thanked the Planning Commission for allowing her to speak. Vice-Chairman Litton thanked Ms. Clay for her comments.

Vice-Chairman Litton inquired if there was anyone else attending the meeting who wished to address the Planning Commission during Citizens' Period. There being none, he proceeded with the agenda.

5. RE: OTHER BUSINESS

A. RE: RESOLUTION - RECOGNIZING FORMER PLANNING COMMISSIONER M. BRADLEY TATE

Vice-Chairman Litton advised that the next agenda item is the adoption and presentation of a resolution recognizing former Planning Commissioner Mr. M. Bradley Tate for his efforts while serving on the Wytheville Planning Commission. Vice-Chairman Litton inquired if there was a motion to adopt the resolution recognizing former Planning Commissioner Mr. M. Bradley Tate for his efforts while serving on the Wytheville Planning Commission.

Motion made by Mr. K. Jones, Seconded by Ms. Anderson.

Voting Yea: Vice-Chairman Litton, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Ms. Anderson, Mr. Schmidt, Mr. K. Jones, Mr. Wittwer.

Vice-Chairman Litton invited Mr. Tate to come forward for the presentation of the resolution and to have a photo taken. A copy of the resolution is attached and made part of the minutes.

B. RE: SUMMARY OF THE WYTHE COUNTY HOUSING ANALYSIS

Vice-Chairman Litton advised that the next item on the agenda is a summary of the Wythe County Housing Analysis with a specific focus on how the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) rewrite applies to the recommendations made as part of the housing study. Assistant Town Manager Holeton gave a brief overview of the Housing Analysis. Planning Director Woods stated that the analysis suggests that the estimated housing needs for Wythe County and the Wytheville area are 800 market-rate apartments, 80 affordable apartments, 40 affordable senior apartments, 50 patio homes and approximately 100 single-family townhomes. He advised that recommendations were also made on how to make those needs feasible. Planning Director Woods noted that those recommendations are to modify the lot size requirements and the frontage requirements. He stated that in the proposed UDO, the required lot size in an R-2 Residential Zoning District would be reduced from 10,000 to 8,000 square feet, and, in an R-3 Residential Zoning District, it would be

reduced from 9,000 to 6,000 square feet. Planning Director Woods continued to discuss the recommendations for lot size modifications with the Commission. Vice-Chairman Litton stated that he thinks there needs to be more discussion about the minimum home size in the future. Mr. Schmidt commented that he does not agree with a larger home having to be located beside a tiny home because he feels that it will devalue the larger home. He noted that he agrees that more discussion needs to take place. Planning Director Woods commented that the Withers Road area is considered a preferred area of town and that this area has tiny homes, condos, 4,000 square feet homes, etc., and that this is still considered the preferred area of town by him and others.

Assistant Town Manager Holeton noted that the average housing price range that people are wanting is approximately \$170,000-\$250,000, however, the few houses that are on the market are well above that price. She remarked that, essentially, what is happening is that working class people are getting priced out of the housing market. Assistant Town Manager Holeton noted stated that with the glove factory being built, Wytheville is going to need more workforce housing. She stated that one of the ways to do this is to reduce the square footage of homes. Assistant Town Manager Holeton remarked that she respects all the viewpoints being discussed at this meeting. Mr. Wittwer commented that there are approximately 2,600 jobs coming into the area, and there is no housing to offer people. He stated that the medium salary looks to be approximately \$35,000 per year, and the workers have to have somewhere to live. Mr. Wittwer commented that he feels like there will be more opportunities in rentals for the factory workers because of their income level, rather than purchasing small homes. Discussion continued regarding the future of the housing market.

Vice-Chairman Litton advised that he would like for the Planning Commission members and other members of the community to think about the topic of small homes and to email their thoughts to Planning Director Woods. He remarked that this is only a draft ordinance, and if ideas are not shared then Director Woods does not know what everyone thinks or how to proceed. Mr. Wittwer commented that what Town officials do not want, is for the workers who are relocating here for work, to live elsewhere and commute to Wytheville because then the Town loses the opportunity for property tax, food tax, etc. Ms. Anderson remarked that she does not think a small home would look appropriate in a subdivision such as King Hills, Loretto, etc., because there would be no balance between the larger and smaller homes. Planning Director Woods explained that subdivisions, such as those, have covenants, therefore, they would not be affected by the minimum home size if that is addressed in the subdivision covenants. Vice-Chairman Litton commented that if anyone could provide any feedback regarding the proposed requirements, to please contact Planning Director Woods. Discussion continued regarding the proposed requirements for the future Subdivision Ordinance.

C. **RE: REVIEW OF UPDATES TO THE DRAFT UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (UDO)**

Vice-Chairman Litton advised that the next agenda item is the review of the updates to the draft Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) since the March meeting. Planning Director Woods reviewed the new draft of the UDO, since the March meeting, which includes parking standards and landscape standards. He noted that some of the parking standards will include two parking spaces per single family dwelling, one parking space for accessory dwelling units, one parking space per studio unit for multi-family dwellings, etc. Planning Director Woods reviewed the need for additional parking standards in different areas of town. He stated that he thinks it would be good for retail to set a soft maximum for parking, so that it does not spill out into residential neighborhoods, except for when there are special events. Planning Director Woods reviewed the landscape standards, and he noted that he has made little change to this section of the UDO. He stated that Town staff recommends three levels of buffer yards. Planning Director Woods explained that the recommended buffer yards are basic buffer yards, full buffer yards and full buffer yards with a required architectural screening. He then discussed the recommended buffer yards in more detail with the Commission.

D. **RE: OVERVIEW REGARDING THE 2023 SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA HOUSING SUMMIT**

Vice-Chairman Litton advised that the next agenda item is the overview regarding the 2023 Southwest Virginia Housing Summit. Assistant Town Manager Holeton gave an overview of the 2023 Southwest Virginia Housing Summit. She stated that the Housing Summit is sponsored by the Joint Industrial Development Authority (JIDA) of Wythe County, which will be held on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at the Wytheville Meeting Center. Assistant Town Manager Holeton advised that the Commissioners have the information in their packets regarding the Housing Summit and the information regarding how to register online, if they are interested in attending.

6. **RE: ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting (7:16 p.m.).

Bradford M. Litton, Vice-Chairman

Brandi N. Jones, Chief Deputy Clerk