



MINUTES

WYTHEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2024 AT 6:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 150 EAST MONROE STREET
WYTHEVILLE, VA 24382

1. RE: ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mayor Beth Taylor, Councilwoman Candice Johnson, Assistant Town Manager Elaine HOLETON, Chief Deputy Clerk Brandi Jones, Planning Director John Woods, LaDonna Jones, Denise Clay, Joseph Hand, Jr.

RE: CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Litton called the meeting to order.

2. RE: ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

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

3. RE: APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Litton advised that the next agenda item is the Approval of Agenda. He inquired if there was a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion made by Mr. Wittwer, Seconded by Mr. K. Jones. Chairman Litton inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting results, by roll call vote: Voting Yea: Mr. Wittwer, Mr. K. Jones, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Vice-Chairwoman Anderson, Mr. J. Jones, Jr., Mr. Schmidt, Chairman Litton.

4. RE: CONSENT AGENDA

A. RE: MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 9, 2024

Chairman Litton presented the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of May 9, 2024. He inquired if there was a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Motion made by Vice-Chairwoman Anderson, Seconded by Mr. Wittwer. Chairman Litton inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: Voting Yea: Chairman Litton, Vice-Chairwoman Anderson, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Mr. J. Jones, Jr., Mr. K. Jones, Mr. Schmidt, Mr. Wittwer.

5. RE: PRESENTATIONS TO PLANNING COMMISSION

A. RE: MR. JOSEPH HAND, JR. - UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (UDO) PRESENTATION

Chairman Litton advised that the next agenda item is a presentation by Mr. Joseph Hand, Jr. regarding the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Mr. Hand thanked

the Planning Commission for allowing him to be placed on the agenda to address his concerns regarding the UDO. He commented that he had been excited to see the new ordinance, but did not see it until recently, and that was his fault. Mr. Hand explained that because he saw the ordinance so late, he has questions. He advised that he was able to meet with Town staff on July 10, 2024. He expressed that the meeting was very informative, and it helped a lot with some of his questions that were included in the Planning Commission package. Mr. Hand stated that he realized that all 12 of his questions could not be discussed at this meeting, but he would discuss a couple of the questions with the Commission. Mr. Hand presented his concerns regarding the proposed UDO to the Planning Commission. Discussion ensued regarding flag lots, private roads, Homestays, Airbnb's, the Small Lot-Small Home Overlay Ordinance, etc. Mr. Hand advised that he is requesting that the Planning Commission consider the following in regard to the proposed UDO: removing the flag lots; that Homestays not be allowed as a use in Historic, R-1 Residential or R-2 Residential Zoning Districts; to not allow the use of Airbnb's; and, to delete Sections D8 through 13 of the Small Lot-Small Home Overlay restrictions. He expressed that he is aware that the Town has done an outstanding job in advertising this information, however, he is still talking to people who have no idea that the Zoning Ordinance is being rewritten. Mr. Hand inquired of the Planning Commission if the Commission would slow down and make sure that the Commission and Town staff has time to talk to as many people as possible before some of the decisions are made regarding the proposed UDO. He remarked that the first time he reviewed the proposed UDO was six weeks ago, and he knows that there are people who are not aware of the upcoming changes. A copy of Mr. Hand's questions and concerns are attached and made part of the minutes.

Planning Director Woods discussed the steps that Town staff and the Planning Commission planned to take to involve the citizens, etc., and to market and get the community's input about the proposed UDO. Discussion ensued regarding scheduling more focus group sessions to help people understand the proposed UDO, Mr. Hand's suggestion regarding the Town's proposed UDO being based on a model ordinance with a population of 103,000 compared to Wytheville's population of approximately 8,000 and it not being a good model in comparison, etc. Planning Director Woods advised that he would like to clarify that the proposed UDO has zero text taken from the South Bend Ordinance. He commented that the primary items that were taken from that model ordinance was inspiration of the idea that zoning districts are developed specifically to address the unique character of each neighborhood. Planning Director Woods stated that the proposed UDO is not mirrored from the South Bend Ordinance, so he wanted to make that clear. Mr. Schmidt inquired of Planning Director Woods if the square footage, etc. in the proposed UDO was based on the South Bend Ordinance. Planning Director Woods stated that it is not. Mr. Schmidt inquired of Planning Director Woods as to where Planning Director Woods got this information from to place it in the proposed UDO. Assistant Town Manager Holeyton explained that essentially, Planning Director Woods wrote a lot of the zone district standards specifically for the Town of Wytheville based on case studies in town of how neighborhoods are working together. Assistant Town Manager Holeyton explained that Town staff actually used several localities located in Virginia. She noted that she oversaw the writing of the first four chapters, and she used information from the ordinances of Charlottesville, Albemarle, Pulaski and Blacksburg to create those chapters. Assistant Town Manager Holeyton explained that zoning wise, unfortunately, there are not a lot of towns the size of Wytheville that are cutting edge to use as example ordinances. She remarked that Town staff is trying to produce a great document for a town the size of Wytheville. Planning Director Woods stated that the setbacks and standards for the proposed UDO R-1 Residential, R-2 Residential and R-3 Residential Zoning Districts are essentially the same as the current Zoning Ordinance. He explained that they are modified to be consistent on where we measure the setbacks from so there is a difference. Discussion continued regarding the proposed UDO being a form-based code as opposed to the current ordinance, the goal of having hyperlinks to move easily from one area to the next throughout the proposed UDO, etc. Mr. Hand inquired if any of the Planning Commissioners had any questions for him at this time. He reiterated that he would request the Planning Commission take its time with making a recommendation to the Council regarding the proposed UDO because whatever the Commission recommends, the Council will trust that recommendation. Mr. Hand expressed that

this document is a big decision which is why he would request that the Planning Commission take its time before making the recommendation. He thanked the Planning Commission for allowing him to speak. Chairman Litton thanked Mr. Hand for his comments, and he proceeded with the agenda.

6. RE: CITIZENS' PERIOD

Chairman Litton advised that the next agenda item is Citizens' Period. He stated that there was no one listed on the sign-in sheet who wished to address the Planning Commission during Citizens' Period, however, if there was anyone who would like to speak, now would be the time to do so. There being no one who wished to address the Planning Commission during Citizens' Period, Chairman Litton proceeded with the agenda.

7. RE: OTHER BUSINESS

A. RE: UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (UDO) FOCUS GROUPS SUMMARY

Chairman Litton advised that the next agenda item is a discussion regarding the comments received during the two focus group sessions for the proposed Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Planning Director John Woods presented a summary of the input received regarding the UDO based on notes taken at various focus group meetings and presentations to community groups. He discussed the comments and made suggestions that could help alleviate some of the concerns that the groups had regarding the proposed UDO.

Planning Director Woods presented the survey comments received regarding the proposed UDO as of June 25, 2024, from the focus and community group sessions held at the Wytheville Meeting Center on June 12 and 13, 2024. He discussed the survey comments and made suggestions to the Planning Commission that could help with the concerns from the survey feedback.

A copy of the summary notes taken during various focus and community group meetings and presentations, as well as the survey comments received from the focus group sessions held June 12-13, 2024, at the Wytheville Meeting Center are attached and made part of these minutes.

B. RE: UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (UDO) PUBLIC INPUT

Chairman Litton advised that the next agenda item is to discuss the next steps for public input regarding the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Planning Director Woods stated that the public input survey is in pre-draft form, but staff intends to develop a public survey, by way of Survey Monkey, which will allow citizens in the community to view the UDO and make comments. He explained the purpose of the focus groups, which is to get the UDO as close to something that is as palatable to Wytheville before presenting the broader surveys. Planning Director Woods stated that the surveys may be interpreted as a huge step, which in a way they are, but adopting the UDO does not change the zoning of anything. He advised that zoning change would be another phase that the Planning Commission would have to go through, and there would not be any land zoned as a Residential Artisan District until a rezoning has taken place. Planning Director Woods discussed the phases regarding the adoption of the UDO. Discussion was held regarding updating the draft UDO with the information received from the focus group sessions, Mr. Hand's concerns, staff's updates and presenting a second draft to the Planning Commission; discussing the "hot topics" at the August meeting; presenting the public input survey after the August meeting; graphic design in the UDO, etc. Assistant Town Manager HOLETON advised that the desire to get the UDO complete relatively soon is because Town staff is struggling with the existing Zoning Ordinance. She commented that it is hard for staff to navigate and hard for citizens to understand, therefore, Town staff would request that the Planning Commission not wait too long to complete the UDO. Assistant Town Manager HOLETON noted that, at the most, staff would recommend completing the document within six months. She explained that if the Planning Commission wanted to include detailed graphics, it would require at least one year to complete, and the work would have to be contracted out of house and require approval of a budget. Discussion continued regarding the Planning Commission

reviewing the modifications to the UDO concerning the "hot topics" compiled from comments received from the focus group session meetings, surveys, Mr. Hand's concerns, etc., at the August meeting.

8. RE: ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be discussed, a motion was made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting. (7:30 p.m.)

Bradford M. Litton, Chairman

Brandi N. Jones, Chief Deputy Clerk