

Minutes

Northampton County Planning Commission

April 1, 2014

Regular Meeting

Those present were Chairman Dixon Leatherbury, Jaqueline Chatmon, Mike Ward, Roberta Kellam, Sylvia Stanley, Martina Coker and Hank Heneghan. Also in attendance was Charles McSwain, Director of Development and Peter Stith, Long Range Planner.

A quorum was established and the Chairman called the meeting to order.

The agenda was reviewed and accepted as submitted upon a motion from Commissioner Coker, a second from Commissioner Stanley, and all members unanimously favoring the motion.

Matters from the public -- Ken Dufty a resident of Northampton County expressed his concerns regarding the proposed zoning code amendment. He referenced the purpose of a zoning ordinance and how it should be consistent with the Comprehensive plan as defined by the VA State Code.

The minutes of the February 4th meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Coker made a motion to approve and with a second from Commissioner Kellam, the motion carried unanimously. The February 19th work session minutes were reviewed with Commissioner Coker making a motion to approve and with a second from Commissioner Kellam, the motion carried with all commissioners in favor. The March 4th Meeting minutes were approved unanimously with a motion from Commissioner Coker and a second from Commissioner Kellam. The March 11th minutes were reviewed and tabled to include more summaries of public comment and to include more in depth summaries of those that did not submit written comments at the public hearing.

The Commission continued their review of the proposed zoning code. Commissioner Kellam had objections to the current process and the legal time frame and was not comfortable with reviewing the proposed document without proper staffing or even having a qualified consultant on hand. Commissioner Kellam suggested the Commission vote "no" on the ordinance, hire a consultant and work with the public. Commissioner Chatmon questioned whether the number of people who spoke against the change were substantial enough to be deemed a majority, while also noting that some were not residents of Northampton County. Chairman Leatherbury posed 3 options: 1. Do what Commissioner Kellam suggested; identify the items and pass back to Board of Supervisors, they may or may not take a year and they may vote, but ultimately the opportunity to steer them in any direction would be lost. 2. Recommend withdrawing the application and its resubmission could lead the Board to resubmit but give us a much shorter time frame, and 3. Continue with what's been handed to the Commission and move on with what we have. Commissioner Coker suggested withdrawing the application but provide suggestions with changes for issues presented by the public. Commissioner Kellam and Chatmon both noted that the Commission has to continue to work to complete the task.

Commissioner Kellam questioned how to handle public input regarding biomass. She suggested using the state code definitions and laying out performance standards for biomass. She also suggested conducting meetings with those areas that have community plans in the village and hamlet districts. Commissioner Kellam requested clarification of the VA Code language, referencing single family

dwelling, assisted living, and children's facility. She also questioned the removal of the statements of intent from all zoning districts. Commissioner Kellam stated that statements of intent should be included as it is the typical way of describing a district and guides the applicant in keeping with community character. A motion was put forth by Commissioner Kellam that intents be drafted a second was made by Commissioner Coker with Commissioners Kellam, Coker and Heneghan being in favor, Ward and Chatmon against, and Stanley abstaining. The motion carried for the drafting of intent statements for each district.

Commissioner Ward spoke of single wide mobile homes and the notion of whether they are good or bad investments. He added that it is the property owner's decision to make and single wide mobile homes should be permitted in all districts. Commissioners Stanley and Chatmon were in agreement and noted that given the present economic environment and chronic poverty, most seeking this home type are unable to get financing and a single wide may be the only home they can afford. Commissioner Ward motioned that single wide mobile homes be permitted in all districts except Commercial and Industrial. A second was made by Commissioner Stanley and the motion carried with all in favor.

The next issue discussed was intensive farming. Commissioner Kellam motioned to accept the changes in the memo presented by staff and with a second from Commissioner Chatmon, the motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Ward moved to include Domestic Husbandry by-right in the R-3 district. With a second from Commissioner Kellam, the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Kellam moved to recess until April 16, 2014 to continue the zoning review. With a second from Commissioner Coker, the motion carried with all in favor.