



PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

21 Main Street

Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at 7:00 PM

MINUTES

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF WARRENTON, VIRGINIA, WAS HELD ON February 20, 2024, at 7:00 PM

Regular Meeting

PRESENT

Mr. Ryan Stewart, Chair; Mr. Terry Lasher, Vice Chair; Ms. Darine Barbour, Secretary; Ms. Denise Harris, Planning Manager; and Ms. Heather Jenkins, Zoning Administrator

ABSENT

Mr. James Lawrence; Mr. Steve Ainsworth

The minutes laid out will be a brief recap of the agenda items. Please see recorded video for more in-depth information.

REGULAR MEETING - 7:00 PM

At 7:00 PM on Tuesday, February 20, 2024. The Planning Commission meeting was called to order by the Chair and a quorum was established.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES.

Commissioner Lasher motioned to adopt the January 16, 2024, Planning Commission Minutes.

Commissioner Barbour seconded the motion.

Vote 3-0 (Lawrence, Ainsworth Absent) to approve.

Chair Stewart amended the agenda to conduct the Work Session before New Business.

PUBLIC HEARINGS.

1. ZOTA 2023-01 A Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to Reduce the Setback Requirement for Telecommunication Towers in the PSP (Public Semi Public) Zoning District. Zoning Ordinance Section 9-18.10 - *Setbacks* requires that all telecommunication towers in all zoning districts be set back from property lines at a distance no less than the height of the tower. The applicant is requesting that the setback requirement be reduced within the PSP – Public Semi Public Zoning District to allow a setback that is less than the height of the tower, with certification provided from an engineer that a lesser setback is appropriate due to the design of the tower. Arcola Towers LLC (Applicant)/James P. Downey (Representative)

Ms. Heather Jenkins gave a brief presentation and provided an update on developments since the December public hearing that was continued per the Applicants request.

Mr. James Downey, Applicant’s Representative, requested a deferral due to the desire to review the applicability of the 1996 Telecommunications Act and the position of the Town’s consultant, Cityscape, with the endorsement of the Town Attorney, that allowing this text amendment in one zoning district is discriminatory.

Mr. Downey agreed to waive the timelines and 100-day clock established in the Zoning Ordinance.

Chair Stewart opened the Public Hearing at 7:04 PM.

Dr. Jay Harre of 350 Alexandria Pike spoke to the application stating he does not support towers in town.

Chair Stewart closed the Public Hearing at 7:12 PM.

Commissioner Lasher confirmed the Applicant is waiving the 100-Day clock.

Commissioner Lasher moved to recommend deferral of the application per the Applicant’s request; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Barbour.

Ayes: Mr. Ryan Stewart, Chair; Mr. Terry Lasher, Vice Chair; Ms. Darine Barbour, Secretary

Nays: N/A

Abstention: N/A

Absent: Mr. James Lawrence; Mr. Steve Ainsworth

The motion passed.

WORKSESSION ITEMS.

1. SUP 2023-04 Taylor Middle School - The Applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit for an expansion to an existing middle school. The property is zoned Public-Semi Public (PSP) on approximately 39.18 acres. The site includes Brumfield Elementary. Article 3- 4.9.3 of the Town of Warrenton's Zoning Ordinance allows school expansion to existing facilities equal to or over 10,000 square feet with the approval a SUP by Town Council.

Ms. Harris gave a brief overview of the application.

Luke Fetcho, the Applicant’s Representative from Timmons, gave a presentation and introduced the team that was present, including Tom Edwards (FCPS), Josh Johnston (FCPS), David Graham (FCPS), Patrick VanNuys (Timmons Engineering), Doug Cofer (RRMM Architects), and Jeff Harris (RRMM Architects).

Commissioner Barbour raised concerns about the afternoon pick up for Brumfield and Taylor, stating the cars begin to line up for Brumfield at 2:25 PM.

Chair Stewart inquired what percentage of students is anticipated to walk, take the bus, or be dropped off.

Mr. Graham stated 15-20% of students are dropped off.

Chair Stewart expressed concerns over the circulation paths, conflict points within the parking lot, and inquired if different layouts had been explored.

Mr. Fetcho stated they are meeting the required parking and there are grading issues.

Chair Stewart stated the access road creates operational challenges.

Mr. Fetcho indicated the intent is to have it gated during school hours to prevent cut through traffic.

Chair Stewart inquired why there is no pedestrian accommodations on the access road and pointed out the children from the Arrington neighborhood have no means to walk to the middle schools.

Mr. Fetcho stated they have not looked at how many students might be able to walk from the Arrington development.

Chair Stewart inquired about bicycle/pedestrian connections on Shirley Avenue.

Mr. Fetcho indicated there would be a shared use path from the Greenway crossing to the front of the school and a sidewalk along the existing building's frontage. An easement would be provided along the parking lot and property adjacent to Walmart and the Community Center. He stated no other crosswalks are proposed and the existing pedestrian signal would be utilized.

Chair Stewart raised safety concerns about the height and number of retaining walls on the property.

Mr. Fetcho stated there would be a fall protection guard per code.

Chair Stewart asked if Parks and Recreation had been approached by the schools regarding field usage and would like their input.

Commissioner Lasher inquired about the delineated wetlands and why the fields are being retained in the current configuration as it seems unnecessary due to the size of the parcel. He asked the Applicant to think bigger, broader, and that it would be prudent to think larger. He expressed it is an oversight to not be discussing needs with Parks and Recreation. He stated it was short sighted to focus only on the front portion of the site on Shirley Avenue. He brought up the need for crosswalks, anticipated signals, and asked the anticipated number of drop offs. He further stated the Applicant needed to be thinking long term.

Mr. Fetcho stated the TIA looks at growth values and that it found the school does not impact Shirley Avenue.

Commissioner Barbour raised more concerns about the interaction of the access road and Brumfield.

Chair Stewart encouraged the Applicant review the walkability of the site and to reduce conflicts before the public hearing.

NEW BUSINESS

2023 Draft Planning Commission Annual Report

Ms. Harris provided highlights of the draft report. Members of the Planning Commission expressed they like it.

Commissioner Lasher motioned to accept the 2023 Planning Commission Annual Report; Commissioner Barbour seconded.

Ayes: Mr. Ryan Stewart, Chair; Mr. Terry Lasher, Vice Chair; Ms. Darine Barbour, Secretary

Nays: N/A

Abstention: N/A

Absent: Mr. James Lawrence; Mr. Steve Ainsworth

The motion passed and the Annual Report will be provided to Town Council.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSION.

The Planning Commission discussed training for 2024 and the opportunity to attend the APA-VA Annual Conference in Williamsburg in July. The Chair tabled the discussion until all Planning Commissioners were present.

The Planning Commission reviewed its draft goals for 2024. The Chair tabled the discussion until all Planning Commissioners were present.

COMMENTS FROM THE STAFF.

Staff reviewed the work surrounding the Historic District survey, the upcoming National Register public meeting, and the goal to align the existing local and national districts.

Staff reviewed the current land use applications in process updated submission of Warrenton Village and rezoning for United Methodist/Heros Bridge.

ADJOURN.

Commissioner Lasher moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Barbour . Chair Stewart, with no further business, this meeting was adjourned at 8:09 PM.

I hereby certify that this is a true and exact record of actions taken by the Planning Commission of the Town of Warrenton on February 20, 2024.

Darine Barbour, Secretary
Planning Commission

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