



PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION

21 Main Street

Tuesday, April 23, 2024, at 7:00 PM

MINUTES

A WORK SESSION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF WARRENTON, VIRGINIA, WAS HELD ON April 23, 2024, at 7:00 PM

WORK SESSION

PRESENT

Mr. Ryan Stewart, Chair; Ms. Darine Barbour, Secretary; Mr. James Lawrence; Mr. Steve Ainsworth; Ms. Denise Harris, Planning Manager; Martin Crim, Town Attorney; Steven Friend, Director Public Utilities; and Chris Tiesler, Town Transportation Consultant (Kittleson)

ABSENT

Mr. Terry Lasher, Vice Chair

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

WORK SESSION - 7:00 PM

At 7:00 PM on Tuesday, April 23, 2024. The Planning Commission meeting was called to order by the Chair and a quorum was established.

Chairman Stewart clarified the agenda listed "Comments from the Commission" twice when the first listing should read "Closed Session."

Secretary Barbour motioned to approve the agenda as intended. Commissioners Ainsworth seconded. The motion passed 4-0 (Lasher Absent).

WORKSESSION ITEMS.

1. SUP 2022-05 Warrenton Village Center, the Owners, Jefferson Associates LP and Warrenton Center, LLC with the Applicant, New Castle Development Group, seek a Special Use Permit for two parcels totaling approximately 29.05 acres to create a mixed-use development in the existing Warrenton Village Center. The proposal includes apartments, 2 over 2s, and townhomes with the addition of central plaza, parking garage, enhanced internal road network, and pedestrian infrastructure to promote walkability. The properties are zoned Commercial and designated in the New Town Character District of Plan Warrenton 2040. (GPINs 6985-20-7247 and 6984-29-6753)

The Planning Commission began its third work session on the application. Chairman Stewart asked staff to give an introduction.

Ms. Harris indicated that tonight's work session would discuss water and sewer needs, transportation, schools, and requested waivers and modifications. The Applicant would be presenting as they have the two previous work session; however, subject matter experts for the Town were also in attendance.

Kendrick Whitmore, Applicant's Representative, began the presentation by answering questions from previous work sessions on the topics of the historical on site spring, shade trees at the central plaza, stormwater management, and architecture.

Mr. Whitmore continued with a detailed presentation covering water and sewer. He indicated the Applicant's anticipated impacts based on six other communities they currently manage. He also covered the impacts anticipated by the Town. Both of which fall within the water and sewer capacity of the Town.

Director Friend covered the water and sewer capacity graphs included in the WRA Study and confirmed that this development was incorporated into the study.

The Planning Commission inquired about the current improvements being made to the sewer facility and confirmed this application is not driving those maintenance improvements. Mr. Friend confirmed the maintenance improvements are necessary due to aging infrastructure.

Mr. Whitmore then introduced Kevin Sitzman, of Gorove Slade, the transportation consultant for the Applicant. Mr. Sitzman provided a detailed review of the transportation system proposed, the bicycle/pedestrian connections, the Traffic Impact Analysis results, intersection analysis, school bus accommodations, emergency and delivery vehicle movements, and a summary of impacts. Specific analysis was provided regarding the entrance to the Highland Lower School. The outcome of the analysis is the existing transportation network is sufficient to handle the proposed development. No turn lanes or signals are warranted.

Mr. Tiesler, the Town's transportation consultant, confirmed the Applicant used the profession's accepted methodologies for conducting the transportation analysis and addressed any questions presented during the review process. Mr. Tiesler concurred with the statement that no warrants are tripped to require new road improvements.

Chairman Stewart referenced a letter from the Chair of the Highland School Board of Trustees indicating concern regarding the garage entrance and the entrance to the Lower School. The Applicant indicated they have studied that intersection and walked through how peak hours are developed. They also indicated they have reached out to Highland School but have yet to be able to meet with the representatives.

Mr. Whitmore presented the anticipated school seat generation numbers based on the calculations Fauquier County Public Schools uses for the entire county. Using the projected enrollment numbers, and the stated capacities of the respective schools, the Applicant presented there is enough capacity in the schools to accommodate this development.

Chairman Stewart referenced the Highland School letter a second time where the Chair of the Board of Trustees indicated that as a private school they anticipated the cost of tuition to be a barrier to rentals and thus would likely not serve this development. Chairman Stewart pointed out he is a Highland parent and a renter in the Town. He requested the school consider this development, if approved, to be part of their potential school community as well.

Mr. Whitmore gave an overview of the waivers and modifications being requested. He stated this was necessary due to the Zoning Ordinance not having caught up to the goals stated in Plan Warrenton 2040 for setbacks between commercial/retail and residential in mixed use developments.

Mr. Whitmore and Mr. Jess Achenbach, the Applicant, presented the requested density, setbacks, and height modification and waiver requests. They offered why the development was seeking the additional height along Oak Springs despite the New Town Character District designating a Transition Zone of 2-3 stories. The Applicant offered other building heights adjacent and around town as examples.

It was pointed out the Smart Scale applicant for the roundabout shaped like a peanut would require right-of-way in an area the Applicant was requesting a waiver to the setbacks.

The Planning Commission expressed a desire to look further at the Transition Zone on Oak Springs Drive and the massing of the proposed apartment building. Plan Warrenton 2040 speaks to preserving the character of the Town. The proposed apartment buildings requests modifications and waivers to a well thought out planning effort to protect the existing neighborhoods.

The Planning Commission indicated they would be open to a Public Hearing when the Applicant is ready to move forward but expressed a concern over the June 27, 2024 decision deadline. Chairman Stewart stated the Planning Commission would like one additional meeting after the Public Hearing in case the Public Hearing needs to be kept open for additional work or speakers. The Applicant indicated they would likely not meet the Planning Commission deadlines for a May Public Hearing. The Chair asked then if the Applicant is not ready in May, to please consider allowing the Planning Commission to have two months after that to act at its July meeting.

With no further business, Chairman Stewart closed the work session.

CLOSED SESSION.

As permitted by Virginia Code §2.2-3711 (A)(8), consultation with legal counsel regarding legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, relating to Special Use Permit conditions of approval and rezoning proffers, the Planning Commission voted 4-0 (Lasher Absent) to go into a closed session with the Town Attorney.

The Planning Commission voted 4-0 (Lasher Absent) themselves out of the Closed Session by certifying nothing was discussed except for the matters specifically identified in the motion to convene the closed session and lawfully permitted to be discussed in a closed session under the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSION.

There were no comments from the Planning Commission.

COMMENTS FROM THE STAFF.

Ms. Harris informed the Planning Commission there would be a Pardon Our Dust meeting on May 1st for the upcoming construction on Broadview Avenue and construction was due to commence on May 6th.

ADJOURN.

Commissioner Lawrence moved to adjourn, seconded by Secretary Barbour. Chair Stewart, with no further business, this meeting was adjourned at 10:07 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 April 23, 2024.

Darine Barbour, Secretary
Planning Commission

DRAFT