

September 5, 2019



**PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
September 5, 2019**

PRESENT: Tip Stinnette, Chair/Town Council Liaison
Theresa Stein, Vice-Chair/Planning Commissioner
Mary Frances Bennett, Planning Commissioner
Nan Forbes, Planning Commissioner
Chip Paciulli, Planning Commissioner

STAFF: Patrick Sullivan, Director of Community Development
Andy Conlon, Senior Planner
Stefanie Longerbeam, Planning and Zoning Technician

ABSENT: Stosh Kowalski, Planning Commissioner
Ed Neham, Planning Commissioner

Note: The audio recording of this meeting is available at:

<https://www.purcellvilleva.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/5120>

Selected references to specific locations in the audio recording are given in square brackets. For example, a discussion that began at 1 hour, 5 minutes and 55 seconds after the beginning of the recording would appear as [1:05:55].

CALL TO ORDER OF REGULAR MEETING:

Chair Stinnette called the Planning Commission Special Meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS

None.

COMMISSIONER DISCLOSURES

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

PRESENTATIONS

None.

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CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS [2:15]

[2:15] Chair Stinnette recapped the events since the that last Planning Commission meeting - July 25, 2019. The Commission was going to meet in the first week of August but didn't because the Staff as well as the Town Council was to be in recess during August. In the meantime, Andy Conlon and Commissioner Neham reviewed that Comprehensive Plan artifact documents produced as a result of the 2018 and 2019 Planning Commission public hearings. These artifacts, which will be forwarded to the Town Council, are:

- 2019 Change Matrix - Plan Purcellville 2018 Comprehensive Plan, Version 5.0, with an accompanying map highlighting land use changes expressed in the matrix
- 2019 Errata - Plan Purcellville 2018 Comprehensive Plan, Version 5.0

Commissioner Neham also produced a Working Papers document that is a consolidation of all the changes made to Version 5.0 of the Comprehensive Plan with red-line edits visible. This document will be made available to the Town Council and to the public on the Town's website.

[9:00] Chair Stinnette conducted a review of the Change Matrix and solicited comments and changes from the Planning Commission.

- [12:40] Line 21: Update the Town's 2020 population estimate to 10,025 and delete the statement about the current build-out capacity and the comments in the Distillation.
- [16:45] Line 29: Delete the third and fourth bullets.
- [34:00] Line 31: Chair Stinnette read Kate Struckmann's comments (see Attachment 1) into the record. This comports with the Planning Commission's description of the Hirst East Focus Area.
- [42:18] Lines 45 and 46: Make Agriculture definitions consistent in Hirst East and East End Focus Areas.
- [49:30] Line 29: Replace the third bullet with the third bullet of Line 46 (i.e., "Very limited density and restricts commercial development except for uses such as a farm store, a plant nursery, agricultural or rural, or tourism-related businesses that are compatible with the rural character should be encouraged with a demonstration the proposed uses will not negatively impact rural or residential areas.")
- [58:45] Line 46: Remove the last bullet.
- [1:01:11] Line 46: Append to the fifth bullet: "but not equipment sales or service."

[1:03:30] Chair Stinnette conducted a review of the Errata Sheet and solicited comments and changes from the Planning Commission. There were none.

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ACTION ITEMS [1:05:40]

Chair Stinnette introduced a resolution to the Planning Commission for recommending adoption of the Comprehensive Plan 2018 to the Town Council and enumerated the source documents that are to be transmitted to the Town Council:

1. Plan Purcellville 2018 Comprehensive Plan Version 5.0;
2. 2018 Change Matrix resulting from the July 2018 Public Hearing;
3. 2018 Errata;
4. 2018 Future Land Use Map;
5. 2019 Change Matrix resulting from the June 2019 Public Hearing; and
6. 2019 Errata

Vice Chair Stein made a motion to adopt the resolution as read and corrected (see Attachment 2), seconded by Commissioner Paciulli.

[1:11:55] Chair Stinnette read Commissioner Neham's comments (who could not attend the meeting):

I joined the Planning Commission in February 2018 in the midst of the ongoing activity to develop Purcellville's Comprehensive Plan. Prior to joining, my wife and I were very active participants in the Comprehensive Planning process and together we submitted many comments to the Planning Commission. After joining, I continued to be active and proactive, working collaboratively with the Commissioners to make changes I felt best represented the community's interests. In the end, having presented a number of white papers and worked through several versions of the Plan, I can say that in my opinion it is a better Plan than when I first started and I think it is in good enough condition to be presented to the Town Council, which is certain to make its own adjustments and changes. Had I been present at this meeting tonight, I would have voted in favor of the resolution to move this version of the Comprehensive Plan along with its artifacts to the Town Council for their consideration.

[1:13:23] Commissioner Bennett's comments:

I will not be voting for this Comprehensive Plan to move forward to the Town Council. Here are my reasons why.

First let me say that I do appreciate the amount of time and the sincerity of thought given by all over the past three years.

Purcellville is at a critical point. Growth is pushing from all sides. While our past few meetings have tempered the size and scale in key focus areas, a large amount of development remains in the plan. Not just commercial and mixes of use, but multi-family housing. Often spoken of as "affordable" yet never quantified. Therefore, it leaves considerable doubt in my mind as to just how affordable it will actually end up. "Density" is often the path proposed by developers.

The first example I speak about is the commercial uses on Hirst East. A citizen of our town just spoke recently about keeping this designated as is: office use/industrial. Uses that mimic those of Hirst West. Traffic is the concern here. The thought of multiple aprons opening onto Hirst Road with commercial traffic is a disturbing one. During the school year, traffic already backs up from

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Rt. 287 to the fire station. I was persuaded to this thinking not just by the citizens that have come before us but by a couple of my fellow commissioners as well who pointed out how commercial enterprises ringing the periphery of the town draws away business from the downtown.

One other point that has always been aggravating to me about the Hirst East portion that was recently designated “Commercial Neighborhood Scale” is the area of land being elevated above the floodplain. Many of us as well as citizens in the town have wondered, “What are they doing there?” The response? “Oh, they are just bringing the land above the floodplain.” Something didn’t seem right. So this week we learn that the owners there have corrected a problem for themselves regarding the floodplain — it is now shifted towards the neighbors to the back of them.

For the Comp Plan to designate Neighborhood Commercial Scale at Hirst East, with more roof tops and paved parking that will generate run-off, is not good. As we now understand where the water will flow — right into the backyards and onto the community path/walkway.

Finally, a recent population figure puts the town over the 10K mark. With the amount of housing and commercial slated in the Comp Plan, in all focus areas, that number has nowhere to go but up. Growth brings cars, kids, and construction — and rarely enough of the taxes and tap fees to minimize the impact.

[1:22:04] Vice Chair Stein’s comments:

We have worked very long and hard on this Plan; it allows a reasonable amount of redevelopment or development of vacant land. I don’t see it as a growth plan by any stretch of the imagination. I would imagine the Town’s going to realize a drop in development and I think that’s what people wanted. There might be a result that the Town doesn’t want from that but we just will deal with it in five years when we look at this Plan again. I think it’s time to move it on and I think it’s where it should be. I’m satisfied.

[1:23:02] Commissioner Paciulli’s comments:

Do I believe the plan is perfect? – No. Do I agree with all the proposals, wording, plans? – No. Do I believe that the Commission has attempted over the past five years to produce a plan that works for the community and considers the citizens’ inputs? – Yes. With three different opinions on an issue it is difficult but important to consider all – I tried. I therefore support moving the Plan to the Town Council.

[1:23:50] Commissioner Forbes’ comments:

I have really been torn about this. I think part of it is that I’ve been indulging in magical thinking wishing I could turn the clock back about ten years and eliminate a lot of what has happened that’s now built and what’s been paved over that we can’t restore – and that is magical; it’s not going to happen. But I’ve also looked at the Plan as it exists today and I think, particularly in the last few months, there’s been a significant effort by this group to temper some of the volume of the growth that was put on the board, particularly the Hirst area and on East Main. So instead of the larger scale commercial, a lot has been scaled down to neighborhood.

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I am concerned about some of the designations that call for redevelopment within the Town, and I really have concerns about what [Vice Chair Stein] said about traffic and trying to put a lot of the growth on the outskirts of the Town because there are more highways and that kind of thing. It seems contrary to supporting a thriving downtown and it seems that our downtown is really struggling. We have long-time business owners who are in really marginal situations because everybody is going out to these shopping centers, and we're going to become Anytown USA if Purcellville loses a lot of what makes us unique.

I concur with [Commissioner Bennett] on her concerns about development along Hirst East. I'm also worried that you can't take away the right of somebody to use their property at all, and I wish that you could but I'm aware that you can't and it's a huge dilemma. I frankly wish that I had more information from the Town about what the budget is to buy land – I didn't hear anything which makes me think that doesn't exist which is why that wasn't an option. But it occurs to me that if the Town had some sort of plan to accumulate funds so that purchases of that nature could be made, that would be a very critical piece in a planning tool, and it has not been mentioned at all. To my knowledge, there is nothing that's been budgeted to acquire property, not that they wouldn't like to do it, but nothing has been budgeted and there doesn't seem to be anything in other aspects of the Town that would permit that, and it's a missed opportunity because things are going to evaporate with more building provided that's what we wanted.

So I've gone back and forth, back and forth, back and forth – I didn't vote for the last Plan, I was very concerned – particularly about East Main Street and I concur with [Commissioner Bennett] with because to her assessment – that's really problematic because I want it to stay green but I don't think that can happen. So because this seems to be an improvement on what we now have calls for bigger, dense, more, I'm reluctantly supporting this but it's only because I think it really has some vision of downsizing the scope of growth on East Main Street and even on the west end of town and the Plan that we're looking at now doesn't have that, and that's even scarier. The work that has been done to address the concerns has been great, really impressive. Everybody has been so well-intentioned.

[1:28:40] Chair Stinnette's comments:

The additions and changes that have occurred over the last few months have improved the Plan, at least made it more consistent with what I think the community wants. There are five main points that I think are useful to telescope away from the Plan to see where we've come from:

1. The Plan is inward focused; there is no aspiration for further expansion.
2. The work we've done collectively over the last three months has significantly constrained density growth.
3. The Plan focuses more on scale, form and fit than on use. If you look at our original Comprehensive Plan, it was mainly focused on use.
4. I think we appropriately focused on the Main Street and Hirst Road corridors, and that's where all the dots were in the results of the community input.
5. I think the Plan advocates for the development of the regional transportation and traffic plan as well as an updated water resource plan.

I share [Commissioner Forbes'] point on green space. Ideally, I would have liked to have bought the property adjacent to the fire department, because once you give up green space you can never get it back. But I think the challenges that we have in the budget are such that we have to find a

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new location for the police department, we need to stabilize the debt structure and a host of other competing infrastructure needs that I don't think we have the capacity to go buy it. I think in large part we've done some fairly heavy lifting to get the Plan to where it needs to be.

[1:31:52] Patrick Sullivan stated:

I agree that it's important to save land wherever we can, for example for a pocket park. No matter how much we try to compress this Plan into a no-growth plan, we're still going to burst at the seams with growth. It's just going to go into an area we can't picture right now. If we're proactive, we'll end up being a lot better off in the long run. I think that any land the we could buy and don't is a missed opportunity.

[1:33:18] the Planning Commission voted on the motion to recommend the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan 2018 and its artifacts to the Town Council:

Commissioner Bennett - No

Vice Chair Stein - Yes

Commissioner Paciulli - Yes

Commissioner Forbes - Yes

Chair Stinnette - Yes

Commissioner Kowalski - Absent

Commissioner Neham - Absent

It is noted that per communications from Commissioners Kowalski and Neham, they both would have voted Yes had they been in attendance. Passed: 4-1-2.

[1:34:24] The information to be displayed on the Plan Purcellville website was discussed. Staff agreed to post update files and archive outdated files by September 12th.

INFORMATION ITEMS

[1:39:10] The issue of the floodplain and the Conditional Letter of Map Revision was briefly discussed and the FEMA process was described. It was noted that building permits cannot be issued on the basis of a Conditional Letter of Map Revision. It was also noted that the local municipality/community gets to weigh in on this.

[1:49:41] The boundary line readjustment on the west end of town, page 63 of the Comprehensive Plan, was discussed. Tom Rust, who owns four parcels of land, wants to adjust the interior lot lines within the four parcels to provide better access to the street. There is no development involved at this point.

[1:53:30] There was a discussion about fences that were built in the Mayfair development with Town approval are now being told that the fences are in an easement area and need to be removed. However, the fences were not built in accordance with the conditions specified in the permits in which the easement areas were identified.

[1:55:55] Patrick Sullivan reported that there will be a meeting in the following week with consultants to move forward with the Zoning Diagnostics and refining the scope of the work to be performed. Work is expected to start in October and is expected to take about 90 days.

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COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT [1:57:10]

Provided earlier.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS [1:59:45]

The next Planning Commission meeting will be on September 19th, tentatively.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES [2:01:15]


Commissioner Forbes moved that the July 18, 2019 Special Meeting Minutes and the July 25, 2019 Special Meeting Minutes be approved, waiving the reading, seconded by Commissioner Bennett. Passed: 5-0-2.

ADJOURNMENT [2:02:00]

With no further business, Commissioner Forbes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 PM, seconded by Vice Chair Stein. Passed: 5-0-2.



Ed Neham and Stefanie Longerbeam, Recorders



Tip Stinnette, Chair

