

2015 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PURCELLVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Pursuant to Code of Virginia, § 15.2-2221(5), the Purcellville Planning Commission (“Commission”) hereby submits its Annual Report to the Purcellville Town Council concerning the operation of the Commission and the status of planning within the Commission’s jurisdiction.

The Planning Commission

The following six citizens served on the Purcellville Planning Commission at the end of 2015:

Doug McCollum, Chair
Chip Paciulli
Edward Van Istendal

Theresa Stein, Vice Chair
Nedim Ogelman
Chris Bledsoe

Two other citizens served on the Commission during the course of 2015:

Gil Paist (*former Chair*)

Keith Melton

In 2015, the Planning Commission held a total of 20 regular meetings and 15 work sessions; most were attended by at least one member of the public.

In October, the Commission elected Commissioner McCollum as Chair for the upcoming year, Commissioner Stein as Vice Chair, and Tucker Keller as Recorder after only one nomination was made for each position.

Citizen Input & Related Matters

In each regular meeting, the Commission heard from citizens during the Citizen Comment portion of the Commission’s agenda. The Commission also expanded the public’s opportunity to contact the Commission by the creation of a public email address for the Commission. During the summer, the Commission’s Staff was assisted by Heidi Mitter, a recent graduate of the University of Virginia with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Urban & Environmental Planning. Lovettsville Planning Commissioner Ciolkosz observed the Commission as part of his training under the Certified Planning Commission Training conducted by Mike Chandler.

Public Hearings

The Commission held Public Hearings covering text amendments. One such text amendment addressed the CM-1 Local Service Industrial District to make above ground storage, distribution but not refining of petroleum, propane and other flammable liquids a permitted use. The Commission voted to recommend that the Council adopt this text amendment. In addition, the Commission later voted that no additional performance and/or safety standards be adopted for above ground petroleum storage tanks.

2015 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PURCELLVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION

The Commission held a Public Hearing on proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance's lists of allowable uses, at which 18 people appeared in person to present their views and 14 persons submitted written comments for the Commission's consideration. After the adjournment of the regular meeting, the Commission met in a public work session to weigh whether any comments made during the public hearing warranted adjustments by the Commission. Several modifications to the proposed text changes were made in response to public input. The Commission ultimately voted to recommend that the Council approve this proposed text amendment. (See next section for additional details.)

The Commission held a Public Hearing on a proposed zoning text amendment to add automobile and truck maintenance, service and repair as a permitted use to the C-1 Office Commercial District. The Commission voted to recommend that the Council deny this proposed text amendment. After a separate Public Hearing at the same meeting, the Commission also voted to recommend to the Council that it approve a proposed text amendment to add commuter parking lot as a Special Use in the CM-1 Local Service Industrial District.

The Commission held a Public Hearing on the application of the operator of a home child care service for a text amendment to increase the maximum enrollment of such a business from 6 to 12 children. The Commission received 4 written comments from local HOAs and heard from 12 citizens who appeared in person. These persons spoke about the quality of the home child care operation of the applicant. The Commission decided to defer any action on this application until each commissioner had considered the language adopted by jurisdictions that have addressed similar applications. Commission action on this matter is scheduled to be taken in January, 2016.

Zoning Ordinance Uses Review and Amendment

Acting under the direction of the Council and with guidance of the Town Staff, the Commission spent extensive time in multiple public work sessions throughout the year addressing the district zoning uses with the purpose, among other things, to simplify the list of zoning uses by removing redundant uses and consolidating multiple related uses under a single use with a description of the various uses that are covered by this simplified use. The Commission was careful not to change the purpose of any zoning district nor consolidate zoning districts although the distinctions between CM-1 and M-1, for example, are minor. The Commission held three Public Input Sessions in July to hear from members of the public about their concerns or suggestions about the results of the Commission's Use review. Each Input Session addressed specific zoning districts to facilitate substantive and useful comments. These sessions served their purposes. After the conclusion of each session, the Commission met in a work session to discuss what changes, if any, should be made based on the information presented at the session. The Commissioners made a number of modifications. Those persons who missed one or more of these Public Input Sessions were also able to present their views during the Public Hearing held later in the year. The Public Input Sessions and the Public Hearing provided the Commission with specific concerns for the Commission to consider and adjust. As a result of the

2015 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PURCELLVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Commission's efforts, the number of uses in the Town's Zoning Ordinance was reduced from 315 to 113.

Comprehensive Plan

The Commission acted on the Council's endorsement of a review and possible revision of the current Comprehensive Plan. Several commissioners suggested ways to publicize the meetings involved with the review of the Comprehensive Plan so as to increase citizen participation. The Commission held a training session on April 18, facilitated by Mike Chandler, as part of the Commission's preparation for the upcoming Comprehensive Plan review. Mr. Chandler noted that he has not seen a project management plan (PMP) for the review of a comprehensive plan that is as detailed and as well developed as the PMP developed by then Chairman Paist and Senior Planner Daniel Galindo.

Other Issues

The Commission also held extended discussions on a variety of subjects. Included in these discussions were the adoption of civil penalties regulations and revisions to the sign regulations. The Commission decided that any action on civil penalties or sign regulations should be deferred until 2016 after the zoning use effort had been completed.

The Commission heard presentations from representatives of developers for a proposal to rezone property on 32nd Street to provide for senior housing. The commissioners posed questions for the representatives, and the Commission has received no response.