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PLANNING COMMISSION

Albert Gutekenst
Steven Pekary
Lewis Keller
James Dodd
Michelle Covert
Tom Runnett

Town of Mineral
Planning Commission Meeting
March 20, 2014
7:00pm

PRESENT: Albert Gutekenst; Steven Pekary; Lewis Keller; James
Dodd; Michelle Covert; Tom Runnett
ABSENT: Lewis Keller
STAFF: Town Manager Sal Luciano;.
PUBLIC: None

Tom Runnett called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Roll call was taken and there were no public comments.

VACANT SPOTS & CHAIRMAN: Tom Runnett stated that to clarify, Brooks Besley was the Chairman of the Planning Commission and when he was appointed by the Mayor to fill Brooks' term, he was also to fill his place on the Planning Commission and he will continue to serve as the Chairperson until he is replaced. This May will bring the upcoming elections and there might be someone else in the spot.

Sal Luciano stated that some of the recommendations have been met, i.e. trailers, size of buildings, multi-family dwellings etc. Jimmy Dodd stated that the square footage needed to be confirmed as to not run into the same problem in the future as the problem that recently arose with the Family Dollar Store. Sal Luciano stated that he did not find anything in the five (5) year plan on that and Mr. Dodd stated that he did not remember if they had put anything in there about that requirement.

Albert Gutekenst asked if there was anything regarding the sidewalks and crosswalks. Sal stated that there is a section, #4 pertaining to sidewalks and crosswalks. Michelle Covert asked if any were met. Tom Runnett stated that one of the things that was done with the Family Dollar Store is that there will be sidewalks on 5th Street and along that

section of Mineral Avenue. What was asked in the past that any business coming in, Council needed to approve the site plan to accommodate for curb and gutter.

Sal Luciano stated that one crosswalk that VDOT denied us was at the baseball field across to the Farmer's Market because the current sidewalk does not have the handicap accessible cut-out, but that they would look at their budget and possibly allocate some funds for that.

Looking down the agenda, Thomas Jefferson Planning Commission, the Rural Transportation Planning Work Program, has looked into giving us some of their money in helping us with some of the crosswalks. The two (2) that Sal has been looking into were the first one across from the ballpark to the Farmer's Market and the second was from the Old Town Office across to Sabor A Mexico Restaurant. Both of these locations would have to be made handicap accessible.

Al Gutekenst asked if there was anything to the up keep of these sidewalks and Tom Runnett stated that it is the responsibility of VDOT.

Sal Luciano stated that Council has put in a grant with Louisa County to go from Sabor A Mexico Restaurant all the way to the High School/Middle School Complex.

Michelle Covert stated that maybe a crosswalk at 5th Street also so that there is one at each end of the Town.

Tom Runnett stated that a new railroad crossing will be at 1st Street and it will be a nice one like the one at Purcell's in the Town of Louisa.

Steven Pekary asked if the speed limit would have to be changed with installing these crosswalks and Tom responded with the fact that the speed limit is already set at 35 mph. Sal stated that there might be some signage that would need to be, location of signs and possibly some additional signs.

Al Gutekenst asked if the sidewalks would be maintained during inclement weather and Sal stated that he asked Mr. Maus, the Town Attorney, that within the Commonwealth of Virginia, that it is the owner's responsibility for the section in front of their property. Tom Runnett stated that the Town of Louisa, as a courtesy to the business owners, the maintenance men clean the sidewalks on Main Street, both sides.

Sal Luciano stated that he had gotten a few questions from persons showing interest in creating low income housing, housing for elderly people or short term living for homeless people and some of the land that has been requested is zoned limited residential so they do not have the option of applying for a residential use permit. One specific request was a 1,500 sq. foot rancher with two entrances, one on each end of the building for two residences and Sal had to deny it because the code states it cannot be multi-family residence. Is this something the Planning Commission is interested in looking into and possibly allowing?

Tom Runnett stated that people have talked to him about two (2) things in particular which are specifically asking for a pharmacy and/or a restaurant; and also sidewalks all the way down to West 9th Street where it branches off. They would like to see sidewalks on both sides of the street the entire length of Mineral Avenue. With that being said whomever we attract in, one of the things we would request is that they put in turning lanes.

Sal Luciano stated that he has had a lot of contact with Will Cockrell of the Thomas Jefferson Planning Commission and they would like to help the Town of Mineral out as much as they can in looking at some grants along with a few other things. He brought Sal up to speed on things that have been done since the 5 year comp plan has been done and he has learned that we have a lot of right of way to do what we want to do.

Al Gutekenst requested coming up with a board to attract new businesses. Tom Runnett stated that new Mexican Restaurant and pet groomin businesses will hopefully be a success stories. Maria's Deli is done so that space is vacant, but a formal wear boutique opened up in place of the tanning boutique.

Sal Luciano stated that the Laundromat is for sale. He has spoken to the owner and while there are no formal signs up, he is interested in selling. On Mineral Avenue, the only vacant place other than Maria's is the building where the Mineral Pack & Ship was located. The building where the old drug store was is coming down per Tom Runnett.

Tom Runnett stated that since he has been on Council, he has been in negotiations with a restaurant in getting them to come into the Town of Mineral. He has a developer that stated he would build them a building and hand them the keys with a 20 year lease if they would come here. It's a process that would not come overnight.

Sal Luciano asked if the 5 year comp plan is something that you all decide upon now or is it something that a group looks at, has several meetings to make changes and then approve. Jimmy Dodd stated that if it is not already in the comp plan about the 10,000 sq. foot building requirement then it needs to be added. Michelle Covert stated that what needs to be done is take things that have been accomplished and add new things to the plan.

Sal stated that the Thomas Jefferson Planning Commission is non-profit organization, who has done all this work, have offered their services at cost, with a small fee for them to break even. They can do all of this, any tier that we wanted or pick and choose want we wanted or even if we wanted their help at all. So the thought tonight would be to see if the Planning Commission wants to do this on their own or would they like outside help. Steven Pekary asked if there was money in the budget for this and Sal stated that there is not a budget. Sal stated that this is important enough to find funds to do this comp plan the right way.

Tom Runnett brought up that on page #5 there has been a change in the state law where no ordinance can discriminate against mobile, manufactured homes, i.e. double or single wides. The Town of Mineral has added that they must be put on a permanent foundation,

with the tongues & axels removed and the title turned in and treated as real estate property. This has already been done.

Tom Runnett's suggestion would be that each member review the plan; make notes and /or changes and then come back to the table and come up with a comp plan. This would be what the community needs. Sal questioned if they wanted to bring other people in on this review and planning such as Council members for example and it was agreed upon that the Planning Commission was all they wanted involved. Tom Runnet stated that the vacant spot from the resignation of Susan Groome did not have to be filled at this time. Sal also asked the members to look over the proposal from the TJ Planning Commission and come back at the next meeting with how they would like to proceed. Sal also stated that he will leave all this information in his office and they can come by at their leisure and review the packet.

Tom Runnett stated the next meeting would be held Thursday, April 10, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Sal pointed out one last issue on Page #7 of the TJ Planning Commission's proposal is the allocation of their funds and how they plan to help us out in using a portion of their funds. Steven Pekary asked where they get their funds from and Sal stated that most come from the State, but they have listed on the back where they come from. They are willing to work with us and they also have a grant writer on staff that would help us in finding grants for free money that would work for us.

Tom Runnett called for a motion to adjourn meeting: Michelle Covert made the motion to adjourn; Jimmy Dodd seconded the motion; vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting.