

Town of Mineral Comprehensive Plan

2018



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Michelle Covert
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Town Council:

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Michael Warlick, Vice-Mayor
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Introduction

The development of a useful and meaningful comprehensive plan for any community must be preceded by a clear understanding of what a plan is. Planning in general is an attempt to make conscious choices about future actions. Those choices are based on present and historical conditions and goals to be achieved. In part, a plan is based on a premise that human and physical resources are limited, and that benefits from one action can be compared to benefits from an alternative action. In the particular case of comprehensive planning for a community, the existing cultures and social values are also a basis for making plans.

A second important aspect of planning is an understanding by community residents of how a plan can be used once it is adopted. In Virginia, a comprehensive plan is intended to be a guide for future development, both public and private. It may include social programs as well as physical development. It may focus on policies by which the locality intends to carry out. It is not, however, and absolutely fixed plan once it is adopted. It can be changed or amended whenever necessary, and by state law it must be reviewed at least once every five years. Thus, a comprehensive plan is intended to reflect the attitudes of the people for whom it is prepared; attitudes that change as well as those that remain the same.

Government Organization

The government of the Town of Mineral is in a mayor-council form. The mayor, as well as six council members, are elected directly by the residents and serve for terms of four years.

The elected council both employs and appoints people to fill other positions needed to carry out the Town's responsibilities. Council employs a Town manager and staff. Council appoints a seven member planning commission, and makes recommendations to the Circuit Court Judge for appointment to a five-member board of zoning appeals. Council also may employ an attorney and auditor, as needed.

According to Virginia state law, it is the responsibility of the local planning commission to "prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction." The planning commission recommends this plan to the local governing body (Mineral Town Council), which eventually adopts the plan. Before the plan is adopted, public hearings are held, and all interested citizens as well as Town officials are given the opportunity to comment on the proposed plan and/or make recommendations. Once the plan is adopted, it can always be changed after consideration by the planning commission, public hearings, and vote by the Town Council.

CODE OF VIRGINIA REQUIREMENTS

The Code of Virginia establishes the broad parameters for preparing and adopting a comprehensive plan. The Code states, in part: § 15.2-2223. Comprehensive plan to be prepared and adopted; scope and purpose. The local planning commission shall prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction and every governing body shall adopt a comprehensive plan for the territory under its jurisdiction. In the preparation of a comprehensive plan, the commission shall make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth, and of the probable future requirements of its territory and inhabitants. The comprehensive plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities. The comprehensive plan shall be general in nature, in that it shall designate the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature, including any road improvement and any transportation improvement, shown on the plan and shall indicate where existing lands or facilities are proposed to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated, narrowed, abandoned, or changed in use as the case may be. This Town of Mineral Comprehensive Plan was developed to meet the Code of Virginia requirements for a comprehensive plan. First and foremost, however, this comprehensive plan has been developed by the Town of Mineral Planning Commission, the Mineral Town Council and the residents of the county.

HISTORY & EVENTS

Mineral was originally known as Tolersville, but adopted its current name when it incorporated in 1902 due to the mining industry that supported the community. It was the center of gold mining activity in Louisa County, and during its heyday, there were fifteen gold mines located within two miles of the town. A zinc and lead mine also operated in the area into the 1970s.

The Mineral Historic Foundation helped the approximately 100-year-old town of Mineral receive its historic designation status from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in December of 2004. The foundation was formed several years ago as a means of protecting the historic significance of the unique mining town. Each year, the Mineral Historic Foundation hosts various programs highlighting an aspect of the town's history or forefathers. The town of Mineral is also an affiliate in the Virginia Main Street Program, an initiative of the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. This program is a comprehensive, incremental approach to revitalization built around a community's unique heritage and attributes. Using local resources and initiatives, Main Street helps communities develop their own strategies to stimulate long term economic growth and pride in the traditional community center — downtown.

At 1:51 p.m. on August 23, 2011, a 5.8 magnitude earthquake was centered 5 miles south-southwest of Mineral, at a depth of 3.7 miles. According to Associated Press, it "forced evacuations of all the monuments on the National Mall in Washington and rattled nerves from Florida to Canada". The roof of Mineral's town hall collapsed, and three of the six schools in the county's school system suffered heavy damage. There were no fatalities, and most injuries were minor.



Mission Statement of the Planning Commission

To advise and make recommendations to the Town Council on issues of land use, land development, subdivision, ordinance amendments, zoning and the comprehensive plan.

Overall Goal of the Planning Commission

Create and maintain a physically distinctive and high-quality community environment through efforts that preserve the existing quality of life, character, and heritage, while anticipating change and progress in the future. Achieve a balanced pattern of development in the community that provides for well designed, compatible and economically sustainable business, employment and residential needs.



Mineral Town-To-Be Vision:

The Town of Mineral aspires to become a thriving community that maintains its historic appearance while fostering business and residential growth. The Town aspires to create an attractive, engaging downtown that is safe, accessible and an integral part of the surrounding area. The Town aspires to be a destination as well as a place where people live, work and visit.

This vision is divided into the following goals and objectives:

Goal 1: Maintain the Town's Historic Resources and Appearance

Objective 1A – Preserve the Historic Train Depot:

Preserve and reuse the train depot as a welcome center and information booth.

Objective 1B – Preserve Existing Buildings:

Where feasible, preserve the Town's historic buildings by providing incentives to property owners which encourages renovation and better property maintenance



The Town's heritage is important to its residents. Mineral is home to a designated historic district, which is recognized by the State of Virginia.

Goal 2: Foster Business and Economic Development

Objective 2A – Focus on Infill:

Provide resources and incentives to develop the existing, vacant lots for infill and redevelopment

Objective 2B – Actively Recruit New Businesses:

Take efforts to attract more businesses to the Town including the development of a brochure to market the town to potential businesses

Objective 2C – Availability to High Speed Internet:

Assist with availability to high speed internet, a cell tower, fiber optic

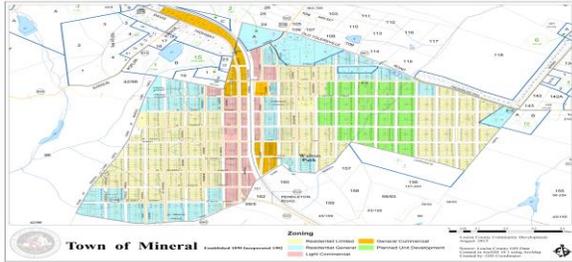
Objective 2D – Build on Success of the Farmers' Market:

Find a permanent location for the Farmers' Market and provide a covered structure

Objective 2E – Identify Growth Area:

Designate growth areas in town and actively recruit business to those locations (See Page 15)

Strengthening the local economy is a significant part of downtown revitalization. Without healthy business and residential growth, the Town would continue to experience decline. Five objectives have been identified for focusing resources and efforts.



Goal 3: Foster Residential Development

Objective 3A – Evaluate areas for Multi-Family Dwellings:

Expand areas where multi-family dwellings are allowed by code or by conditional use permit

Objective 3B – Increase Communication with Residents:

It is important that the citizens are informed and updated consistently through:

- Email Blasts
- Electronic Message Boards
- New resident information booklet

Although business growth is important to the town in terms of revenue and bringing in visitors, the residents are the backbone of the town. The Town would like to encourage more owner residents and an increase in the elderly population. It is important for the citizens to be informed and participate in decisions that affect the town.



Goal 4: Create an Attractive, Engaging Downtown that is Safe, Accessible and an Integral Part of the Surrounding Area

Objective 4A – Use of Better Sign Design:

Improve the aesthetic appearance, design and function of signage throughout downtown to include directional signage at points of interest

Objective 4B – Demonstrate Town Spirit:

- Install winter decorations that are updated and non-holiday specific
- Install a mural visible on Mineral Avenue
- Hang banners representing the town on Mineral Avenue and Louisa Avenue

Objective 4C – Improve Street Lighting:

Install street lights that effectively illuminate the roads and sidewalks, and that are aesthetically pleasing and allow for a flag display

Objective 4D – Eliminate Physical and Economic Blight

Implement strategies for renovating or removing blighted buildings, along with redeveloping vacant and underutilized properties.

Objective 4E – Gathering Location

Locate an area and install a park bench, trash receptacle and planters to be used by pedestrians



There are several surrounding areas that serve as economic and service centers for the region. In order to maintain its competitive edge, the Town of Mineral must revitalize the downtown in a way that would create a unique destination. Rather than being a pass-through, Mineral needs to establish itself as a place where people would like to visit, live and work. The previous five objectives are intended to accomplish that goal.

Goal 5: Create a Safe and Well Designed Transportation System

Objective 5A – Build and Improve Pedestrian Facilities:

Install needed sidewalks and crosswalks along Mineral and Louisa Avenues

Objective 5B – Pursue Roadway Improvements:

Install bike lanes along Mineral and Louisa Avenues.

Objective 5C – Install Traffic Calming:

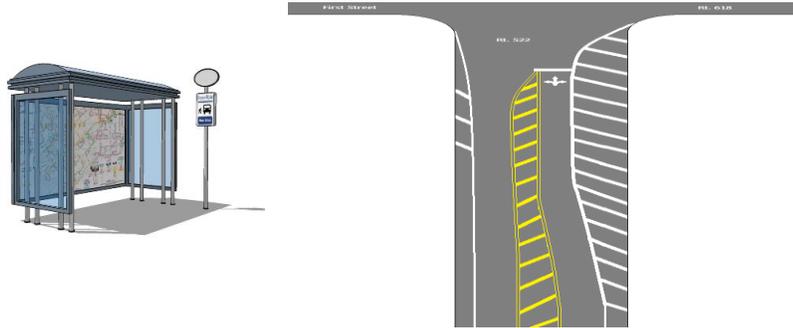
Install measures that control the intersection at First Street and Mineral Avenue to prevent illegal right hand turns

Objective 5D – Park & Ride:

Locate, designate, and encourage a Park & Ride

Objective 5E – Commuter Train:

Become a train stop when a commuter train through the town is put in service



Pedestrians are important to any thriving downtown. As part of the “Town to Be” vision, there are several infrastructure improvements that would help improve the safety and ease of walking around the downtown area. These recommendations include new crosswalks, repaired/improved curb cuts, bulb-outs, new sidewalks, street lights and a bus stop. Roadway improvements are a significant piece to the “Town to Be” and are critical to how people travel to and through the Town. The specific roadway recommendations include new medians, traffic calming measures, bike lanes and on-street parking.

Goal 6: Parks & Recreation

Objective 6A – Walton Park:

Increase usage and accessibility of the park by improvements to the access road into the park and by adding features such as a children’s playground.

Objective 6B – Luck Field:

Improve parking and increased safety for pedestrians.

Objective 6C – Farmers Market:

Obtain a use agreement or purchase land to insure the continued use of the market.

Walton Park is a wooded park area of about 13.5 acres with water and sewer hookup for campers. Some lighting exists on the site, though it is not well planned. Also existing on site are a covered stage, water pump building, old stables that has been renovated into a covered pavilion, and an old concession building. The Town of Mineral would like to expand upon the current site elements and park uses to create a park that the community can use on a daily or weekly basis, and that can also be used for annual meetings, company picnics, family reunions and for industries that would like a venue for outdoor events. An improved road to enter and access the park would help improve the usage of the park.



Planning Concepts for Mineral Avenue – “Town to Be”

Before

After



Typical Section of Mineral Avenue: This segment is located between Second and Third Streets, but serves as a typical treatment for Mineral Avenue. The before graphics depict the existing conditions along the street, while the after represents the “Town to Be.” These illustrations show the public investments in the street, along with infill development and private improvements. Those private efforts are important for creating the consistent street wall of storefronts, attractive buildings and activity in the community. All of these help establish Mineral as a unique destination.

Planning Concepts for Mineral Avenue – “Town to Be”

Before

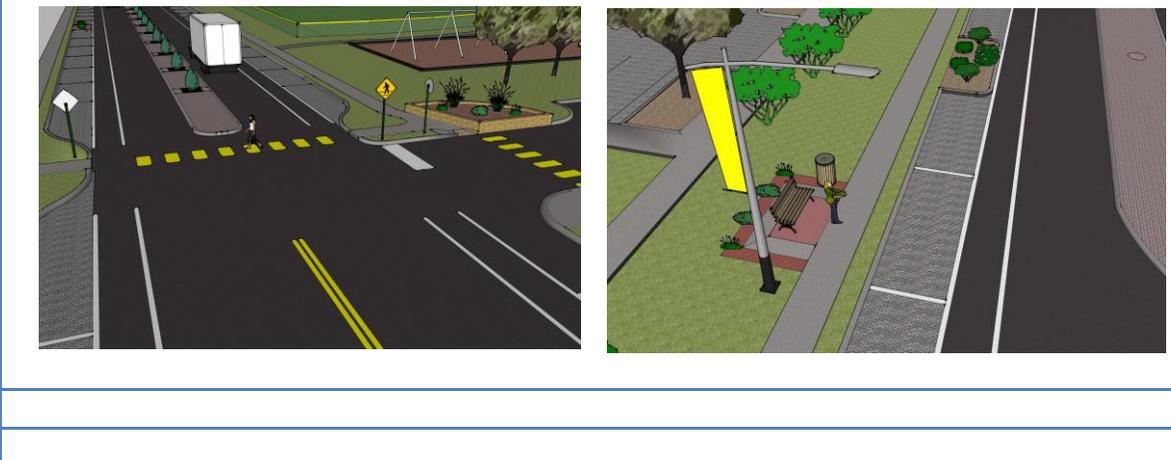
After



Typical Section of Mineral Avenue: This is the intersection at Mineral Avenue and First Street. The “Town to Be” image shows the addition of crosswalks and the improvements needed to make those crossings safe to pedestrians. While this is a specific location, these concepts apply to the entire downtown.

The second priority for revitalization is the Louisa Avenue area. While Mineral Avenue is the major access point into this community and home to a higher concentration of local businesses, the Louisa Avenue portion of the town area also holds significance. This is also a major gateway into Mineral and is flanked by local landmarks, recreational facilities and other places that are important to local citizens. The following images depict the vision for this part of the study area. The basic concepts are the same as those shown for Mineral Avenue.

Planning Concepts for Louisa Avenue – “Town to Be”



FINANCES

There are four major sources of income, which fund the operations of the Town of Mineral. They are real estate levies, various taxes, water service fees, and sewage receipts. There are also several miscellaneous revenue sources, as well as the DMV Select agency fees. Mineral’s fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30; the current fiscal year (FY 18) ends June 30, 2018. Expected revenues for FY 18 are \$728,975.

Expenditures may be budgeted by items (such as total salaries, all supplies, utilities, etc.) or by categories. The Mineral budget is prepared by categories: general fund, water fund and sewage fund. The FY 18 estimated expenditure budget is \$728,975.

Copies of detailed budget for current and past years can be obtained on request from the Town Clerk.

Mineral does presently have a Capital Improvements Program and a Contingency Fund. The kinds of projects which might be included in a Capital Improvements Plan include sidewalk and road construction, purchase of Town vehicles, additional water and sewer lines, and improvements to the Town Park. Advance planning for such major projects usually will result in lower final costs.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

It is not projected that there will be a substantial or sudden increase in the Mineral population during the 2000's. As in the past, people who are employed in nearby industries and those who prefer a small town atmosphere with the amenities offered by a small town will be attracted to Mineral.

The population of Mineral has not changed significantly over the last seventy five years. Since 1920, Mineral has remained a residential community with a small commercial center which has served the residents of the Town and the nearby area. The historic trend of the population of Mineral is listed as follows:

As is shown in the following table, which was compiled using US Census data, the population of the County of Louisa increased by 49.2% between 1990 and 2015 however, in the same time period, the population in the town of Mineral increased by only 2.76%.

Population	Louisa County	Mineral
1990	20,506	471
2000	25,766	424
2010	33,360	467
2015	30,602	487
Percent Change	49.2%	2.76%

Growth Areas:

PUD (Planned Urban Development)

Block 28, Lots 9-16

Blocks 29, 30, 21, 32, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 85, 86, 87, 88, 106,
107, 108

Next to Dollar General- Block 1

Farmers Market – Block 4

Baseball field/old Mineral School – Block 5

VFW/Motel – Block 23

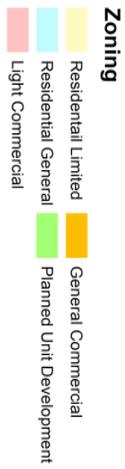
Next to Town Office- Block 40

Pekary Field- Block 135

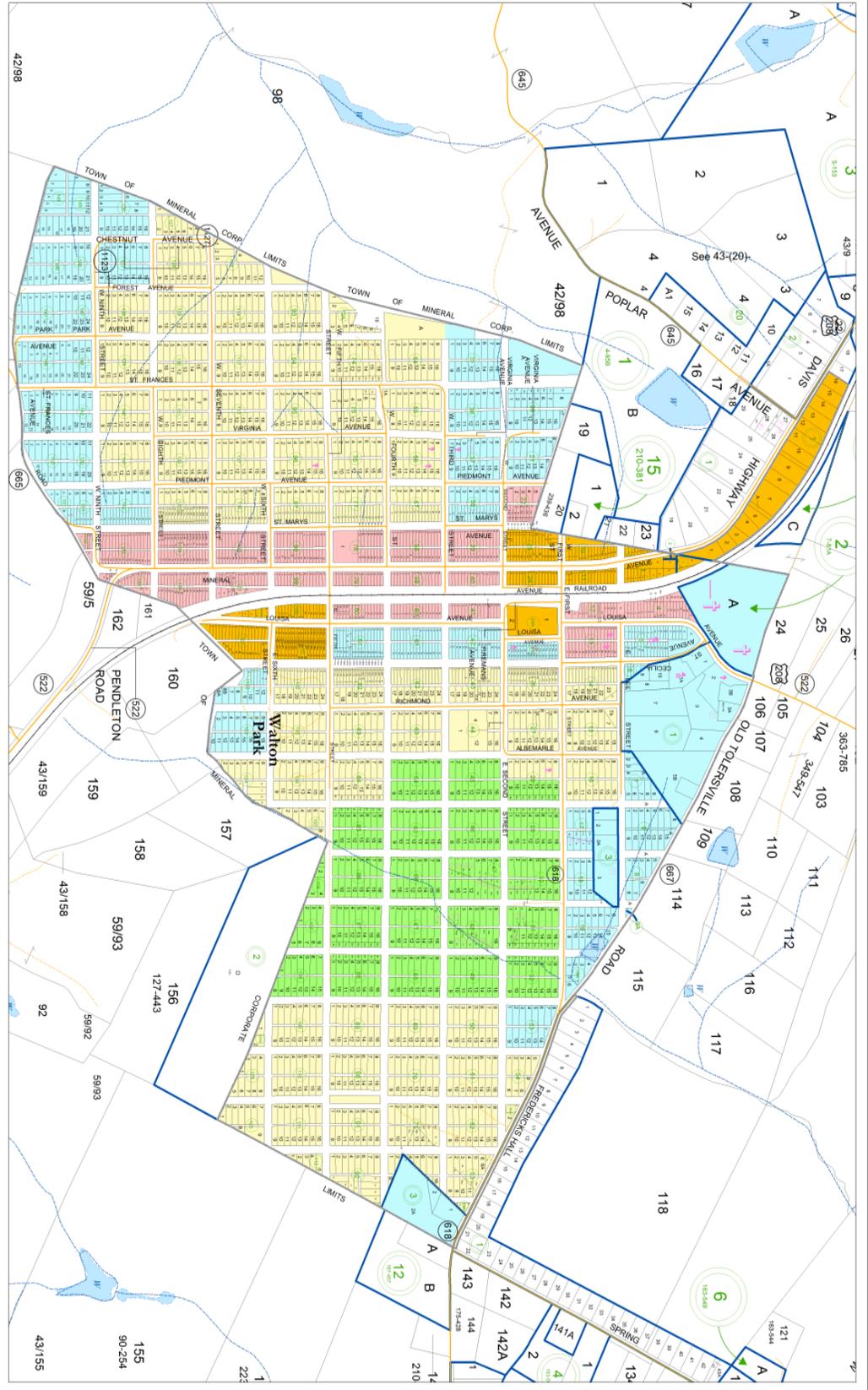


Town of Mineral

Established 1890 Incorporated 1902



Louisiana County Community Development
August 2015
Source: Louisiana County GIS Data
Created in ArcGIS 10.1 using ArcMap
Created by: GIS Coordinator



PUBLIC HEARINGS AND VOTES

Advertisement for the public hearing for the planning commission:

February 1, 2018

February 8, 2018

Advertisement for the public hearing for the Town Council:

March 22, 2018

March 29, 2018

Mineral Town Planning Commission held a public hear on February 20, 2018

Present Commission Members: Edwin Jarvis, Michelle Covert, Tom Runnett, Lewis Keller.

Absent: Steven Pekary, Tony Williams

Action of the Planning Commission:

Tom Runnett made a motion to forward the recommendation of adopting the draft comprehensive plan to council, seconded by Lewis Keller. Motion passed 4/0 with none voting in the negative.

Mineral Town Council held a public hear on April 9, 2018

Present Council Members: Pamela Harlowe, Michael Warlick, Bernice Wilson-Kube, Tom Runnett, Roy McGehee, William Thomas

Absent: Doswell Pierce

Action of the Town Council:

Tom Runnett made a motion to accept and adopt the comprehensive plan as presented by the planning commission, seconded by William Thomas. Motion passed 5/0 with none voting in the negative.