

Minutes of a regular meeting of the Marion Planning Commission held in the Municipal Building at 5:15 p. m. on October 13, 2014.

CALL TO ORDER: Vice-Chairman Ramsey called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION: Mr. Hicks rendered the invocation.(Chairman Wolfe arrived and Vice-Chairman Ramsey turned the meeting to him).

VISITORS: Aaron Sizemore Mount Rogers Planning District Commission.

PRESENT: Vice-Chairman Bob Ramsey , Chairman Cameron Wolfe (arriving late), Alice Freeman, Jim Barker, Dan Surface, Avery Cornett and Ben Reedy Planning Commission Members. Town Engineer/Zoning Administrator Cecil Hicks, Town Attorney Mark Fenyk and Deputy Clerk Anita Catron.

ABSENT: None.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM: The meeting was called to order, and with 7 voting members present, the Commission has a full quorum.

MINUTES: Upon motion of Mrs. Freeman, seconded by Mr. Ramsey and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the minutes of the meeting held September 8, 2014 were approved.

REPORT OF SECRETARY: No report,

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES: No report.

REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES: No report.

NEW BUSINESS: ZONING ORDINANCE REVIEW OF PROPERTIES: Chairman Wolfe requested Mr. Hicks to review pictures of the lots that were discussed at the last meeting.

Mr. Hicks stated at the last meeting, it was decided he would choose six lots that would be effected by the suggested zoning ordinance change and e-mail these to members, so they could go by and view the properties for discussion at this meeting. Mr. Hicks gave a brief review on each property, then opened the floor for discussion. Several questions with regards to how this will change the property values, and how the public will be informed of the changes were discussed. Mrs. Freeman requested Mr. Hicks to contact the Commissioner of Revenue Jeff Richardson, and inquire as to what effect this change will have on the property taxes. Mr. Ramsey stated he feels this change would only make the lots more valuable. Mr. Sizemore reminded members they are reviewing this at the request of Town Council. As the governing body, Town Council will make the final decision. Mr. Surface agreed and stated that Planning Commission only makes the recommendation to Town Council. Mr. Reedy suggested a good example of how this change would be for the good of the town, would be to look at the Virginia Avenue lot. If this change is approved, it could create more lots for building in the town. Mr. Sizemore stated this will have good and bad effects, but feels Planning Commission members need to consider what is best for the future of the town.

Upon motion of Mr. Ramsey, seconded by Mrs. Freeman and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, Marion Planning Commission recommends to Town Council the R-2 Land Requirements be changed to 75 feet wide minimum and 7500 square feet lot area.

Mr. Hicks requested to change the agenda as he has two items to discuss before the last item on the agenda. Chairman Wolfe approved and turned the floor to Mr. Hicks for discussion.

Mr. Hicks stated that in the past if citizens requested permission to change an old mobile home for a newer one they were told this was not allowed. Virginia has a Vested Rights Act that states you may do this if certain requirements are met. Mr. Sizemore stated that Town of Damascus has these requirements in place, he will bring a copy to the next meeting so members may review these. Mr. Fenyk stated this is in the State Code, and the Town adopts this every year. The replacement must meet HUD standards and the area cannot be vacant for more than two years in accordance with the vested rights act. Mr. Sizemore and Mr. Fenyk were requested to work on the wording of this for the next meeting.

The next item Mr. Hicks wanted to discuss was Lesser Use Zoning. This occurs when an area is zoned for a certain purpose and someone requests to use it for another reason. An example of this would be using old buildings in the Industrial area to create apartments. Mr. Sizemore stated this was blended zoning. People do this, but it is not a good practice. Members inquired if Mr. Hicks has an issue with this now. He stated there is an old abandoned building in town located in the industrial area, that he feels may be considered for this. The other areas around it are residential areas. Discussion ensued. Mr. Sizemore stated that if a residential area joins the lot, this can be allowed by changing the property to R-1. Mrs. Freeman suggested planning commission may want to look into adding a B-1 or B-2 code to allow for apartments from one end of town along Highway 11 to the other end of town to allow for apartments in the second floor of an existing business. Mr. Sizemore suggested choosing a zoning area and allow for this in that area. He will check on this before the next meeting.

Chairman Wolfe stated that he would like to continue this at the next meeting, as there are other items that need to be discussed. All members were in agreement with this.

Mr. Ramsey stated that it was discussed at the last meeting that Town Council would like to know when the Zoning Ordinance will be completed. Mr. Sizemore stated they have completed review, and are now making certain changes they feel may be necessary. Mr. Barker stated if possible, Town Council would like to have this before the end of the year.

REVIEW OF REZONING OF 410 EAST MAIN STREET FROM R-1 TO MA: Chairman Wolfe turned the meeting over to Vice-Chairman Ramsey as he had an item for discussion that related to this item.

Mr. Sizemore left the meeting.

Mr. Wolfe shared with members the plans that Mount Rogers Community Services Board have for this property if the requested zoning change is approved by Town Council. Discussion ensued.

Vice-Chairman Ramsey turned the meeting back over to Chairman Wolfe.

Chairman Wolfe asked for more questions or comments for discussion. With none stated he reminded members of the Joint Public Hearing with Town Council set for Monday, October 20th at 5:30 p.m. Also the next Planning Commission meeting will be November 10, 2014 at 5:15 p.m.

Upon motion of Mr. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Reedy and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES the meeting was adjourned.

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Chairman

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Secretary