

Minutes of a regular meeting of the Marion Planning Commission held in Council Chambers at the Municipal Building on May 11, 2015 at 5:15 pm.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Cameron Wolfe called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION: Mr. Hicks rendered the invocation.

VISITORS: Steve Rossiter.

PRESENT: Chairman Cameron Wolfe, Bob Ramsey, Alice Freeman, Jim Barker, Ben Reedy, Avery Cornett and Dan Surface Planning Commission Members, Town Engineer/Zoning Administrator Cecil Hicks, Town Attorney Mark Fenyk (arriving late) 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 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 April 13, 2015 were approved.

REPORT OF SECRETARY: No report.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES: No report.

REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES: No report.

NEW BUSINESS: DISCUSSION ON STUDENT HOUSING IN R-1 AND R-2 RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS: Chairman Wolfe turned the floor over to Mr. Hicks, Mr. Barker and Mr. Ramsey for this discussion. Mr. Barker began by stating the former Berry home in the Wassona area has been sold. Some members of Town Council had been informed this was purchased with the intent to house students for the Emory & Henry College of Physical Therapy Programs. The home is located within an area zoned as Residential Single Family District (R-1). In accordance with the zoning regulations for R-1 & R-2 districts, this type of housing is not permitted for this area. He informed Planning Commission that Mr. Surface is the insurance agent for coverage on the house and asked him to explain more. Mr. Surface stated the owner of the residence has decided to use this property as a family rental, and not rent to students. He has rented the property to one person. Chairman Wolfe stated he feels the R-1 & R-2 zoned areas need to be discussed as this could become a potential issue at a later date. Members began discussion with page 96 of the Matrix with regards to Public and private schools, colleges, and universities, graduate programs, and housing associated with these uses. Members feel the wording for this indicates this is for campus type housing only and not single family zoned areas. Also members discussed the definition of "family," boarding houses and parking issues. After discussion, it was noted that R-2 allows for Duplex housing, and this would allow for student housing in those areas zoned as R-2. Also, R-3 allows for boarding houses and this could possibly be another area that may be used for housing students.

Mr. Cornett would like a clear definition of the time frame for "living together."

Mr. Reedy inquired as to the concerns of the residents in the areas not zoned for housing of students. Are the concerns noise, changes in the area or other issues?

Mr. Barker asked what we as a planning commission can do to protect the R-1 zoned areas?

Mrs. Freeman asked if the definitions for R-1 & R-2 can be enforced with the definitions listed. She feels some type of public information needs to be made available that informs the public of the areas not zoned for student housing. She feels this should be addressed before the need arises.

Mr. Surface inquired if other areas that have faced this situation may be contacted for information as to how they addressed these concerns.

Mr. Barker asked Mr. Hicks to contact Blacksburg, Christiansburg and other localities that have faced this to see how they have dealt with the housing concerns.

Mr. Ramsey inquired if a judge could interpret and agree with our definition of what constitutes a family as defined in the ordinance.

Chairman Wolfe asked for any more comments or questions for discussion. With no more comments he inquired of Mr. Hicks if he feels a June meeting will be needed?

Mr. Hicks and Mr. Barker agree that with the annexation to be in effect June 30, 2015 they will need to schedule a meeting to review the areas and the zoning.

Chairman Wolfe stated the next meeting will be June 8, 2015.

Upon motion, duly seconded, and a vote of 6 AYES and 0 NOES, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25pm.

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Chairman

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Secretary