

The Richlands Town Council held a "Public Hearing" in the Richlands Council Chambers on June 8, 2021 at 5:45pm with the following present:

Mayor: Rodney D. Cury
Town Manager: John O'Daniel
Town Clerk: Connie Allen
Council Members: Mike Street, Jeff Hurst
Richard Brown, Mary Ann Strong, Doug Ratliff
Council Members Absent: Logan Plaster
Town Attorney : No Attorney

Mayor Cury opened the meeting.

Mayor Cury – Solicit Public Comment regarding Ordinance O-2021-05-02 Derelict Buildings/Tax Abatement.

Mayor Cury - Is there anyone here that would like to speak on Derelict Building/Tax Abatement Ordinance?

Mayor Cury – Is there a signup sheet? No one signed up.

Robin McGlothlin – Can you explain what that is sir?

Mayor Cury - I will read from the Ordinance – Whereas, The Richlands Town Council now desires, as pursuant to Section 2.4 of the Richlands Town Charter and Va. Code 15.2-907.1, to adopt certain additions to its Code of Ordinances pertaining to derelict structures, blight abatement, and tax abatement. Would you like for me to read more?

Robin McGlothlin - Will it include the wall?

Mayor Cury - The wall, I suppose would be part of it. We have been asked to draft a proposed ordinance which has an "Exhibit A" which has all the definitions and pieces and parts of the ordinance. The intention of the ordinance is to help the Town and the residents to have structures that are safe, occupied and well used, it is real simple.

Doug - I am all for that, are there any limits what the Town can go to?

Mayor Cury - I will suggest this, and your question is valid, that would probably be reserved for Council. The public hearing is to see what the public has to say. If I am wrong on that I stand to be corrected.

Doug - My only concern is, I think in the ordinance there should be some limits that the Town can go to as far as to protect the citizens from unwarranted harassment.

Mayor Cury - Harassment

Mayor Cury - Did I chose the word you might be looking for?

Doug – Exactly.

Mayor Cury - That is duly noted and we can take up at the Regular Council Meeting.

Audience - Is it property that is in bad shape and ready to fall down is that what you are talking about?

Mayor Cury – Safety, public safety is involved.

Ernest Edgell - What about trash piled up in the yards?

Mayor Cury - I think trash came up in a previous ordinance that we worked on.

Ernest Edgell - Did it pass?

Mayor Cury - Yes

Ernest Edgell - Why has it not been enforced?

Mayor Cury - Can we reserve that for the public comment period at the Regular Council Meeting?

Keith Jahnke – I am curious about the definition of abatement, is that like tax forgiveness?

Mayor Cury - It is a broad definition, I actually did some checking on that this afternoon. Abatement can mean forgiveness of taxes, forgiveness of past taxes or present and other forms of help.

Joe McCracken - Why would you want to forgive taxes when you want to raise taxes? It doesn't make sense.

Mayor Cury - Joe I appreciate your question, it is well taken but I can't answer that right now.

Robin McGlothlin - I know formerly, there were Councilmembers that would bring to the attention of Council and Town Manager of derelict houses and properties in Town, and grass that could be cut for hay, you guys would make a ruling the Town would come and do it and charge the people.

Mayor Cury - We still have the authority to do that. I don't know that we haven't been doing it but probably not. We do have that power, the Council has the power.

Robin McGlothlin - There was certain Councilmember that would go around and take pictures and bring to your attention.

Mayor Cury - Sparky and Vickie England

Audience - The clarification of definition in the matter in which you spoke it, the fact that you used and made clear that you said that, where it can be used in matter of broadness and what would the committed definitions of the word be so they would have clarity, where it wouldn't be ambiguous.

Mayor Cury - I will address your question. We are kind of in an informal setting here which it should be more formal. I will try to answer your question honestly. I have questions that I will address in the Council meeting about clarity of words, words are important and powerful and they need to be clarified and I don't disagree with you.

Audience - In 2019 when they sold the Ball Estate on Daw Road, a portion of the money was supposed to have gone to the Town, when we were annexed according to the papers Francis Vandyke the last living heir, nieces and nephews came, the Town should have gotten \$900 and some dollars. When these properties are sold do you get the money?

Mayor Cury - I can't answer that specifically that would require some research to see how that money was dispersed and I will refer to Town Manager John O'Daniel, I don't think he has at his disposal right now. If you would allow a little time checking on that I would appreciate it.

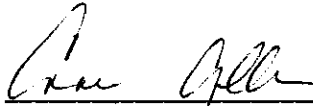
Audience - There were several properties in 2019.

Mayor Cury - If there is no more questions or comments I will close the Public Hearing comment period and will ask for a motion to close the public comment hearing.

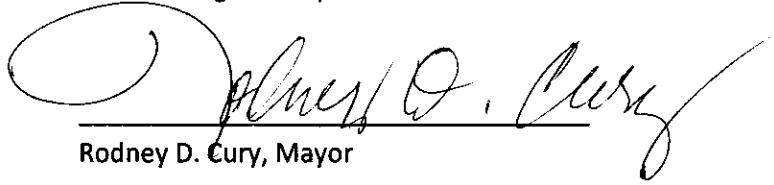
Mike - I will make a motion to close the Public Hearing, Mary Ann seconded the motion.

Mayor Cury- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann – Yes, Richard- Yes, Jeff- Yes Motion carries – 5/0.

Mayor Cury – Public Hearing closed, Regular Council meeting at 6:00pm.



Connie Allen, Town Clerk



Rodney D. Cury, Mayor