

Richlands Planning Commission
September 7, 2021

Members Present

Michelle Elswick
Elliot Joyce
Richard Smith
Gaynelle Thompson

**Staff and Town Officials
Present**

Ashley Harris
Jeff Hurst
Nathan Keen
John O'Daniel
Brad Pyott

Guests

- I. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Richard Smith at 7:30 pm.
- II. Gaynelle gave the invocation.
- III. Michelle led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- IV. The agenda was presented. There were no additions/deletions. Gaynelle made the motion to approve the agenda as written. Michelle seconded the motion. All members voted "aye" and the agenda was approved.
- V. Richard asked that the minutes from the July 6, 2021 be presented and voted on for approval at the next meeting.
- VI. New Business:
 1. Introduction of New Economic Development Director
 - i. John O'Daniel introduced Ashley Harris as our new Economic Development Director
 1. Ashley told the commission they were working on getting a grant for the stage at the Greenway and are ready to accept bids on the library rehabilitation.
 2. Consideration of Conditional Use Request- Harold Glen Roberts (mobile home)
 - i. Mr. Roberts was not in attendance at our meeting.
 - ii. After last meeting's discussion, the consensus was to recommend denial for Mr. Roberts' request due to not completing his last approved request to code.
 - iii. Michelle made the motion to recommended denial of Mr. Roberts' request and Gaynelle seconded. All members voted "aye".
 3. Consideration of Conditional Use Request- Dr. Titha (Rehab Clinic)
 - i. Dr. Titha was not in attendance at our meeting.
 - ii. Dr. Titha wants to start an in-patient drug rehabilitation at Washington Square Clinic. According to town zoning laws, an in-patient rehabilitation facility is not allowed in at B2 zone. It was the recommendation of the staff and legal to deny the request because of zoning.
 - iii. Richard asked what happens if it is denied. If the Commission recommends denial and the Council denies the request, Dr. Titha can then take it to the Board of Zoning Appeals.
 - iv. Gaynelle made the statement that this is something that is very much needed in our area.
 - v. Elliot agreed and thinks Dr. Titha should pursue it but go about it the correct way.
 - vi. John reminded the Commission of how much work needs to be done on the zoning map and Richard agreed with need to clean it up.
 - vii. Richard hopes the Council will be proactive at looking at future development and assuring consistency and unity going forward.
 - viii. Michelle recommended Dr. Titha take his request to the BZA versus council.

- ix. Elliot asked if the application dies if denied. John said he would contact Dr. Titha about the denial and discuss his options.
- x. Elliot made the motion to deny based on zoning. Michelle seconded it.
- xi. Elliot made the motion for John to recommend studying the location for rezoning. Michelle seconded it.

4. Consideration of Conditional Use Request- John Willis (1222 Second Street)

- i. Dr. Willis has put in a request to rezone 1222 Second Street from B2 to R2. Previously several businesses were located here, the last being a music shop.
- ii. The location is not connected to Front Street in any way.
- iii. Richard stated he was not in favor of spot zoning.
- iv. Gaynelle made the motion to recommend denial due to zoning. Elliot seconded the motion.
- v. Recommend Dr. Willis go to BZA for a variance.
- vi. Ashley stated it was important to remain consistent.

5. Ordinance Update Discussion for RFP (Request for Proposals)

- i. What areas do we need to focus on? Signage, mobile homes, etc.?
- ii. John stated we can discuss and/or send a list at a later date if we want to think about it.
- iii. Suggestions given were signage, In-home businesses, zoning inaccuracies due to spot zoning in the brickyard.
- iv. John was asked for an update on the Gomez property in Hidden Valley. He stated they are working on foreclosing on the property. The hope is they sell the property to someone that wants to tear down the dilapidated house and rebuild.
- v. John stated we need more zones than what we have. Our goal should be to develop a new zoning map that we put into place and leave it alone.
- vi. Richard stated we cannot be afraid to say no to requests.

VII. Old Business:

- 1. John updated us on the Flood Task Force- Council has decided to wait for the Army Corp of Engineers. The \$200,000 grant would not have been enough to do the study. The town would have done a \$50,000 match. If we fix two-thirds of the flooding, where does the water go? He stated there are three or four towns ahead of us on their list.

VIII. Miscellaneous and/or Member Concerns:

- 1. John informed us of a zoning permit denial for a client of Shea Cook at 178 Jewel Ridge Road due to there not being enough space based on current requirements.
- 2. Upcoming Variance Requests
 - i. Request to build a tiny home. Currently the setback requirement is not met.
 - ii. Travis Hackworth is requesting to building two houses on land purchased on Brown Avenue recently rezoned. However, the setback requirement cannot be met if building two houses. Since the land has already been rezoned, it is out of our hands. Mr. Hackworth will need to take his request to the BZA.
 - iii. John states BZA should be the responsibility of the BZA, not the Planning Commission.

IX. With no other business, Jeff made the motion to adjourn; it was seconded by Elliot and all members voted "aye". Meeting was adjourned.

X. The next meeting for the Planning Commission is scheduled for Tuesday, October 5, 2021 at 7:30 pm.

Submitted by: Michelle Elswick, Secretary