

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN OF VINTON PLANNING  
COMMISSION HELD ON THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2019, AT 6 P.M., AT THE VINTON  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 311 SOUTH POLLARD STREET.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**           **Dave Jones, Vice Chairman  
Bob Benninger  
Bob Patterson**

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**         **Keith Liles, Chairman  
Bill Booth**

**STAFF PRESENT:**           **Anita McMillan, Planning and Zoning Director  
Anne Cantrell, Treasurer/Finance Director  
Nathan McClung, Principal Planner  
Brandon Gann, Financial Services Analyst  
Julie S. Tucei, Planning and Zoning Coordinator**

**AGENDA**

**WORK SESSION**

- I. Call to Order—Roll Call**
- II. Fiscal Year 2020 Capital Improvement Projects – Anne Cantrell, Treasurer/Finance Director**
- III. Zoning Amendment Topics for Discussion:**
  - 1. Home Stay Regulations**
    - a. Review attached Home Stay Regulations Memorandum**
    - b. Short presentation on what these sites look like and how they work.**
  - 2. Central Business (CB) District Height and Setback Regulations**
    - a. Review attached CB Height and Setback Regulations Memorandum**
    - b. Review consultant’s recommendations in Vinton Zoning Revisions Framework Document**
  - 3. Central Business (CB) and General Business (GB) District Regulations on Large Retail Uses**
    - a. Review attached PowerPoint Presentation on these regulations**
    - b. Review consultant’s recommendations in Vinton Zoning Revisions Framework Document**
  - 4. Parking Requirements**
    - a. Briefly review consultant’s recommendations in Vinton Zoning Revisions Framework Document**
- IV. Comments of Planning Commissioners and Planning Staff**
- VI. Adjournment**

The work session of the Planning Commission was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Vice Chairman Jones. Roll was called, and all members were present, except Chairman Liles and Mr. Booth. Chairman Liles was out of town due to his job, and Mr. Booth was not feeling well.

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The first item on the agenda was the Fiscal Year 2020 Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) from Anne Cantrell, Vinton's Treasurer/Finance Director. Ms. Cantrell mentioned that they had a Finance Committee meeting on Monday, and there were some changes to the CIP due to the meeting. She stated that she has supplied them with a copy of the revised full CIP list and the revised recommended items list. She turned the floor over to Mr. Gann who went over each item line-by-line on the recommended CIP list. These items included the following:

In the General Fund with a Total of \$500,012:

Police Department Computer Replacements

Construct Covering for Salt Spreaders

Replace Mounted Salt Spreaders with stainless steel spreaders with folding legs for ease of attachment

Replace Two (2) Zero Turn Mowers

Enclosed Mowing Trailer

Mountain View Road Improvements

Gateway Entrance Signs to replace the outdated signs at the entrances

Garthright Bridge Funding for future repairs

In the Utility Fund with a Total of \$51,860:

Diagnostic Reader for Heavy Duty Trucks

Trailer for Trench Box and Equipment

Generator Connections for Chestnut Mountain Tank, Bali Hai Booster, and Chestnut Well

In the Stormwater Fund with a Total of \$38,727:

Replace Street Sweeper—current one has died and is no longer usable

Ms. Cantrell stated that is what staff is recommending for funding from all the requests received from each department. She explained that the funding for Mountain View Road is to satisfy a VDOT request to have money dedicated in the budget in order to receive 50% matching funding for the project from VDOT. Ms. Cantrell said she would be happy to answer any questions from them about the CIP

Vice Chairman Jones asked for more information about the Mountain View Road improvements. Ms. Cantrell said that Council would like to see improvements made to Mountain View Road. She said the total cost for the improvements will be about \$1 to \$2 million. She stated that Council is hoping to use the revenues that should come in from the new Rosie's Gaming Emporium once it opens. She stated that the soonest the Town could get the matching VDOT funding would be 2021. Ms. McMillan mentioned that the application for the funding will be due this year. Ms. Cantrell reiterated that Town Council feels that this is a really important item.

Mr. Benninger asked about the renovations to the 3rd Street pump station. Ms. Cantrell said they funded the smaller projects. She stated that they are going to work with a consultant to study the rates and hope to start on it next April and finish up in July. She said the larger projects on the list would be done by bond issuance.

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Vice Chairman Jones asked about the tank generators. Ms. Cantrell stated that these are the last three that need to be done. Mr. Benninger asked how many generators the Town has. Both Ms. Cantrell and Mr. Gann said they believe the Town has two.

Ms. Cantrell mentioned that the meter reading project is something that will be important in the coming years' CIPs. She stated that the Town would like to upgrade to radio read meters for both the Town and East Roanoke County. Vice Chairman Jones asked if they have done any upgrades to the meters. Ms. Cantrell stated that the entire commercial book has been done, as well as the harder to read meters such as those along busy roadways. She stated that 800 meter upgrades have been completed, but the Town has 5,000 total accounts. She mentioned that the Town may be changing vendors because they have not been satisfied with the services from the current vendor. Vice Chairman Jones asked if there were any other questions. He stated that he believes they have done a good job putting the CIP together with very little money available.

Ms. Cantrell said that she is hopeful that the new Rosie's Gaming Emporium will come through with the promised \$390,000 in revenues for the Town. She mentioned that they will be open from 8 a.m. to 2 a.m. on weekdays and from 8 a.m. to 4 a.m. on weekends.

Vice Chairman Jones stated again that they have done a good job on the CIP. He said he likes it when they come in and let the Planning Commission know what all is going on in the Town. He asked if we need a recommendation to be made on the CIP. Ms. McMillan said that they do need to make a recommendation to Town Council; however, no vote on the recommendation will be taken since this is not a public hearing. Vice Chairman Jones recommended that the CIP, as presented to them, be recommended to Town Council. Both Mr. Patterson and Mr. Benninger agreed with the Vice Chairman's recommendation.

Next on the agenda were the Zoning Amendment Topics for Discussion, the first of which was the Home Stay Regulations. Mr. McClung said we would start with discussing short-term rentals like Air B and B, Couch Surfer, VRBO, and other short-term rental websites. He stated that he has been doing a lot of research on this by looking at other localities like Blacksburg and the City of Roanoke. He pointed out that most localities require an annual registration for these type of rental units. He said that most localities want owners to live on-site. He said that there is a transient lodging tax that localities are starting to collect from the different websites, and that the playing field needs to be level with regards to taxes on the short-term rentals versus hotels. Mr. McClung mentioned that normally the taxes are about seven to nine percent. He said that other localities have the following restrictions: No signs; Primary residence of the owner; Minimum stay of 24 hours required with maximum stays varying; No parking of RVs; Post refuse guidelines in the unit. Ms. McMillan said the enforcement of regulations on these units could be difficult. Vice Chairman Jones asked who would be enforcing the regulations. Mr. McClung said the Planning and Zoning Department would enforce the permitting process, but the Finance Department would have to enforce the taxation on the units. Mr. McClung stated that the ordinance will have to be crafted to make the owners held accountable for their rentals. He suggested including wording such as, "Receiving three valid complaints against a unit will result in the revocation of the permit." Mr. McClung said he would put the safety of the occupants as the number one priority

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with things like requiring smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Mr. McClung said it will also be important to ensure proper ingress and egress and to have occupancy restrictions. Vice Chairman Jones asked about the difference in the Efficiency Inn and these short-term rentals. Ms. McMillan explained that the Efficiency Inn is zoned commercial and hotels are allowed in that zoning district. Mr. McClung also mentioned that the City of Roanoke requires a special exception in some districts, and they do hear about four or five of these requests each month at their Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA). Vice Chairman Jones asked how the consultants missed this from inclusion in their recommendations to the Town since this type of use has been around so long. Mr. McClung said the issue is still fairly new to local governments, as far as taxation and safety regulations. Ms. McMillan also said that hotels feel it is not fair that they have to pay the occupancy taxes when the short-term rentals generally haven't been paying these taxes. Mr. McClung mentioned that he began to think about why people might stay overnight in Vinton. He mentioned the new Rosie's Gaming Emporium, Explore Park, Lancerlot, weddings or other big events, the Dogwood Festival, and class reunions. Vice Chairman Jones mentioned Hammond's Boxtree Lodge, Woodland Place, and the Vinton War Memorial where events are held often and draw people into Town. Mr. McClung said this provision would complement Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) if we decide to allow them. Vice Chairman Jones said we need to be ahead of things instead of behind them. Mr. Benninger asked about how the Town of Bedford handles the short-term rentals. Mr. McClung said he would check their ordinance to see.

The next item up for discussion was the revisions to the Central Business (CB) height and setback regulations. Mr. McClung stated that currently we require that building height be limited to 35 feet maximum in the Central Business District. He said that the consultants recommend that the Town change that to 45 feet maximum. Mr. McClung said the Town wants to have residences on the upper floors and retail on lower floors in the downtown area. It has been suggested we limit height either to four stories high or 45 feet to allow for different types of construction. Mr. Benninger and Vice Chairman Jones agreed that would be a good idea. Mr. McClung said he looked at our downtown area, and currently 59% of properties are one story, and 38% are two stories, with another 2% being one and a half stories. Vice Chairman Jones asked what Vinton Baptist Church is zoned. Ms. McMillan said they are zoned CB. Mr. McClung mentioned that Vinton Ford is zoned General Business (GB) District so that property would not be affected by this regulation. Vice Chairman Jones asked if there was a concern about fire safety with the taller buildings. Mr. McClung stated that he can talk to Deputy Chief Linkous to see if the fire-fighting equipment is available for taller buildings.

As far as the setbacks for the CB District, Mr. McClung said the consultants recommend a minimum of four feet and a maximum of fifteen feet for setbacks. He said this is to encourage walkability and pedestrian friendliness. He mentioned that you would have the retail uses closer to the street. Vice Chairman Jones asked how many buildings are currently at zero feet setback. Mr. McClung stated that 52% of existing buildings in CB are at zero setback. Vice Chairman Jones said he can think of very few buildings in downtown Vinton that are not at zero setback. Ms. McMillan mentioned Carilion Family Medical Practice on Pollard Street as an example of a building in CB that is not at zero setback.

Mr. McClung mentioned that, if we require four feet setback, we need to have some exceptions for infill lots. He said it would almost have to be decided on a case-by-case basis. Ms. McMillan said we have to

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be conscious that the town is already built out when we are changing our ordinance so we do not make it harder to build.

The next item up for discussion was the Central Business (CB) and General (GB) District Regulations on Large Retail Uses. Mr. McClung said that it is being proposed that 30,000 square feet or more would require special use permit be granted. He stated that the square footage will be based on the ground floor square footage only. He presented a brief PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which will be made part of the permanent record of this meeting. After the presentation, they discussed it the four questions at the end of it. Vice Chairman Jones suggested that maybe the CB District should be capped at 25,000 square feet.

The next item up for discussion was Parking Requirements. Mr. McClung mentioned the video about parking that he had them view on YouTube during the previous meeting. He stated that the consultants recommended 125% of the minimum requirement for stormwater and to have right-sized parking lots and not have too much parking. He thinks have 125% of the minimum requirement is a great way to manage it.

He mentioned that screening and buffering of parking will also have to be considered. Ms. McMillan said she may have an official from VDOT come to speak to the Planning Commission about best practices for street width and other requirements. She mentioned that we do not have many large lots left for development. She stated that you have to balance the width of the road to where it can be maintained and emergency vehicles can have easy access, plus help it be more cost effective for the developers.

The final item of the work session was the comments from Planning Commissioners and Staff. Ms. McMillan asked about holding the future Planning Commission work sessions from noon to 2 p.m. since Chairman Liles is unable to attend. It was the consensus of those in attendance that Fridays would work best to hold the afternoon meetings.

Mr. McClung reminded them that if they have any questions or comments on the Zoning Ordinance updates to feel free to email or call him. Vice Chairman Jones asked about the names that were suggested by Commission members for the committees. Ms. McMillan said several of them have already agreed to serve on a committee. Vice Chairman Jones suggested Mr. David McClung to be called and asked to join a committee. Ms. McMillan said she would call him and ask if he would be willing to serve on one of the committees. Vice Chairman Jones asked about Mr. Keith Poff of the Dogwood Restaurant, but Ms. McMillan said she heard that he may be selling the business.

Ms. McMillan mentioned that the Town's Arbor Day Celebration would be held tomorrow and asked them all to try to attend. She said it will be held at the Vinton Library, but the preschoolers may not be able to come if it is raining. Ms. McMillan said the Town holds this event annually because of the Tree City USA designation. Ms. McMillan mentioned that the Town received \$800 from the Virginia Department of Forestry which will be used to plant one tree at the Vinton Library and some small evergreens at the new Glade Creek Greenway.

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Vice Chairman Jones asked about current stream bank restoration projects. Ms. McMillan stated that Roanoke County is currently restoring the stream bank over near Vinyard Park. She said the County may also be restoring the one along Wolf Creek near the County portion of the greenway soon. Ms. McMillan said that Joey Hiner in Public Works would be the best person to ask about stormwater projects such as streambank restoration in the Town.

With there being nothing further to discuss, the work session was adjourned at 7:44 p.m. by Vice Chairman Jones

Respectfully Submitted,

Anita McMillan  
Planning Commission Secretary