

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN OF VINTON PLANNING  
COMMISSION HELD ON THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2021, AT 6:30 P.M., VIA ELECTRONIC  
COMMUNICATION MEANS.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Keith Liles, Chairman  
David “Dave” Jones, Vice Chairman  
Robert “Bob” Benninger (at 6:41 p.m.)  
Andrew “Ty” Braxton  
Sarah Reid

**STAFF PRESENT:** Richard Peters, Town Manager  
Anita McMillan, Planning and Zoning Director  
Nathan McClung, Principal Planner  
Anne Cantrel, Treasurer/Finance Director  
Julie Tucci, Planning and Zoning Coordinator

**OTHERS PRESENT:** David Hill, Davii, Developer  
Tyler McDaniel, Hill Studio

**AGENDA**

**PARTICIPATION WILL BE BY ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS PURSUANT TO  
SECTION 15.2-1413, CODE OF VIRGINIA (1950), AS AMENDED, ORDINANCE NO. 1016  
AND SECTION 4-0.01(G) OF CHAPTER 1289 OF THE 2020 ACTS OF THE  
VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The Vinton Planning Commission will hold a Work Session at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 25, 2021, using electronic communication means without the public being present. Participation by Planning Commission members, staff, and the public will only be available through electronic means. The public will have access to observe the Work Session and Public Hearing through a livestream on the Town’s Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/vintonva](http://www.facebook.com/vintonva). Citizens may register to speak at the Public Hearing by calling the Town Clerk’s Office at 540-983-0607 or by sending an email to [sjohnson@vintonva.gov](mailto:sjohnson@vintonva.gov) by 12 Noon on Wednesday, March 24, 2021. Once registered, the citizen who wishes to address the Planning Commission will be provided the Zoom meeting information and will be allowed to join the meeting and address the Planning Commission by electronic means.

**WORK SESSION—6:30 P.M.**

- I. Call to Order—Roll Call**
- II. CONFIRMATION THAT MEETING IS BEING HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH ORDINANCE NO. 1016 AND SECTION 4-0.01(G) OF CHAPTER 1289 OF THE 2020 ACTS OF THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ROLL CALL**
- III. Briefings**
  - 1. To discuss and receive comments on the proposed rezoning of the historic Gish Mill properties, located at 350 and 0 Gus Nicks Boulevard, Vinton, Virginia, Tax Map Numbers 060.11-04-22.00-0000 and 060.11-04-23.00-0000, from M-1 Limited Industrial to Mixed Use Development (MUD) District.**

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- 2. To receive the adopted FY 2021 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and to review, discuss, and receive comments on the proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 - 2028 CIP of the Town of Vinton.**

**IV. Comments of Planning Commissioners and Planning Staff**

**V. Adjournment of Work Session**

Ms. Tucei took the Zoom meeting live to Facebook and turned the meeting over to Mr. Liles. Mr. Liles welcomed everyone to the meeting and called it to order at 6:34 p.m. He asked Ms. McMillan for the roll call. She called the roll and all members were present, except Mr. Benninger who arrived at 6:41 p.m. She also mentioned that the following members of Town Staff were present: Richard Peters, Anita McMillan, Nathan McClung, Anne Cantrell, and Julie Tucei. Ms. McMillan said that Mr. David Hill of Davii, the Developer, and Mr. Tyler McDaniel, of Hill Studio, were also present in the meeting. Ms. McMillan then read the following statement, "I would like to confirm that our meeting is being held in accordance with Town Ordinance No. 1016 and Section 4-0.01(g) of Chapter 1289 of the 2020 Acts of the Virginia General Assembly, and everyone present is participating by electronic means. Mr. Liles the meeting is now yours."

Mr. Liles called for the first item on the agenda the briefing on the proposed rezoning of the historic Gish Mill Properties. He then turned it over to Mr. McClung who presented from a PowerPoint slide show about the project. A copy of the PowerPoint containing all details discussed by Mr. McClung will be made a part of the permanent record of this meeting. After the first portion of the PowerPoint, Mr. McClung introduced Mr. David Hill. Mr. Hill also presented from the same PowerPoint. As he showed the images within the PowerPoint, he said some of the proposed uses would benefit from creekside location, especially the restaurant and market on the main level. He stated that they plan for the basement area to be a speakeasy, and it will be very spartan due to the flood risk. Mr. Hill said that the upper stories will be lodging that will be larger than typical so that it can later be converted into apartments if the lodging use does not work out. He mentioned that the sounds of the creek and streets should help buffer any noise created by the proposed uses, especially any from the proposed outside deck area. Mr. Hill stated that he will be the property owner, but the restaurant owner will be Mr. Dave Trinkle, who also owns Fork in the Market and some other restaurants in Roanoke City. He said that the planned market will supplement the restaurant and will have carryout food and other merchandise for sale. Mr. Hill quickly went over the square footage of each use, as shown in the PowerPoint. He also showed some renderings of what the finished product will look like, as also shown in the PowerPoint. Mr. Hill said they will be able to provide a number of parking spaces on the lot and will be adding some additional spaces that can also be used by nearby greenway users. The greenway will connect to this property via a proposed crosswalk on Gus Nicks Boulevard. Mr. Hill said he would be delighted for the greenway to be extended through this property in the future. Mr. Liles asked if the opening into the parking lot to the left would still be open. Mr. Hill said that access would still be open and available for use. Mr. Peters said that he would like to highlight that the final crosswalk plans for Gus Nicks Boulevard have not yet been finalized. He said the crosswalk location could be moved in either direction compared to what is shown on the rendering, and it has yet to be fully planned. He mentioned that there will be a respite island in the middle of Gus Nicks Boulevard within the crosswalk to give people a chance to cross two lanes, wait for any oncoming traffic, and then safely cross the other two lanes. Mr. Jones asked if there is enough room at the back of the

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former mill for the greenway. Mr. Hill said they have looked at that, and it would be too tight. He said if the greenway were placed back there, they would not be able to have the proposed deck due to alcohol regulations, so they will not be able to accommodate the greenway behind the property. Mr. Hill mentioned that he believes that the ultimate goal is to get the greenway over to Vinyard Park. Ms. McMillan said the Town applied for grants funds for phase 3 of the greenway project, but it was not funded this round. She said they are looking at options for the greenway that do not involve Norfolk Southern property. Mr. Hill said the Town is welcome to use a portion of the mill property for the greenway. Next, Mr. Hill went over the outside design of the building as shown in the PowerPoint. He stated that the building is designed with the thought that sometime in our lifetime there will be floodwater in the building. He pointed out that there is only one planned addition to the building. He said part of that addition is for the fire escape. He also showed renderings of the inside of the building including the restaurant, speakeasy and lodging areas, which are also included in the PowerPoint. Mr. Hill pointed out the approximate location of the 100-year floodplain on the rendering. Mr. Benninger asked where the 10-year flood elevation is located. Mr. Hill said he did not know, and he asked if Mr. McClung knew. Mr. McClung said FEMA is only concerned with the 100 and 500-year floods so he did not know either. Mr. Hill said Mr. Keller Poole, former manager of the country store, said he has only seen water in the building in 1985 and again around 2000, with the flooding in 2000 being minor. Mr. Jones said the Cargill Mill in Vinton was designed such that the water flows in, goes through and flows back out. He said that, in 1985, there was 18 feet of water in the Cargill Mill in the warehouse area. Mr. Hill asked if Cargill is the mill over on Walnut Avenue in Vinton, and Mr. Jones confirmed that it is located there. Mr. Hill said most mills have this problem due to their proximity to water. Mr. Jones said Mr. Hill could also ask Mr. Leslie or his son Greg, who own the property next to the Gish Mill property, how bad the water was in 1985. Mr. Hill thought that was a great idea and said he would definitely talk with them about it. Mr. Hill said they would also know more about the 2000 flood. Mr. Hill turned the PowerPoint presentation back over to Mr. McClung who finished going through the rest of it. Mr. McClung said that Town Staff recommends approval of this request due to all the reasons shown in the PowerPoint presentation. He mentioned that this would be the third MUD zoned property in the Town. He stated that this project is truly a public/private project that should be a great success. Mr. Jones asked what negative effect if any would changing the zoning to MUD have on Mr. Leslie's property. Mr. McClung said it would not really affect it, as Mr. Leslie's property will remain zoned as M-1. Only the two parcels containing the mill properties will be rezoned to MUD. Mr. Jones asked if there have been any comments from the community that have been received liking or opposing the idea. Mr. McClung said no comments have been received yet, but the informal comments about the project have been positive. Mr. Peters stated that around 2017, the Town held community meetings about this project with good citizen engagement on the conceptual plans. Mr. Jones said he could not think of anything negative about this project. He said it is a great proposed use, and if we do not do the rezoning, the Town will lose it. Mr. Liles said he agreed with Mr. Jones. Mr. Braxton asked if they are leaning towards apartments or short-term type rentals. Mr. McClung pointed out that in MUD you can do lodging and/or apartments. Mr. McClung said it would come down to whether the larger spaces would be comfortable for long-term rentals or not. Mr. Hill said Vinton has had some great historic apartments developed recently, but also believes short-term lodging would be beneficial for the Town. Mr. Hill said, at first they will likely try them as VRBO units, but will be flexible about using them as apartments later. Mr. Liles said in 2017, the Town did offer an opportunity for public input, as Mr. Peters mentioned earlier. He said during that time, someone had the great idea of asking Mr. Hill if

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he would like to draw some conceptual plans for the building, which he did. Mr. Liles said Mr. Hill then went out and found partners for this project. He thanked him for taking on the project. Mr. Hill stated that they want to make it a great project for Vinton. Ms. Reid said she thought that the thoroughness of the plan by Mr. Hill is excellent. She said it is very impressive, and that it is great to see the historic places being revitalized. Ms. Reid asked if there would be access provided for people to be able to walk down to the creek. Mr. Hill said that it is steep terrain behind the mill. He said there might be an area near the entranceway to the speakeasy, but there is not a lot of room in that area. Ms. Reid said she has never seen the waterway in that area. Mr. Liles said it is very nice back there. He also mentioned that the streambank repairs by Roanoke City would widen the creek and change its course somewhat near the bridge. He said the project might allow people to be able to canoe and kayak in the area. Mr. McClung explained a bit about the city streambank project. He said the project would repair erosion and help the fish populations in the creek. He said they are hoping it will attract more trout. Mr. Hill shared some photos of the stream behind the building and said it is really quite beautiful back there. Mr. Jones said he has never been in the building, except the showroom. He said he would really like to look around before they start renovating it. He also said he hopes some of the old mill equipment will be left down in the speakeasy. Mr. Jones stated that he is also curious about the bin portions of the mill, too. He mentioned that someone did fall into one of the bins about 20 years ago and they had to be extracted out by rescue personnel. Mr. Hill said he would welcome Mr. Jones to come and look at the building and explain how some of the equipment was used. Mr. Jones said some of that equipment could be showcased and used for the decoration of the building. Mr. Hill asked Nathan to set up a field trip for Mr. Jones. Mr. Liles asked if there were any other comments, which there were none. Mr. Liles asked if they should move on to the next item, and Mr. Jones asked if they needed to vote on the request. Mr. Liles stated that the vote would be taken during the joint meeting with Town Council. Mr. Hill said that anyone else is welcome to tour the facility. Both Ms. Reid and Mr. Liles indicated that they would like to take a tour.

The next item on the work session agenda was the briefing on the FY 2021 and the FY 2022 – 2028 Capital Improvement Plan. Mr. Liles turned the meeting over to Ms. Cantrell, Town Treasurer/Finance Director. Ms. Cantrell stated that she has good news for them this year. She asked Mr. McClung to begin the PowerPoint presentation. She presented the CIP proposals and ideas included in the PowerPoint, a copy of which will be made a part of the permanent record. At one point during the presentation, Mr. Liles asked if some of the funding Ms. Cantrell mentioned is for Mountain View Road improvements and repairs. Ms. Cantrell stated that the Town has the money set aside for the Mountain View Road project, and the Town is just waiting for the state funding to come through. She mentioned that there is one change since the PowerPoint was created. She stated that the museum electrical upgrade costs came in higher, so the streetscape planters have been moved out into the following year. She highlighted the FY 22, FY 23, FY 24, FY 25, FY 26, FY 27, and FY 28 projects that are planned, as also shown in the PowerPoint presentation. She stated that, at this point, the Town has a fully funded CIP plan for the next 7 years. It was mentioned that, overall, the role of the Planning Commission in the CIP process is to provide advice and direction to Town Council on it. Mr. Peters added one quick note that they are currently monitoring the American Recovery Funds and are anticipating obtaining additional funds from that. He said with those funds, there is flexibility for water and sewer projects. He said they are just beginning to get guidance on the allowable use of the funds. Mr. Liles asked if the Cares Act monies would also take care of the items in the Municipal Building that could not be completed in the recent renovations. Mr. Peters

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said probably not, but there are plenty of water and sewer needs and the stimulus funds will allow the Town to escalate those projects sooner. Mr. Liles asked if there are any other questions. Mr. Jones asked about the FY 28 refuse truck replacement, about which he said we seem to do a lot of replacing. Mr. Peters said the most recent truck purchased is about 2 years old now. He said about every 8 to 10 years you have to plan on replacement of them. He said it is used daily, and it receives a lot of wear and tear. Mr. Jones said he is not questioning the year to be replaced, but he is questioning if it should be a one-arm bandit truck that would help cut payroll costs. Mr. Peters said they would consider a one-arm bandit in the future. Mr. Liles said last time they did a replacement, they were told the one arm bandit would not work in the alleys, but he said that in the future there would be a more in depth study for the future replacement. Mr. Peters said he would put that in the notes for the next purchase. Mr. Jones said one thing he has been after for years is fixing the streets for storm sewers, and they did get the one fixed behind Vinton Baptist finally. He stated that they still have the stormwater issues at corner of Pollard Street and Lee Avenue near the post office. He said that perhaps the work could be tied in with other repairs. Mr. Peters said they have a proposal for some work along Lee Avenue in that area, and they will look at the stormwater issues in that area. He stated they would be looking at this area in the next 6 to 8 months and will be looking into getting some funding for the Lee Avenue area then. Mr. Jones asked where the skatepark would be located. Mr. Peters said there are a couple of locations being considered for a skate park, but they have not narrowed it down yet. Mr. Jones praised them for the all work they have done. Mr. Liles stated that Town Staff is phenomenal. Mr. Jones mentioned that there have been many changes with staff recently. He also said that everyone outside of town is talking about how good things are in Vinton. Mr. Liles said it is becoming a “go to” town. He asked if there were any other questions or comments. Ms. McMillan asked them to state if they are in agreement with the CIP information that was presented by the Finance Department. Mr. Braxton asked if this was contingent on Cares Act Funding. Mr. Peters stated that it is not based on that. Mr. Jones said he thinks it is good. Mr. Liles, Ms. Reid, Mr. Benninger, and Mr. Braxton all agreed with it as presented.

The next meeting is the joint public hearing with Town Council on April 6, 2021. Ms. McMillan said they would hear the rezoning request for the Gish Mill property. Mr. Jones asked if it would be a live meeting. Mr. Liles said it has to be, but Mr. Peters said it would still be virtual. He stated that they are looking at resuming live, in-person meetings soon, but not by then.

Mr. Liles asked if there are any further questions or comments. There were no further comments or questions. With there being nothing further to discuss in the work session, a motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Reid and seconded by Mr. Jones. The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Liles at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anita McMillan  
Planning Commission Secretary