

Town of Colonial Beach Planning Commission-Work Session Minutes

Date: Wednesday, November 19, 2014 – Town Center, 22 Washington Avenue

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Present: Robin Schick, Chairwoman
Maureen McCabe, Vice Chairwoman
Steve Cirbee
John Reinhart

Absent: Ed Grant
Kent Rodenheaver
Robert Busick

Staff: Acting Zoning Administrator, Brendan McHugh

Item 1: Call to Order

Chairwoman Schick called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Item 2: Public Comment on Planning Commission matters (not on the agenda)

Chairwoman Schick asked if there was public comment on Planning Commission matters not on the agenda. Mr. Mike Looney of 3 Marshall Avenue gave praise to the historical sign at the Colonial Beach Museum. He expressed that he hoped that it would be an example of what the new signs would look like around town. Vice Chairman McCabe explained that the Revitalization Grant will create uniformity throughout town when it comes to the signs. She explained that the committee meets the second week of January to start signage investigation. Mr. Looney asked if the sign was a part of the grant. She explained that it was not a part of the grant. Member Cirbee then said that he heard from staff that public works will install the signs throughout town. Member Cirbee expressed his concern with this because of the way some of the current signs have been installed throughout town. He was hoping that the jobs would go out with an RFP. Vice Chairwoman McCabe expressed that there is a certain process that will have to be followed concerning the grant and that it would be discussed in January. Member Busick then asked if permits will be pulled for the signs. Vice Chairwoman McCabe confirmed. There were no further comments.

Item 3: Town Council Meeting Update

Chairwoman Schick then gave a Town Council Meeting Update. She explained that she believed that her attendance was received well. She explained that nothing will move forward until the new members are inaugurated. She explained that she mentioned that the Planning Commission would like to have a meeting with them concerning the CIP but would have to wait until the new Town Council was inaugurated. Vice Chairwoman McCabe asked if there should be a formal letter written to the Town Council. Mr. McHugh explained that he spoke with the Town Manager and she suggested that we wait until after the New Year to have a joint meeting. Member Cirbee then asked if the Town Clerk was responsible for writing up a formal document concerning the meeting. Chairwoman Schick then explained that Mr. McHugh should coordinate with Ms. Flanagan to try to get the meeting set up. Vice Chairwoman McCabe asked if Chairwoman Schick was only designated to talk about Article 18 or an overview of the Planning Commission's work. Chairwoman Schick then explained that she was asked by Mayor Ham to act as a representative of the Planning Commission but was also asked to speak about Article 18. She then talked about how the Town

Council was not prepared to vote on the article and that she does not believe they will vote on it until the new Town Council is inaugurated. She then expressed that until Town Council passes ordinances, the Town is left to enforce old ordinances. Member Cirbee then expressed his concern that the current ordinance is not on the Town website or Municode. Vice Chairwoman McCabe then expressed her appreciation for Chairwoman Schick's presentation to Town Council but felt that it would have also been beneficial to speak about the Planning Commission's role in the Town, the status of the Comprehensive Plan, how the Planning Commission is trying to keep it updated and how the Town Council can help Planning Commission. Chairwoman Schick then expressed that she didn't feel the need to say those things because she would have to re-present after the new Town Council takes office. She explained that she felt it would be beneficial to wait until January. Member Cirbee asked if the Planning Commission could have an open item action list to show the current and future projects of the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission agreed. The Planning Commission and Mr. McHugh then discussed issues with the Town's website and the lack of information concerning planning and zoning. Vice Chairwoman McCabe then suggested talking about the website during the joint Capital Improvement Meeting. The Planning Commission agreed.

Item 4: Planning Commission Study Document Discussion

Vice Chairwoman McCabe then gave an introduction to the following document:

PLANNING COMMISSION

The following issues and questions covered by the four month course just completed and discussed as a group may be useful in guiding our joint efforts in better serving the community. We look forward to working with our fellow commission members and hope that the topics and questions presented below can serve as a catalyst to start a dialogue on how best to approach the issues and confront our town and thus, better serve the community. Colonial Beach has great potential and hopefully the PC will make all potential reality!

AREA OF STUDY	ISSUES	QUESTIONS
LEADERSHIP OF MEMBERSHIP	Aligning people to build consensus!	1. Does our commission try to recognize each other's strengths and weaknesses? 2. Is there a sense of the common good present in our commission? 3. Does our commission have work sessions to discuss issues or concerns? 4. Are we members of plan.com? 5. Does the commission evaluate itself?
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN	Guide post to making decisions...	1. How does one know the point at which objectives have been completed? 2. Is there an annual report? 3. Is there a chart of the strategic steps as well as a timeline and responsibility designation? 4. Is there a public relations plan

<p>MEETING/COMMISSION PROCESSES</p>		<p>to bring people up to date on the comprehensive plan? 5. How does our commission review the plan every five years? 6. Do we have sub committees to monitor the plan according to sections? 7. What is planning commission’s role in land use for town owned property and for the pud created years ago? 8. Is there a system among the many groups and organizations to gather information and opinions? 9. Does the commission meet with the town council to discuss the annual plan and the objectives for the next year? 10. Has the pc been thoroughly informed on the revitalization plan and also the components of the grant? 11. What is the relationship of the revitalization management team and the newly developed business committee to highlight the boardwalk area? 12. Should a member of the commission be the representative to the council? 13. Is there an update on the capital improvement plan? 14. Could 10 or 15 minutes of the meeting be set aside for other issues, concerns or questions on part of each commissioner? 15. Should we institute a 15 minute Agenda item where the Public can raise any issues, address their questions and receive a direct response if appropriate? 16. What is the best way to orient new PC members to assist them in becoming fully involved in the shortest time possible?</p>
<p>VISIONING</p>	<p>what our future should be</p>	<p>1. How often do we hold sessions for updates in visioning? 2. Does commission do their own</p>

		visioning? 3. Does the commission ever have a study day or retreat?
ZONING & ORDINANCES	Body of guidelines that are addressed in the comprehensive plan	1. Where does one find this presently in force? 2. Do we have energy ordinances? 3. How are they administered? 4. Can we help new commissioners by presenting old ordinances with the new recommended version?

She explained that she and Member Busick created the document to be better commissioners and explain to the people of the town what they are doing every year to improve the town. She explained that one thing that the Colonial Beach Comprehensive Plan was lacking was steps that need to be taken to accomplish the plan. She explained that it was a major issue and that is why she and Member Busick created the document.

Chairwoman Schick explained that there needed to be an action item list. Member Reinhart asked why items that are listed as having an accomplish date of four and five years ago have not been accomplished. Member Cirbee voiced that he did not think the Town understood how the CIP and the Comprehensive Plan were supposed to intertwine with the different departments. He believed the town was working autonomously in lieu of what needed to be done concerning the comprehensive plan and the CIP. Chairwoman Schick believed that the Town is too focused on the day to day issues instead of looking at it from a “big picture” point of view. Vice Chairwoman McCabe explained that in a visioning session she attended five years ago, after the Comprehensive Plan was created, they mention things in the visioning that were part of the Comprehensive Plan but they have not been addressed. She explained that some of the things that are needed concerning the document are a flow chart and a set of strategic goals and objectives in which somebody takes responsibility for each item. Member Cirbee explained that the Revitalization Grant has been running smoothly because of that type of organization. Member Cirbee explained that it would be efficient to break the CIP down by department and then have points of contact set up for Town Council and Planning Commission for each department. Member McCabe then explained that an efficient way to get the Town on board with issues is through awareness. Member Reinhart voiced that all of the issues take money. Member Reinhart explained that he spoke with the Town Manager concerning getting grants for some of the projects that need to be tended to throughout town. He said that the Town Manager explained that the Town did not have anyone who could write grants. The Planning Commission then discussed how they believed that it was not that difficult to write a grant and that there are plenty of people who could write them. They then discussed how there are many little grants that could help improve the town piece by piece.

Chairwoman Schick then expressed that she felt that they were discussing very important things. She then said that an important part of the process would be to have the rest of the Planning Commissioners take the Planning Commission course. She also believed that two responsibilities that need to be divided were the Strategic Goals and Objectives and Public Relations. Member Reinhart volunteered with the Public Relations aspect. Chairwoman Schick volunteered to take the Strategic Goals and Objectives section. Chairwoman Schick then addressed the issue of the Planning Commission recognizing strengths and weaknesses section explaining that they are at the work session focusing on those types of issues. She explained that the Commission addresses the common good by being a very active Planning Commission. The Planning Commission then expressed how they would like a list of Planning websites and interesting article updates. Chairwoman Schick then spoke about the Commission evaluating itself. She expressed that the work session in itself is an evaluation. She expressed maybe creating a document that would address goals. Chairwoman

Schick then spoke about how she did not want to finish the entire document because she wanted input from Members Rodeheaver and Grant. She expressed how they are helpful with their experience and sometimes keep the Planning Commission from repeating past mistakes. Vice Chairwoman McCabe then expressed that she thought that there should be fifteen minutes of every meeting set aside to discuss the status of the goals of the Planning Commission and what was next on the agenda. Member Cirbee then expressed an interest in inviting department heads and Town Council members to Planning Commission meetings to discuss the strategic plan. The Planning Commission agreed. Member Reinhart then talked about how all of the ideas sounded nice but he had a suspicion that when it comes down to it, he believed there would be issues keeping anything from happening. Chairwoman Schick then explained that the joint meeting would be a great way to get things moving. The Planning Commission then spoke about the Annual Report. Mr. McHugh agreed to have the annual report ready for the Planning Commission at the December meeting along with copies of the previous year's report. Chairwoman Schick then reiterated that she was going to work on goals and objectives. Member Reinhart then expressed that he needed copies of the Revitalization Plan, Comprehensive Plan and CIP to do his part effectively. The Planning Commission then spoke about what they needed to do as far as reviewing the Comprehensive Plan every five years. They discussed what they felt they needed to do to properly review it. Member McCabe then spoke about how they need citizen committees to help the Planning Commission.

Chairwoman Schick then expressed that she wanted to stop at that point. She felt that she did not want to overdo it and focus on the things that they have discussed thus far. Member Cirbee then explained that he wanted to get more done. Mr. McHugh then asked if the Planning Commission wanted to discuss the paper at the December meeting. The Planning Commission confirmed. Chairwoman Schick then asked each Planning Commission member to bring an update concerning their designated responsibilities at the next meeting.

Item 5: Other Topics

Member Cirbee then spoke about how the burned down school on Douglas Avenue was determined that it was salvageable by an engineer. He explained that there was not a full report but that he was trying to get interest in finding an assisted living developer to turn it into an assisted living facility. He explained that there was HUD money and historic grants available for the rehabilitation. He explained that the Town Manager was charged to market it. He felt that the Planning Commission had a responsibility to determine what could be done with the building. He explained that the idea needed to be solid enough for a developer to come in with a good idea to get Town Council to vote favorably on the idea. Chairwoman Schick explained that the Planning Commission has done this kind of work in the past and that it has not been taken seriously. Member Cirbee explained that with the school, it had to be done soon which might make a difference. Chairwoman Schick then explained that it needed to be ordered by Town Council. Vice Chairwoman McCabe then asked if it was a CIP. Member Cirbee then explained that it was an emergency situation that was caused by an emergency situation. He explained that it could not wait a long time. He felt that the public had a demand to know what was going to happen to the school. Vice Chairwoman McCabe then explained that she dealt with a similar situation in Richmond where Bon Secour came in and helped with the situation. She voiced that there are entities that will help with those types of situations. Chairwoman Schick then voiced that she wanted to hear a suggestion from the Town Council concerning this situation before they work on it. She explained that she would ask Town Council about the situation. Member Cirbee then explained that the Code of Virginia states that the Planning Commission does not have to wait for a resolution concerning the issue. Chairwoman Schick then explained that she was not going to wait for a resolution but that she did not want to go through all of the work if they are not going to listen.

Item 6: Adjournment

There was no further business. The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Chairperson, Colonial Beach Planning Commission