

Town of Colonial Beach Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, December 3, 2015 – Town Center, 22 Washington Avenue

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Present: Robin Schick, Chairwoman
Maureen McCabe, Vice Chairwoman
Diana Clopton
Pam Tolson

Absent: Bob Busick

Staff: Brendan McHugh, Planning and Zoning Administrator
Tori Haynes, Planning Assistant
Val Foulds, Town Manager

Item 1: Call to Order

Ms. Schick called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

Item 2: Approval of Minutes from November 12, 2015 Regular Meeting

Ms. Schick made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2015 Regular Meeting. Ms. McCabe seconded.

Ms. Schick called for a voice vote; it was unanimously resolved:

That the minutes of the November 12, 2015 Regular Meeting be approved.

Item 3: Public Comment on Planning Commission Matters (Not on the Agenda)

There were no speakers. Public comment was opened and closed at 5:42 p.m.

Item 4: Discussion on Vacant Town-Owned Properties (N. Irving Avenue – Old Town Hall, Old Police Building, Klotz Building)

Ms. Schick said that she met with a commercial realtor regarding the marketing of the Town-owned properties on N. Irving Avenue. She asked him what needs to be done to market and maintain the historic buildings. The realtor recommended having a historic preservation consultant perform an asbestos study, lead-based paint study, and structural integrity study on each building. He also recommended including architectural criteria as a contingency of the sale to help ensure architectural preservation. Ms. Schick noted that Old Town Hall (Original Westmoreland Bank building) is the most important building to preserve.

Ms. Clopton expressed concern about ultra-modern infill. She asked about the height restriction in the Resort Commercial district.

Mr. McHugh said the height restriction is 35 feet throughout the Town, with the exception of the Potomac Renaissance condos, which have a Conditional Use Permit.

Ms. McCabe asked if doing studies on the Old Police Building would be worth it, since it is the lowest priority.

Ms. Schick said that the Old Police Building could be sold as is.

There was a discussion on possible flood plain issues with the site.

There was a discussion on appropriate architectural styles.

Ms. Clopton asked if the Main Street Program has a Town Center criteria.

Ms. Haynes said that it doesn't.

Ms. Clopton asked if Main Street affiliation would be affected if any buildings on N. Irving Avenue are demolished.

Ms. Haynes said Main Street shouldn't be affected; however, a potential Historic District designation may be affected.

Ms. Clopton asked about the upcoming Department of Historic Resources (DHR) windshield survey.

Ms. Foulds said the survey would start in early 2016 and would assess a potential Historic District designation.

There was a discussion on the Klotz Building, which is locally significant but has severe structural damage. The Commissioners recommended having the historic preservation consultant study the Klotz Building along with Old Town Hall.

Linda Farneth of the Journal Press asked the name of the realtor who consulted with Ms. Schick.

Ms. Schick said she didn't remember but could provide the name at a later time.

Item 5: Discussion on the CIP

Ms. Schick presented the CIP from the Town of Orange, VA to be used as a model for Colonial Beach's CIP.

The Commissioners discussed the pros and cons of the Orange CIP.

Ms. Schick presented a spreadsheet with consolidated information from the Town departments' CIP applications.

Ms. McCabe discussed the needs of the Police Department as per her conversation with Police Chief Danny Plott. High priority items include adding a second floor to the current Town Hall to house the Police Department, as well as upgraded weapons and bulletproof vests to better respond to modern threats. She also noted the Chief's desire for continuing education for each officer.

Ms. McCabe questioned whether the current Town Hall could support a second floor addition. She suggested getting a structural study to assess the possibility of a second floor.

Ms. Clopton expressed doubt that the Town's crime rate justified upgraded police equipment.

Ms. McCabe explained that Chief Plott wants to be prepared for a catastrophic event.

Ms. Schick complimented the Town Clerk's application for upgrades to the Town Center chambers.

Ms. Schick said she added Technology and Infrastructure as a CIP item, although there was no application for it yet.

Mr. McHugh said he expected some technology-related applications to be submitted.

Ms. Schick discussed her concerns with security in the Chief Financial Officer's office. She noted that the current Town Hall lacks a vault and long-term data storage options. She added a CIP item for security and storage on behalf of the Town's CFO, who did not submit a CIP application.

Ms. Schick asked Mr. McHugh about GIS Phase 2 for the Planning Department.

Mr. McHugh explained that an integrated GIS is a Town-wide initiative and should go under Town Administration.

There was a discussion on presenting the CIP in narrative or spreadsheet format.

Ms. McCabe suggested prioritizing the Fire Department roof as an emergency item.

Ms. Schick said the Planning Commission is not in the position to make emergency decisions.

Ms. Clopton suggested making the roof a high priority item.

Ms. Schick added Stormwater Management Plan to the Planning Department's CIP items.

Ms. Tolson asked if water meter installation should be on the CIP.

Ms. Schick confirmed it should be.

Ms. Clopton said fire hydrant testing should be added to the CIP. She also discussed adding a Parks & Rec department.

Ms. Schick asked if the Safe Routes to School grant needs to be on the CIP.

Mr. McHugh said the money for Safe Routes to School was already set aside and does not need to be on the CIP.

Item 6: Discussion on Comprehensive Plan

Ms. Schick commenced the discussion on the remaining Action Items from page 5-20 of the Comprehensive Plan.

Attract and host a number of smaller events throughout the year.

Ms. Schick said it's a plus that we now have Bike Fest.

Ms. McCabe suggested adding Colonial Beach Foundation and Downtown Colonial Beach to the stakeholders.

Mr. McHugh said the Chamber of Commerce Visitor's Guide shows events held in Colonial Beach.

Consider hiring a Tourism and Economic Development Specialist and/or a Grant Specialist

Ms. Foulds said a Tourism Specialist is needed more than a Grant Specialist.

Ms. McCabe asked who currently writes the grants.

Ms. Foulds said everyone helps write grants, depending on resources.

Ms. Clopton asked if having a Grant Specialist would be helpful.

Ms. Foulds said hiring a Grant Specialist would require hiring additional support staff as well.

Ms. Tolson, Ms. Schick, and Ms. McCabe reiterated the need for a Parks & Rec department.

Increase tourism market through continuing active participation with area tourism agencies including the Northern Neck Tourism Council and development of Colonial Beach tourism website and brochure that highlights all the events, accommodations, and recreational activities available in town.

Ms. Schick said updating the Tourism website is part of the ongoing Technology Infrastructure improvements.

Ms. Clopton said that would be under a Tourism Specialist.

Establish an Arts Commission to explore ways to attract artists and promote the town as an artist-friendly community.

Ms. McCabe said we already have an Arts Guild.

Ms. Clopton and Ms. McCabe said there is no music or theater.

Ms. Tolson said we have the new Artisan Trail.

Establish a Recreation Commission or Committee to recommend and prioritize needed improvements, and work with various stakeholders to provide additional recreational opportunities.

Ms. Schick said the Community Center facility agreement with the Lions Club would hopefully bring more recreational opportunities.

Ms. Clopton said that is a desperate need.

Ms. Schick reiterated establishing a Parks and Rec department.

Ms. Clopton suggested converting the current Town Hall into a rec center if a new Town Center is built.

Work with Westmoreland County to identify desired future land uses surrounding the town.

Ms. Clopton said that is important.

Ms. Schick said we haven't really been working on that.

Ms. McCabe asked who owns the property that was going to build a golf course community.

Mr. McHugh replied Lennar.

Ms. Clopton asked if they are just holding it.

Mr. McHugh confirmed.

Work with Westmoreland County Health and Social services to expand its outreach services to citizens of Colonial Beach.

Ms. Clopton said we're in desperate need of that. She said the high school social worker reported a high number of students (50) are currently classified as homeless.

Ms. McCabe added there are many senior citizens using social services.

Ms. Schick said there are no Health and Social Service employees at Town Hall.

Ms. Clopton said there are no emergency services, housing, or shelter.

Ms. Schick said the Fire Department and Rescue Squad provide services. She also said individuals at the school pick up some of the slack.

Ms. McCabe said local churches offer services as well, such as delivering food to seniors.

Ms. Clopton said we need a staff person to handle social services.

Ms. Foulds said social services are primarily handled by the County. She noted that Helen Wilkins, Director of Westmoreland County Social Services, recently sent brochures detailing all services provided to residents.

Ms. Clopton said the County should have a small office here since we have the largest population.

Ms. Founds clarified that each district in the county has the same population, although Colonial Beach is the most concentrated.

Ms. Clopton reiterated her concern about the lack of social services.

Ms. Schick said we now have Bay Aging, which provides transportation and social services to all ages.

Ms. Tolson, Ms. McCabe, and Ms. Clopton said the Catholic Church also has a weekly clinic.

Ms. Clopton reiterated her concern about the lack of social services for non-seniors.

Ms. Schick clarified that Bay Aging helps people of all ages.

Ms. Foulds explained the town contributes financially to Bay Aging based on what other localities contribute. The most recent contribution was approximately \$48,000.

Nominate Route 205 between Oak Grove and Route 218 as a state scenic byway.

Ms. Foulds noted that VDOT maintains Route 205.

Ms. Schick asked how to get a state scenic byway.

Mr. McHugh said there's a grant for the National Scenic Byways Program.

Ms. McCabe asked why paving roads in Riverside Meadows isn't on the CIP.

Ms. Schick said it's under Public Works – Paving Gravel Streets. She clarified that CIP items do not need to be directly funded by the Town. They can be funded by proffers, grants, bonds, or donations.

Item 7: Other Topics

There were no other topics to discuss.

Item 8: Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.