

Town of Onancock, Virginia  
Planning Commission Meeting  
Tuesday  
July 18, 2017  
5:30 P.M.

Call to order and Roll Call:

Chairman Fletcher Fosque called the meeting to order at 5:31 P.M. Commission members Bill Bagwell, Ridgway Dunton, Fletcher Fosque, Judith Grier, and Scott Schreiber were present. Commission members John Simpkins and Buck Walters were absent. A quorum was established.

Point of Business:

Town Manager William Kerbin noted that commission members Bill Bagwell, Judith Grier, Ridgway Dunton, Fletcher Fosque and Buck Walters need to be reappointed to the Planning Commission by the Town Council. Commission member Scott Schreiber was just appointed this year and Commission member John Simpkins was appointed in 2016. The appointment is a four-year term with no term limits. Chairman Fosque noted the need for new officers and stated he was stepping down as Chairman.

Minutes:

Chairman Fosque asked if there were any changes or additions to the May 16, 2017 minutes as presented. Commissioner Bill Bagwell asked that Edmund Bagwell's name be spelled correctly and instead of the word hero the word veteran be used.

A motion by chairman Fosque to approve the May 16, 2017 minutes as corrected were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Items of Business:

Comprehensive Plan Review

**Section 8: Water & Sewer**

Discussion: Town Manager William Kerbin said the new hospital (Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital) needed to be added to this section of the plan.

Chairman Fletcher Fosque and Town Manager William Kerbin both agreed an agreement should be reached with Accomack County to increase waste water and work to increase hook-ups.

Chairman Fosque stated that the water line to the hospital is owned by the County of Accomack, the hospital paid to put the line in and the Town of Onancock is the direct biller for their water usage. He also stated that one of Robert Crockett's (Chairman - Accomack County Board of Supervisors) goals is to run a waste water line to the Food Lion shopping complex on Route 13 and that the Accomack County Board of Supervisors already have several hundred thousand dollars earmarked for the project.

Discussion about sewer rates. The County of Accomack has the lowest rate. Questions about what the water rates are now, everyone pays the same rate for water.

Chairman Fosque stated that the sewage treatment plant was a huge drain on town finances. The Town of Onancock's goal should be to get the water and sewage treatment plant running in the black. The main goal is to improve waste water.

#### Section 5: Housing

Discussion: Commission member Judith Grier stated she had pulled information from the 2010 Census and wants to change Table 7, Housing Occupancy and Types and asked which version to use. She also said the most recent Census from which to get information is the 2010 Census. Town Manager William Kerbin asked about using information from the American Community Survey which comes out every five years however Commissioner Grier said Onancock is too small to be included in that survey. She also stated she wanted to look at the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Survey. Chairman Fosque agreed housing section numbers need updating and the planning commission needs as many numbers as it can get. He also stated the planning commission should be looking more closely at the needs summary. Commissioner Grier said she thought Commission member John Simpkins should look at the figures.

Chairman Fosque stated one of the goals in this section of the comprehensive plan was to provide safe and adequate housing for present and future residents of Onancock and another was to encourage historic preservation. Town Manager William Kerbin said he added two objectives (not stated) to this section of the plan.

Chairman Fosque asked if anyone had been to the Northeast section of town and stated it was looking "pretty rough". He added that many of the families that used to live there have passed away and the houses have been left vacant and are in bad shape. Mr. Kerbin stated he was looking at some grants that might help with revitalization efforts adding that abandoned houses did not help property values or crime rates and could be a health risk.

Chairman Fosque stated the objectives looked good and that the planning commission needs more information on housing values. He suggested contacting Andy Mason, a local real estate broker, to get updated information on local real estate transactions.

Commissioner Scott Schreiber asked if the comprehensive plan talked about what the commission wants to encourage, for example does the commission want higher density or not. He stated the plan seemed very general. Chairman Fosque stated the commission needs to look at the types of land use and what kind of density it wants. He said in the past the commission had issues with the type of apartments that were built and with some multifamily units being proposed. Chairman Fosque and Mr. Kerbin said R2 (multi-family dwellings) is a small area of the town. Commission member Grier asked about multifamily units being built on the Fireman's field (old Carnival grounds). Chairman Fosque said the requested zoning changes were not approved. He also stated there have been several conversations about having apartments over the downtown businesses and in the B2 district (business highway). Chairman Fosque also stated a request was made some time ago to put up a three-story building (45 feet) and at that time there were no height restrictions. He stated height restrictions are now in place.

Chairman Fosque stated the need to look at the zoning and see if the commission wanted to make any changes. He stated he was always told not to put too many specific things in the town plan. He also stated another area for the commission to look at was boundary adjustments; an annexation plan as a goal for the future.

Discussion about Duncan Manor and the planned development off Jackson Street. Commissioner Ridgway Dunton asked where Duncan Manor was located. Chairman Fosque said it was the few houses at the end of the airstrip and it has been plotted out as a subdivision since the sixties. Commissioner Bill Bagwell asked if the development off Jackson Street was going to be lot sales or did they plan to build spec houses. Mr. Kerbin stated they would be spec houses, single family homes.

#### Section 4: Economy

Discussion: Commissioner Scott Schreiber made some changes to the second paragraph, Inventory and Analysis. He stated that the Hospice headquarters is not there anymore and asked if the commission wanted to be so specific as to list businesses that were there or not. Chairman Fosque said it might be better to name the types of businesses instead of the names.

Chairman Fosque asked about commodity imports. Commissioner Schreiber gave the example of gravel. Chairman Fosque asked about the fish houses, were they still active? Commissioner Bagwell stated they were still active, mostly gill netters and some crabbers.

Commissioner Schreiber stated the third paragraph talks about the second commercial area and the downtown area and there is no mention of the Charlotte Hotel or the North Street Playhouse. He asked if the commission wanted to name them or not? He noted in the next paragraph in the third area of activity, the oil company is no longer there and asked if the commission wants to add in anything about the kayak tours?

Chairman Fosque asked where the table of businesses came from and who did it? Mr. Kerbin said he could do a count of the businesses. Chairman Fosque said he could help with that.

Commissioner Schreiber had questions about the downtown development plan. The plan needs to be attached to the report or added as an addendum. He also asked if the plan has been largely ignored should the commission follow it going forward or not? Chairman Fosque recommended including a copy of the Main Street Program in the plan.

Town Manager William Kerbin stated the Town of Onancock could set up a non-profit organization that would help run downtown activities, everything from grant writing to fund raising, it could help with facades and could incorporate other things like streetscapes and revolving loan funds into it as well. It could be expanded into a great downtown program and strategy.

Commissioner Schreiber wanted to know how the commission could encourage businesses to promote and sponsor activities in town and how to get some of the vacant buildings in use again. Chairman Fosque said there use to be a marketing committee to promote things like the parades and second Fridays. He also stated that the Onancock Business and Civic Association (OBCA) is part of the same thing. He said he would also like to see some of the vacant buildings in use. Commissioner Bagwell asked about the old Area on Aging building and what was being done with that. Mr. Kerbin stated that there would be condos upstairs and on the ground floor would be a furniture business. Commissioner Schreiber asked if there are minimum standards the town can enforce for old buildings. Mr. Kerbin referenced the Town of Onancock's nuisance ordinance and said that the County of Accomack handles all the Town of Onancock's building requirements. Commissioner Schreiber stated that the Onancock School is leased, the property belongs to the town and if the town cannot maintain its' own properties then how can the town tell others how to handle their properties.

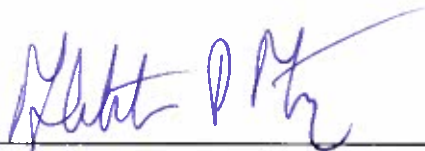
Public Comment:

None

Adjourn:


Commissioner Bill Bagwell made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Grier seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:27 PM.



---

Fletcher Fosque, Chair



---

Mariellen Mearsheimer, Deputy Clerk