

Town of Onancock
Planning Commission Meeting
Tuesday
March 19, 2019
5:30 P.M.

Call to Order and Roll Call:

Chairman Judith Grier called the meeting to order at 5:34 P.M. Commission members Robert Bloxom, Ridgway Dunton, Larry Frey, and Judith Grier were present. Commission members Bill Bagwell and Matt Spuck were absent. Commission member Scott Schreiber arrived late. Town Manager William Kerbin was absent. Deputy Clerk Mariellen Mearsheimer was in attendance. Also attending the meeting was Onancock resident Jim McGowan.

Minutes:

Chairman Grier asked for a motion to approve the February 19, 2019 minutes. Commission member Larry Frey made a motion to approve the minutes. Commission member Robert Bloxom seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Items of Business:

A. Review the Code of Virginia

Chairman Grier introduced Jim McGowan to the Commission members and thanked him for agreeing to help the Commission with the Comprehensive Plan. Chairman Grier hoped to complete work on the Comprehensive Plan in time for the September meeting of the Town Council.

Mr. McGowan started with a review of the Code of Virginia Title 15.2 Counties, Cities and Towns, Article 3, The Comprehensive Plan. He discussed the Dillon Rule which states that local governments are only allowed to do what is expressly allowed by the State. He summarized that the main purpose of the Comprehensive Plan was to support and provide a rationale for the zoning ordinance and that comprehensive plans are required in the state of Virginia, zoning is not, except in areas with the Chesapeake Bay Act. He stated that you need a Comprehensive Plan to guide the future of the town. Mr. McGowan said the plan can include a capital improvement plan, goals for a subdivision ordinance, zoning maps, mineral districts, agriculture and forest districts. Specifically, he stated if you see the word shall in the state code, it is mandatory, if you see the word may, it is discretionary. Mr. McGowan encouraged the commission members to review the Code and become familiar with it.

Discussion followed about what should be included in the plan, such as transportation, strategies for dealing with sea level rise and recurrent flooding, surveys and studies, historic districts, telecommunications facilities, solar facilities and maps.

Mr. McGowan pointed out that the local Planning Commission adopts the comprehensive plan then sends it on to the Town Council for a public hearing and approval. He stated parts of the plan can be adopted and controversial parts can be sent back to the planning commission for more work and approved at a later date. He stated the comprehensive plan needs to be reviewed every five years and amended based on the needs of the town.

Mr. McGowan asked if there were any concerns the commission members might have with issues related to the comprehensive plan.

Commission member Scott Schreiber wants to see growth opportunities particularly from a commercial standpoint and higher density living for older folks.

Commission member Bob Bloxom wants to consider more opportunities for multifamily type dwellings and duplexes on undeveloped properties.

Chairman Grier has concerns with broadband and clean water.

Chairman Grier asked the commission members what they would like to see the town look like going forward.

Commission member Bloxom asked how to fold the Main Street Initiative into the Comprehensive Plan.

Commission member Frey asked if there could be a liaison from the Main Street group that could work with the Planning Commission. Commission member Bloxom said yes but they would not be able to vote to approve the Plan.

Chairman Grier and Mr. McGowan suggested getting together with the MainStreet Group and having a joint public session before the process gets to far along.

Mr. McGowan suggested our goal should be to go through the plan and make recommendations and set a schedule to complete the work.

Chairman Grier suggested Tuesday May 21, 2019 might be a good time to meet with the Main Street Group and anyone else who may want to come.

Commission member Bloxom thanked Mr. McGowan for agreeing to help.

Public Comment:

None

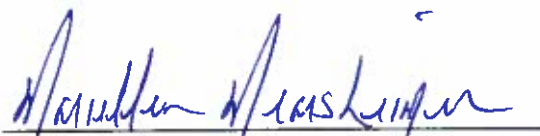
Adjourn:

Chairman Grier asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Commission member Frey made a motion to adjourn. Commission member Bloxom seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 6.27 P.M.



Judith Grier, Chair



Mariellen Mearsheimer, Deputy Clerk