

# Minutes

City of Petersburg

Planning Commission Meeting

February 17, 2021

The City of Petersburg Planning Commission meeting held on Wednesday February 17, 2021 virtually and was called to order by the Chair, Mrs. Tammy Alexander at 6:23 PM. A roll call was completed by Ms. Michelle Murrills.

**Members Present:**

Ms. Tammy Alexander, Chair  
Mr. Fenton Bland, Vice Chair  
Ms. Marie Vargo  
Mr. Thomas Hairston  
Mr. Michael Edwards  
Ms. Candy Taylor

**Members Absent:**

Mr. William Irvin  
Dr. James Norman

A Quorum was established by the Chair.

Others Present: Mr. Reginald Tabor, Ms. Michelle Murrills, Mr. Lionel Lyons, and Mr. Jeremy Tennant.

**Adoption of the Agenda:**

Chair Alexander called for any changes...there were none

Ms. Vargo moved approval of the Agenda.

Mr. Harriston seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Minutes:**

As there was no February 3, 2021 meeting, there was no minutes to adopt.

## **Public Information Period:**

Chair Alexander opened the Public Information Period to anyone who wished to speak on an item not on the agenda. With no one wanting to speak, the Chair moved on and the Public Information Period was closed.

## **Public Hearings:**

6A. Chair Alexander announced that there is a public hearing to be held for a Zoning Text Amendment about small box discount stores and alternative financial institutions. Mr. Tabor then gave a presentation about the text amendment. In the presentation, he said that the City Council adopted a resolution to review Zoning Ordinance text amendments to address small box discount stores and alternative banking institutions. The resolution included a request for Planning Commission recommendation on the issue. The Departments of Economic Development and Planning and Community Development developed a report on small box stores and alternative banking institutions. The report examines food deserts, their impact on health outcomes, the variety of retail businesses that sell food items in Petersburg, definitions of these stores and proposed action. The report also examines payday lending-type businesses in Petersburg and their impact on financial outcomes, the definition of these stores, and proposed action. In Petersburg there are 4 Family dollar stores, 2 Dollar Trees, 3 Dollar Generals, with one more being built. There are 6 Alternative Financial Institutions in Petersburg.

Proposed action:

1. Update the Zoning Ordinance to define the types of store defining this report.
2. Require a special use permit for all new small box discount stores. This special use permit should include elements that
  - Prevent the creation of new stores in a certain mile radius of preexisting stores.
  - Require the dedication of floor space to the sale of fresh foods consistent with USDA recommendations.
  - Require review by the Planning Commission.
  - Require approval by the City Council.
3. Prohibits small box discount stores from the selling of alcoholic beverages and lottery items.
4. Create an incentive package for attracting fresh food stores and supermarkets.
5. Require a special use permit for all alternative financial institutions. This special use permit should include
  - A distance prohibition requirement
  - Require review by the Planning Commission.
  - Require approval of the City Council.
  - Comply with the Virginia Fairness in Lending Act of 2020.

- A moratorium on the creation of new alternative financial institutions should be considered as well.

Since no one from the public wanted to speak on the amendment, a motion was brought to the floor by Mr. Bland and seconded by Mr. Hairston. The Amendment was passed 5-0.

6B. Chair Alexander then went on to announce the public hearing for the Zoning Text Amendment about restaurants. Mr. Tabor then gave a presentation about the restaurant zoning text amendment. The point of the restaurant zoning text amendment is that there are currently more than 80 restaurants located in the city of Petersburg and there is no city zoning ordinance that currently contains a definition for the word restaurant and there is a need to further define restaurants and related uses to clarify zoning matters related to restaurants. Included in restaurants are adult entertainment establishment, drive-in restaurant, live entertainment, drive-in restaurant, micro-breweries (micro wineries or micro cideries), mobile food units, night clubs, private plaza, private club, restaurants, restaurant-fast food, restaurant-carryout, and restaurant-coffee or ice cream shop. With the passing of this amendment, all restaurants in the City of Petersburg would then be defined.

Since no one from the public wanted to speak on the amendment, a motion was brought to the floor by Ms. Varga and seconded by Mr. Hairston. The Amendment was passed 6-0.

## **Old Business:**

7A. Consideration of items referred by the City Council to the Planning Commission:

- i. An ordinance authorizing the City Manager to approve the reduction of site plan review and land disturbance permit fees when offset by in-kind staffing augmentation, in an amount not to exceed 30 percent of the total fees.

Mr. Tabor was recognized by the Chair and gave a presentation as to what this actually meant. It was explained that this could both make it cheaper for the developer, as well as faster. There was a question about whether the developers are being given too much control. But the city does have the ability to either approve or deny the developer's plans, so that is not really a problem.

Since no one from the public wanted to speak on the amendment, a motion was brought to the floor by Mr. Edwards (who just joined the meeting) and was seconded by Mr. Bland. The Amendment was passed 7-0.

- ii. Study and creation of a development plan for certain City-owned properties, and to report back to council: 1015 Commerce Street (Former Titmus Optical Industrial Site)
- iii. 10 North Jefferson (Former Virginia Employment Commission Office Site)

- iv. 125 East Washington Street (Former Virginia Employment Commission Office Site)
- v. 2233 Halifax Road (Vacant property adjacent CSX and Norfolk Southern Railroad tracks)

Mr. Tabor asked to put all four properties together to give a cohesive plan to the City Council. He asked Chair Alexander if she had any feedback to add to the plan for those properties. She also asked the public if there was anything that anyone wanted to add to the comments or be on the record. No one from the public or from the Commission answered. Mr. Tabor said we should table make a motion until the next meeting on March 3, 2021. It was agreed to table it.

#### B. Comprehensive Plan Update.

Mr. Tabor stated that the comprehensive plan has been amended to incorporate the bike walk section of the plan. He said that it would be sent out and put on the city website this week. There is to be a draft to the Planning Commission by its next meeting on March 3, 2021.

#### **New Business**

- a. Chesapeake Bay Act Ordinance
- b. Zoning Text Amendment – Solar Farms
- c. Zoning Text Amendment – Gaming
- d. Zoning Text Amendment—Outdoor Markets

Mr. Tabor requested that these all be grouped together. He then gave a quick overview about the Chesapeake Bay Act. Which requires that local jurisdictions include in their zoning ordinances and their comprehensive plan, regulations regarding discharge into the Chesapeake Bay. Petersburg is working on drafting amendments to those documents to include those things that the Chesapeake Bay Act Ordinance says to now have. These have to be adopted before April 1, 2021 so Mr. Tabor wants to make his presentation for the amendments during the March meeting. The other amendments will be brought back at the meeting as well.

#### **Announcements:**

No Announcements.

**Adjournment:**

Meeting was adjourned by Mr. Irvin at 7:44 pm. Next meeting is at 6:00 pm on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

DRAFT