



AGENDA
Wytheville Planning Commission
Thursday, April 14, 2022
6:00 p.m.
Council Chambers
150 East Monroe Street
Wytheville, Virginia 24382

1. **CALL TO ORDER** — Chairman George F. Wittwer
2. **ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM** — Chairman George F. Wittwer
3. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. Minutes of the regular meeting of March 10, 2022
4. **CITIZENS' PERIOD**
5. **OTHER BUSINESS**
 - A. Continued review of the Sign Ordinance language
 - B. Further review of the Solar Energy Facility Regulations
 - C. Transitional Zoning Business/Residential: A Sample Form-Based Code
 - D. Continued discussion regarding proposed R-4 Zoning District Regulations
6. **ADJOURNMENT**

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE WYTHEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.**

Members present: George F. Wittwer, M. Bradley Tate, John W. Jones, Jr., Bradford M. Litton, Cathy D. Pattison, Lisa K. Anderson

Members absent: Kenny W. Ervin

Others present: Assistant Town Manager Elaine R. Holeton, Chief Deputy Clerk Brandi N. Jones, Planning Director John Woods

RE: CALL TO ORDER, QUORUM

Chairman Wittwer called the meeting to order and established that a quorum was present.

RE: CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Wittwer presented the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of February 10, 2022. He inquired of the Commission if there were any additions or corrections to the consent agenda or if there was a motion to approve the consent agenda, as presented. A motion was made by Mr. Jones and seconded by Mr. Tate to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 10, 2022, as presented. Chairman Wittwer inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: For: George F. Wittwer, M. Bradley Tate, John W. Jones, Jr., Bradford M. Litton, Cathy D. Pattison, Lisa K. Anderson. Against: None.

RE: CITIZENS' PERIOD

Chairman Wittwer advised that the next agenda item is Citizens' Period. He noted that there were no citizens attending the meeting, therefore, he would proceed with the agenda.

RE: WELCOME NEW MEMBER

Chairman Wittwer stated that on behalf of the Wytheville Planning Commission, he would like to welcome Ms. Lisa Anderson as a newly appointed member to the Planning Commission.

RE: FURTHER REVIEW OF THE SIGN ORDINANCE REVISIONS

Chairman Wittwer advised that the next agenda item is further review of the Sign Ordinance revisions. He explained that staff has continued to review the proposed revisions to the Sign Ordinance and made significant changes from the previous version based on the Planning Commission comments and a windshield survey of existing signage patterns in various commercial districts. Chairman Wittwer noted that Town staff will present highlights of the changes to the proposed ordinance. He remarked that the Planning Commission may wish to schedule a public hearing for consideration of the new Sign Ordinance. Planning Director John Woods explained that, unfortunately, he noticed too late that some of the changes to the proposed ordinance did not show up in highlighted text for the Commissioners, therefore, he would go into a little more detail explaining the changes. He presented a PowerPoint presentation of the changes to the proposed Sign Ordinance. He stated that the revisions that Town staff has done since the last meeting include incorporating all the comments received from the Planning Commission, and he had the Town Building Official review the ordinance. Planning Director

Woods commented that Town staff is going to try to incorporate some pictures and graphics into the definitions of the signage to try to help make the ordinance more understandable. He advised that this information will be included in the next Planning Commission meeting package. Planning Director Woods inquired if there were any questions or comments. Discussion ensued regarding the illustration ideas in the proposed ordinance. Mr. Litton inquired regarding eliminating the billboards in the B-1 Business Zoning District. Planning Director Woods explained that in the future Sign Ordinance, Staff has basically taken billboards out as an allowable sign type in all zoning districts. He noted that this means that there will be no more new billboards allowed, but it would not require removal of any that are already in town when they are no longer in use. Planning Director Woods stated that he would have the proposed Sign Ordinance with more graphics ready to present to the Planning Commission at the next meeting. He noted that the Planning Commission will wait to schedule a public hearing. Chairman Wittwer inquired if there was any further discussion. There being none, he proceeded with the agenda.

RE: CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY REGULATIONS

Chairman Wittwer advised that the next agenda item is continued discussion regarding the Solar Energy Facility Regulations. He noted that at the January meeting, the Planning Commission requested that the proposed ordinance be edited to clarify the distinction between solar systems intended to provide electricity to individual property owners at both business and residential properties throughout town. Chairman Wittwer stated that staff has incorporated these revisions, as well as additional requirements requested by the Town Building Official. He noted that Town staff will present these modifications, and the Planning Commission may choose to set a public hearing date. Planning Director Woods advised that, again, he apologizes for the draft changes that were sent out without the changes being highlighted. He noted that he would try to quickly go through the changes. Planning Director Woods continued to review the modifications with the Commissioners. He noted that in regard to scheduling a public hearing, it would be the recommendation of Town staff to schedule the Sign Ordinance and Solar Energy Facility Regulations public hearings together so that staff is only advertising once instead of multiple times. Planning Director Woods noted that this will be reviewed further at the next meeting. Chairman Wittwer inquired if there were any questions or comments for Planning Director Woods. There being none, he proceeded with the agenda.

RE: REVIEW OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON CALHOUN STREET

Chairman Wittwer advised that the next agenda item is the review of the proposed development on Calhoun Street. He stated that a Board of Zoning Appeals' public hearing has been scheduled for a variance request at 310 and 320 Calhoun Street. Chairman Wittwer noted that the request for a variance is to allow conversion of two existing commercial structures for use as multi-family rental housing units. He explained that Town Staff will discuss the importance of encouraging adaptive reuse of obsolete commercial structures and to seek the opinion of the Planning Commission regarding approval of projects of this nature, as well as possible modifications of the Zoning Ordinance to encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings. Planning Director Woods stated that the issue that is raised concerning this project is relevant to the Planning Commission because this is the third project that has come to the Town for approval, and this is the first one that the Town is trying to handle by the strict guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance. He noted that the reason for this is because it is very difficult to convert existing structures into residential use. Planning Director Woods continued to discuss the proposed development on Calhoun Street with the Planning Commission. He noted that Town staff would like to pursue either modifications to the existing zoning districts or create a new zoning district that would allow a lot more flexibility in how these older structures are used. Planning Director Woods inquired if the Planning

Commission would be in favor of pursuing these modifications. Mr. Jones advised that he thinks it is a good idea. Discussion ensued regarding the previous request on Calhoun Street and why it was denied by the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Jones stated that it is known that the Town of Wytheville needs housing, therefore, whatever the Planning Commission can do to help should be done. Chairman Wittwer expressed his support, as well. Mr. Litton discussed sites in town that are located in industrial zones and an old warehouse that could be developed into an apartment building. He noted that if the apartment building would have an industry located near it, the tenants might get upset because they are being disturbed by the noise from the factory. Planning Director Woods explained that Mr. Litton has noted one of the fundamental problems. He noted that in the M-1 Industrial Zoning District and portions of the B-2 Business Zoning District near the railroad tracks, there is a mix of single family residences and industrial uses. Planning Director Woods commented that as soon as a by right use develops in one of the industrial buildings, then there are property/homeowners trying to live next to the noise of an industry, etc. He noted that Town Staff is looking at ways to find uses and restrict the uses in those areas of the Industrial Zoning Districts to keep them compatible with the residences, but, also, give some opportunities for some innovative uses of those facilities. He discussed the uses of facilities in urban areas that could potentially be used in Wytheville. Discussion continued regarding the Calhoun Street variance request. Planning Director Woods noted that most of the area surrounding the building area is zoned M-1 Industrial. Mr. Litton commented that he does not think there will be a problem, with the variance request. Chairman Wittwer inquired if Planning Director Woods needed anything else from the Planning Commission. Planning Director Woods stated that what he needed from the Planning Commission was the discussion that was held in regard to Town Staff proceeding with the modifications to the Zoning Ordinance and approval of the Planning Commission.

RE: DISCUSSION REGARDING PROPOSED R-4 ZONING REGULATIONS

Chairman Wittwer advised that the next agenda item is to discuss the proposed R-4 Zoning Regulations. Planning Director Woods explained that the Homeowners Association for the Old Stage Crossing development has requested that the Town assume maintenance responsibilities for the street that serves the complex. He stated that conversion of the private street to a public street will effectively create nonconforming lots. Planning Director Woods noted that creation of a new R-4 Residential Zoning District has been proposed as a way to allow for the existing development to remain a conforming subdivision while allowing the Town to assume maintenance of a VDOT compliant right-of-way. He remarked that this will also expand opportunities for increased housing construction in town. Planning Director Woods presented a draft of the proposed R-4 Residential Zoning District Regulations to the Planning Commission. He commented that something that Assistant Town Manager Holeton suggested was addressing condominium uses. He remarked that this could also be an opportunity to include residential use in the B-1 Business and B-2 DT General Business - Downtown Zoning Districts, which could resolve some of the issues that were discussed earlier in the meeting. Discussion continued regarding the Old Stage Crossing development. Mr. Litton inquired of Planning Director Woods what the Homeowners Association for the Old Stage Crossing development thought was going to happen because the street that serves the complex is a private street, and it was never intended to be turned over to a public street. Planning Director Woods commented that if all of the units had been built in a timely fashion and everyone had been paying their Homeowners Association dues, in theory, it would have built up a reserve for the maintenance needed to care for the street. He continued to express that there are numerous developments across the country in similar situations due to the recession. The Commission continued to discuss the Old Stage Crossing development issue. Vice-Chairman Tate suggested issuing a variance instead of creating a new portion to the Zoning Ordinance. Planning Director Woods advised that Town Staff sees this as an opportunity to create something that would be useful in other areas, as well. Vice-Chairman

Tate inquired of Planning Director Woods what he wants the Planning Commission to decide at this meeting regarding the Old Stage Crossing request because he did not feel comfortable making a decision at this meeting. Planning Director Woods advised that Town Staff wanted the Planning Commission to review the R-4 regulations because of the Old Stage Crossing development request. Vice-Chairman Tate stated that, in that case, he is in favor of the proposed R-4 Zoning District Regulations. Planning Director Woods noted that this will be discussed further at the next meeting. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission to proceed with the proposed R-4 Zoning District Regulations and expanding other potential areas where they may be appropriate. Discussion continued where this district may be used.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was duly made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting (7:08 p.m.).

George W. Wittwer, Chairman

Brandi N. Jones, Chief Deputy Clerk