



**TOWN OF OCCOQUAN
PLANNING COMMISSION**
Town Hall - 314 Mill Street, Occoquan, VA 22125

MEETING DATE: 2024-05-28

MEETING TIME: 6:30 PM

Present: Chairperson Eliot Perkins, Commissioners Darryl Hawkins, Ann Kisling, Robert Love, Don Wood

Absent: Ralph Newell

Town Staff: Matt Whitmoyer, Deputy Town Manager; Jeff Harvey (remote), Assistant Zoning Administrator; Adam Linn, Town Manager

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm

2. Citizen Comments

None

3. Election

Chairperson Perkins moved to nominate Don Wood for Secretary. Commissioner Hawkins seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Ayes: Chairperson Eliot Perkins, Commissioners Darryl Hawkins, Ann Kisling, Robert Love, Don Wood

Nays: None

4. Approval of Minutes

a. April 23, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Kisling motioned to approve the April 23, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Love seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

5. Reports

a. Town Council and Deputy Town Manager Reports

Deputy Town Manager Whitmoyer outlined the following items:

- The Town Council passed the Town budget that starts July 1, 2024.
- The Riverwalk Expansion Special Committee's report was submitted to the Town Council.
- The Planning Commission Strategic Planning report was submitted to the Town Council.
- The June 18, 2024 Town Council Meeting will include a resolution recognizing former Planning Commissioner Ryan Somma for his many contributions to the Town.

b. Architectural Review Board Report

Commissioner Hawkins reported that the ARB is working on issues concerning maintenance of Rockledge Mansion, including doors.

6. Discussion Items

a. Zoning Administrator Report on Potential Zoning Text and Comprehensive Plan Amendments Relating to Accessory Dwelling Units and Density

Accessory Dwelling Units:

Asst. Zoning Administrator Jeff Harvey (Legacy Engineering) made a presentation on accessory buildings and dwelling units. Key discussion points included:

- Commissioner Love stated the need for more clarity regarding definitions of accessory buildings/dwellings and uses.
- Unintended consequences - on the positive side, property owners can make income from their property. Additional persons on property can increase traffic. Small scale dwelling should not have an impact on schools.
- Stafford County found that it was challenging to enforce accessory dwellings codes which limited accessory dwellings to family members and friends of the owners.
- Limitation on square footage and one-bedroom is a “belt and suspenders” approach to keeping the accessory dwelling units limited in size.
- Status of accessory buildings currently in the B-1 zone.

Commissioner Love moved to initiate a zoning text amendment to add a definition and regulations for accessory dwellings to the Zoning Ordinance based off the Planning Commission’s draft definition and discussion. He further moved to request that the Town Council set a joint public hearing date when staff has produced a zoning text amendment in writing. Commissioner Kisling seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Chairman Perkins asked Town staff to ensure that the definitions of accessory building include limitation to single level and maximum 750 square feet, and that the definitions of accessory dwelling language be tightened to avoid any likely confusion.

Changes in Density:

Mr. Harvey discussed the timing, process, opportunities and challenges of amending the Town’s Comprehensive Plan with regard to increasing housing density. He advised that one key question for the Planning Commission to consider is whether to start now on amendments to the Plan regarding density, or wait for the 5-year review of the Plan (end of 2025).

Commissioner Love mentioned five items to consider when thinking about density discussions: 1) impact of Mill at Occoquan, 2) impact of Riverwalk Expansion Project, 3) status of stormwater improvements as a result of the \$920,000 federal grant, 4) the Planning Commission’s Strategic Planning report, and 5) the Occoquan Greenway Project.

Chair Perkins asked the Planning Commission to think about specific locations in Town where density could be increased and by how much, how increases help or hurt the Town, and how density impacts green space. Chair Perkins said he would work with Town staff in terms of specific locations in Town where opportunities exist to increase density.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 pm

Minutes Prepared by Don Wood, Planning Commission Secretary