



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

**MEETING DATE: 2024-07-23**

**MEETING TIME: 6:30 PM**

**Present:** Chairperson Eliot Perkins, Commissioners Darryl Hawkins, Robert Love, Ralph Newell, Don Wood

**Absent:** Ann Kisling

**Town Staff:** Matt Whitmoyer, Deputy Town Manager; Doug Morgan (remote), Assistant Zoning Administrator; Adam Linn, Town Manager

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm

**2. Citizen Comments**

None

**3. Approval of Minutes**

a. May 28, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Love motioned to approve the May 28, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Hawkins seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**4. Reports**

a. Town Council Report

Chair Perkins reported that Town Council discussed the Planning Commission's Strategic Planning document and will be giving "marching orders" to the OPC.

b. Deputy Town Manager Report

Deputy Town Manager Whitmoyer outlined the following items:

- Town Council recognized Ryan Somma and Carol Bailey for their contributions to the Planning Commission and Architectural Review Board, respectively.
- Town Council designated the 100 block of Poplar Alley as "Ogle Harris Way."
- Town Council designated the island under the Route 123 Bridge as Craighill Isle
- Stormwater pipe replacement (Union and Commerce Streets). Commissioner Love commended the level of staff effort involved in this project.
- Belmont Bay is moving towards a change to its proffers to make the area more residential and less mixed use.

b. Architectural Review Board Report

Commissioner Hawkins spoke of continuing work on Rockledge Mansion.

**5. Discussion Items**

a. Discussion on Changes in Density

Accessory Dwellings: Chair Perkins announced that there will be a joint Town Council / Planning Commission public hearing on August 6, 2024 at 7pm on the proposed Accessory Dwelling Units ordinance.

Presentation by Doug Morgan and questions from the Planning Commissioners. Key discussion points and questions were:

- The Zoning Administrator is looking for clear direction from the Planning Commission to move forward on a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) on increasing density in certain areas of Town in anticipation of revising the Town's Comprehensive Plan.
- The Future Land Use map is a guiding tool that does not specify particular future zoning districts in order to allow for a range of different zoning options in the future for various parcels.
- The Town needs to understand why it may want to increase density. For example, some retail outlets will need to know there is a certain "number of rooftops" (i.e., consumer demand) before locating a community.
- Changing the future Land Use Map to reflect areas where higher density is proposed allows the Town to consider potential rezoning if a developer is interested in building a higher density structure. However, changing the Future Land Use Map for additional density does not obligate the Town to approve a rezoning if it does meet the direction that the Town wants to go.
- Goals that communities generally have when considering increasing residential density might include:
  - Sense of place
  - Walkability
  - Open green space
  - Dog parks
  - Professional offices
  - Businesses that bring revenue, so that residential property taxes can be held stable.
  - Ability to walk to the grocery store, schools and parks
  - Tax base
- Chair Perkins quoted from the Comprehensive Plan. "To seek to encourage the redevelopment of commercial areas in a manner which will ensure the continued recognition of the Town's unique character combining residential and commercial development in an aesthetic and harmonious way."

Questions from the Planning Commission:

- Chair Perkins requested clear definitions of the zoning districts and zoning district designations.

- Commissioner Love questioned the disparity between the colors used in the current zoning map and those used in the future land use map.
- Chair Perkins suggested the Commission should use the time leading up to revision of the Comprehensive Plan to learn more about the pro's and con's of increasing residential density.

Motion: Commissioner Love moved to continue due diligence on assessing the land use and density initiative. Commissioner Wood seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Steps:

- Chair Perkins asked Town Staff for key definitions of zoning designations and to take steps to increase the Commission's comfort level with the two maps.
- Chair Perkins reminded the Commission that the Town Council will soon have a list of the approved action items from the Commission's Strategic Plan.

## 6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 pm

*Minutes Prepared by Don Wood, Planning Commission Secretary  
With revisions from Matt Whitmoyer, Planning Commission Liaison*