

At a meeting of the Accomack County Planning Commission held on the 14th day of October, 2020, at the Accomack County Board of Supervisors Chambers, Room 104, in Accomac, Virginia, via a hybrid in-person and electronic (conference call) meeting.

1. CALL TO ORDER

MEMBERS PRESENT AND ABSENT

Planning Commission Members Present:

Mrs. Angela Wingfield, Chairwoman

Mr. John Sparkman

Mr. Brantley Onley

Mr. C. Robert Hickman

Mr. Leander Roberts

Mr. Lynn Gayle

Planning Commission Members Participating Electronically:

Mr. Roy Custis, Vice Chairman

Mr. David Lumgair

Planning Commission Members Absent:

Mr. Kelvin Pettit

Others Present:

Mr. Rich Morrison, Deputy County Administrator of Building, Planning, and Economic Development

Mrs. Stephanie Woods, Administrative Assistant to the Deputy County Administrator

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

There being a quorum, Chairwoman Wingfield called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

On a motion made by Mr. Gayle and seconded by Mr. Roberts, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to adopt the agenda.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Chairwoman Wingfield opened the public comment period.

There being no public comments; Chairwoman Wingfield closed the public comment period.

4. MINUTES

September 9, 2020: *On a motion made by Mr. Roberts and seconded by Mr. Hickman, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve the September 9, 2020 meeting minutes as presented.*

5. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business discussed.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. Review of Lighting Ordinance Amendments and possible scheduling of the Public Hearing.

Mr. Morrison gave a brief review of the previous discussions had by the Planning Commission concerning the ordinance sections involving lighting. The ordinance change would allow it to be more permissive, specifically to wall pack lighting. Mr. Morrison stated that the discussion is mainly to see if the Commission wants to do more or if they are good with where it is at and ready to schedule a public hearing.

Mr. Gayle stated that the wall packs are becoming more available to the community and are being used anywhere and everywhere. Mr. Lumgair agreed stating that they are desirable because they don't use much, if any, electricity. Mr. Hickman also agreed, stating that you don't have to run any sort of wiring to use them, and just basically "slap" it onto the side of the building. Mr. Hickman stated that wall pack lighting seems to be becoming the new normal for parking lot lighting. Mr. Morrison stated that the preferred lighting for parking lots continues to be the downward lighting, but that the building wall pack lighting is the issue at hand and why the change was originally pursued.

Mr. Onley informed Mr. Morrison that the lighting at the Royal Farms in Nelsonia is still an issue. Mr. Morrison stated he would send staff out to look at it.

Mr. Lumgair stated that he is in favor of moving forward and seeing how things move forward. Mr. Custis inquired about lighting in other zoning districts. Mr. Morrison stated that staff is only focusing on lighting relating to the commercial properties for now and will work on enforcement in other zoning districts. Mr. Morrison stated that staff will work to see if this public hearing can be held at Metompkin Elementary Cafetorium in the event that there is a significant amount of public that would like to attend, in order to maintain social distancing guidelines.

On a motion made by Mr. Hickman and seconded by Mr. Roberts the Planning Commission voted unanimously to give staff the authority to schedule the Public Hearing for the Ordinance Amendments concerning lighting changes when Metompkin Elementary Cafetorium is available.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Agricultural Ordinance Amendment to allow Antennas and Towers over 100 feet in height by Special Use Permit, and scheduling of a Public Hearing.

Chairwoman Wingfield opened the public hearing for Agricultural Ordinance Amendment to allow Antennas and Towers over 100 feet in height by Special Use Permit. Mr. Morrison briefly spoke about the amendment showing the Planning Commission a base zoning map of the County. The Zoning Map shows that the County is primarily zoned Agricultural and that is why staff is asking to add towers to the Agricultural Zoning District.

Mr. Onley stated that he would like to entice them to build more towers in the County. Mr. Gayle stated that he spoke with a Verizon rep and that they are eager to add more access in the County.

Chairwoman Wingfield opened the public comment period of the public hearing, there being none Chairwoman Wingfield closed the public comment period.

On a motion made by Mr. Hickman and seconded by Mr. Gayle the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend that the Board of Supervisors consider amending Section 106-53 (Agricultural District-Special Exception/Special Uses) of the Accomack County Zoning Ordinance by adding the following:

(26) Antennas and towers in excess of 100 feet in height.

B. Agricultural Ordinance Amendment to allow for a use of land not specifically listed as a Use Permitted by Right or Special Exception-Special Use in the Agricultural District Regulations which is clearly similar and compatible with the uses listed therein.

Chairwoman Wingfield opened the public hearing for Agricultural Ordinance Amendment to allow for a use of land not specifically listed as a Use Permitted by Right or Special Exception-Special Use in the Agricultural District Regulations which is clearly similar and compatible with the uses listed therein. Mr. Morrison briefly spoke about the amendment showing the Planning Commission a base zoning map of the County, which is primarily zoned Agricultural. Mr. Morrison stated that staff receives many questions concerning what people can or cannot do with their property. Mr. Morrison gave the specific example that people will call inquiring about putting an accessory structure on their property for storage as they work to build the main dwelling. Mr. Morrison stated that this amendment is used as a 'safety valve' so that these items can go before the Board of Zoning Appeals for a public hearing and approval.

Chairwoman Wingfield inquired as to why the ordinance had been removed previously. Mr. Morrison stated that he spoke with a previous Planning Commission member, Phil Hickman, who stated that it was primarily involving the chicken houses which is now resolved. As well as, potentially putting large structures to close to incorporated town limits, but there have been enough Ordinance amendments since then that it is no longer an issue.

Chairwoman Wingfield opened the public comment period of the public hearing, there being none Chairwoman Wingfield closed the public comment period.

On a motion made by Mr. Roberts and seconded by Mr. Onley the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend that the Board of Supervisors consider amending Section 106-53 (Agricultural District-Special Exception/Special Uses) of the Accomack County Zoning Ordinance by adding the following:

(27) A use of land not specifically listed as a Use Permitted by Right or Special Exception-Special Use in the Agricultural District Regulations which is clearly similar and compatible with the uses listed therein.

8. SUBDIVISION AGENT REPORT

Nothing to report on at this time.

9. REPORT ON BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS UPCOMING HEARINGS

Mr. Morrison informed the Planning Commission that there is one application that has been submitted for the BZA November hearing.

10. OTHER MATTERS

A. Discussion for scheduling November Meeting due to the fact that the second Wednesday in November is Veterans Day, a County holiday.

Mr. Morrison informed the Planning Commission that their regularly scheduled November meeting falls on November 11th which is Veterans Day which is a County Holiday. Mr. Morrison put it to the Planning Commission to decide if they would like to move it to a different day or cancel the meeting. Mr. Roberts stated that it may be best to cancel the November meeting and receive an electronic packet, in hopes that Metompkin Elementary would be available in December.

On a motion made by Mr. Roberts and seconded by Mr. Gayle the Planning Commission voted unanimously to cancel the regularly scheduled November 11, 2020 meeting.

B. HRSD Update

Mr. Morrison informed the Planning Commission that the HRSD project has been approved in both Accomack and Northampton Counties. Staff should receive news in the next month for a schedule of the project.

C. Real Estate Trends

Mr. Morrison informed the Planning Commission that he has continued to keep an eye on real estate trends and that they are indeed going up. Mr. Morrison stated that the trend seems to be folks who have retirement in site, people buying second houses, or people buying land who are looking to building the future. The General census seems to be that people are moving from the Northern area to this area to get out after the COVID-19 shutdowns. Staff will continue to monitor the trends.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next Planning Commission regular session is scheduled for Wednesday, December 9, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the Accomack County Board Chambers, Room 104, Accomac. To be held as a hybrid – electronic (conference call) and in-person meeting.

12. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Mr. Hickman and seconded by Mr. Gayle, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Angela Wingfield, Chairwoman

Stephanie Woods, Administrative Assistant of Building, Planning, & Economic Development