



The following minutes are a summary of items on the agenda. This meeting may be viewed in its entirety by accessing the video of the same date online via the Town's website at www.frontroyalva.com for a limited time.

The Planning Commission meeting of the Town of Front Royal, Virginia was held on October 18, 2023, at 7:00 PM at the Warren County Government Center.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wells called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 7:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Present: Daniel Wells, Chairman
Connie Marshner, Vice Chairman
Glenn Wood, Commissioner
Michael Williams, Commissioner
Brian Matthiae, Commissioner

Staff Present: Lauren Kopishke, Planning Director/Zoning Administrator
George Sonnett, Assistant Town Attorney
Connie L. Potter, Executive Assistant, Clerk of the Planning Commission

ADDITION/DELETION OF ITEMS FROM THE AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- July 19, 2023 – Regular Meeting

Vice Chairman Marshner moved, seconded by Commissioner Wood to approve the meeting minutes as written.



VOTE: Yes – Wells, Marshner, Wood
No – N/A
Abstain – Matthiae, Williams
Absent – N/A

ROLL CALL

- August 16, 2023 – Regular Meeting

Commissioner Williams moved, seconded by Vice Chairman Marshner to approve the meeting minutes as written.

VOTE: Yes – Marshner, Wells, Williams, Wood
No – N/A
Abstain – Matthiae
Absent – N/A

ROLL CALL

CONSENT AGENDA

- **2300609** – An Ordinance text amendment request submitted by Magdalen Capital, LLLP to amend the current zoning ordinances 175-37.3.C, 175-37.4.A & 175-37.17.A regarding the minimum acreage requirement for the Planned Neighborhood Development District (PND) from the existing 20 and 50-acre minimum lot requirements to a 2-acre minimum lot requirement. (*Consent to Advertise*)

Commissioner Wood moved, seconded by Vice Chairman Marshner to go forward to the amendments as stated.

VOTE: Yes – Williams, Wood, Marshner, Matthiae, Wells
No – N/A
Abstain – N/A
Absent – N/A

ROLL CALL

- **2300537** – Rezoning Application submitted by Magdalen Capital, LLLP for a request to rezone 311 Leach Street, identified by tax map number 20A9-1-3 and adjoining properties identified by tax map numbers 20A9-16-D1, 20A9-16-D2 and 20A9-16-D3 from R-S, Suburban Residential District and R-1, Residential District to PND, Planned Neighborhood Development District. (*Consent to Advertise*)



Vice Chairman Marshner moved, seconded by Commissioner Williams for consent to advertise.

VOTE: Yes – Wells, Marshner, Matthiae, Williams, Wood

No – N/A

Abstain – N/A

Absent – N/A

ROLL CALL

COMMISSION MEMBER REPORTS

There were no comments from the Planning Commission members.

PLANNING DIRECTOR REPORT

Ms. Kopishke reviewed the September monthly report.

Summit and staff are continuing to work on the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision ordinance rewrite. Staff is hoping to present a draft of the document to the Planning Commission in December.

The Planning & Zoning office has started tracking the number of walk-ins each week. In the month of September there were 241 walk-ins.

Commissioner Wood asked if anyone had contacted the Planning and Zoning office with questions/complaints regarding the proposed chicken ordinance amendments or if there were any problems when inspections are being conducted.

Ms. Kopishke said there are 2-3 re-inspections that Mr. Ware will be conducting but there are no real issues that staff has been made aware of.

Commissioner Wood noted that the Town Council moved the amended chicken ordinance back to a work session for discussion and asked Ms. Kopishke to describe what the issues were that led them to take it back to a work session.

Ms. Kopishke stated she could not speak specifically to what Town Council's issues were, however there seemed to be concerns that 'free range' chickens would not be allowed in Town. In addition, there seemed to be concerns about the size requirements for the coop and run area. The size requirements written in the proposed ordinance are the metrics that the Virginia Cooperative Extension office uses. Existing Urban Agriculture permits that have already been issued have met the space requirements for their coops. The purpose of the proposed ordinance is to tighten it up and make sure that the language is in place so if there is a problem or complaints staff can address them.



Commissioner Wood mentioned that at the Town Council meeting they chose not to call Ms. Kopishke forward to answer questions. The Planning Commission with their review and recommendation felt the proposed ordinance met the requirements they were requested by Council to meet and yet they failed to discuss or pass it and proceeded to move it back to a work session. He suggested enforcing the ordinance by asking: 1) are the chickens causing a nuisance; and 2) are the chickens getting out, etc.

Ms. Kopishke explained that staff is operating on a complaint basis only. She stated that chickens are not allowed to run at large just as dogs cannot run at large in Town.

Commissioner Wood asked if he had chickens in a fenced backyard and if they were not out making a nuisance would that be an issue the Planning and Zoning Department would be concerned about.

Ms. Kopishke explained that the Planning and Zoning Department would only be concerned if a complaint was received. She noted that staff would not go into someone's private property.

There was some additional discussion regarding "free range" chickens. Ms. Kopishke explained that the proposed ordinance does not allow chickens to run around the yard even if it is fenced in. The chickens must remain in the run and coop area.

Commissioner Williams spoke on record thanking the Planning Department for the professional manner in which they have handled the situation at hand given their resources.

Commissioner Matthiae asked what the nature of the enforcement was for the month of September as noted in the monthly report.

Ms. Kopishke said they could consist of inoperative vehicles, high grass, trash/debris and not obtaining zoning permits.

Commissioner Matthiae asked if this number included dilapidated buildings.

Ms. Kopishke explained that dilapidated buildings are addressed under property maintenance. Code enforcement is addressed in different areas of the Town Code. Property Maintenance is a separate portion of the Town Code and there is State Code that is also attached to it. It is enforced by the State Property Maintenance Code. The Code Enforcement Official is also the Property Maintenance Official, so she has to be aware of all the relevant sections of the Town Code as well as being educated in the State Code.



ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Williams moved, seconded by Commissioner Wood to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Yes – Wells, Marshner, Matthiae, Williams, Wood

No – N/A

Abstain – N/A

Absent – N/A

ROLL CALL

The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Approved by Planning Commission

Date: 11/15/2023