



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 September 18, 2024, at 7:00 PM at the Warren County Government Center.

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Present: Connie Marshner, Chairman
Megan Marrazzo, Commissioner
Allen Neel, Commissioner
Gary Gillispie, Commissioner

Absent: Andrew Brooks

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

ADDITION/DELETION OF ITEMS FROM THE AGENDA

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- August 21, 2024 – Regular Meeting

Commissioner Marrazzo moved, seconded by Commissioner Neel to approve the meeting minutes as written.

VOTE: Yes – Marrazzo, Marshner, Neel
No – N/A
Abstain – Gillispie
Absent – Brooks

VOICE VOTE



CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

- **2400522** – A Special Use Permit Application submitted by Theresa Roberson to allow a short-term rental located at 132 W. Criser Road, identified by Tax Map 20A6-33-B1-1B. The property is zoned R-3, Residential District. *(Consent to advertise for public hearing at the October 16, 2024 regular Planning Commission meeting.)*
- **2400523** – A Special Exception Application submitted by COL Samuel R. Millar VFW Post 1860, Commander Jeffrey D. Cook for relief of existing parking Town Code requirements located at 654-B W. 11th Street, identified by Tax Map 20A1-2-3-3 and 4. The property is zoned C-2, Community Business District. *(Consent to advertise for public hearing at the October 16, 2024 regular Planning Commission meeting.)*
- **2400524** – A Special Use Permit Application submitted by Surber Development and Consulting LLC to construct Multi-Family Apartments consisting of up to ninety (90) apartments in two separate 3-story buildings with a maximum height of forty-five feet (45') on property located on E. Criser Road, identified by Tax Map 20A18-5-5A1. The property is zoned C-1, Community Business District. *(Consent to advertise for public hearing at the October 16, 2024 regular Planning Commission meeting.)*

Commissioner Gillispie moved, seconded by Commissioner Marrazzo to approve the consent agenda items as presented.

Vote: Yes – Neel, Marshner, Gillispie, Marrazzo

No – N/A

Abstain – N/A

Absent – Brooks

VOICE VOTE

PUBLIC HEARING

- **2400436** – A Rezoning Application submitted by Karen Alexander requesting an amendment to the zoning map to reclassify vacant land located on W. Strasburg Road, identified by Tax Map 20A12-3-27 from C-1, Community Business District to R-3, Residential District.



Mr. Ware summarized the application stating this rezoning application was requesting a zoning map amendment to reclassify a vacant parcel on W. Strasburg Road, identified by Tax Map 20A12-3-27 from C-1, Community Business District to R-3, Residential District. This lot is located on a dead-end road (Hammer Head) at the end. Adjacent lots located on W. Duck Street to the rear of the subject parcel have recently been rezoned to R-3, Residential District.

The subject parcel and adjacent lots were previously zoned R-2 prior to 1980 and then rezoned from R-2 to C-1. Realignment of W. Strasburg Road occurred in 2017 which left these lots at a dead-end street. Since that time there has been very little movement for development in that area. One of the challenges highlighted in the Comprehensive Plan was these areas in Riverton due to their location. There are some disadvantages to these lots in this planning district because of the location and the streets.

The applicant Karen Alexander explained she and her husband owned the subject parcel and had previously owned another three (3) lots at this location. They purchased the lots because it had been rezoned to commercial use. Once VDOT installed the quadrant it made the parcels unsuitable for commercial use. They have marketed the lot and the three (3) houses they previously owned and have worked with the other property owners to the end of the road to market the property as commercial with no success. There were several people interested in purchasing the properties but after talking with VDOT and Zoning they resolved to the fact there was no way to get in and out of the lots without a very costly investment and did not follow through with the purchase because there was not a realistic access to the properties. Ms. Alexander stated that they currently have a contract on the subject parcel that will go to closing if the parcel is rezoned to R-3.

Chairman Marshner opened the public hearing. There were no speakers present.

Chairman Marshner closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Marrazzo moved, seconded by Commissioner Neel forward a recommendation of approval to the Front Royal Town Council for Rezoning Application # 2400436 to amend the Zoning Map of the Town of Front Royal to reclassify a vacant parcel on W. Strasburg Road, identified by Tax Map 20A12-3-27, from C-1, Community Business District to R-3, Residential District.

Commissioner Gillispie expressed that he was not in opposition of what Ms. Alexander would like to do with the property but felt the Comprehensive Plan should be amended for this area before a rezoning takes place.

Chairman Marshner believes these are two separate issues and because of the applicant's urgency to get this resolved it was in the best interest of Front Royal to deal with the rezoning and take up the discussion of a possible Comprehensive Plan amendment at a future Planning Commission Work Session.



Commissioner Marrazzo said she would like to congratulate Ms. Alexander for holding on to the property for this long. It's been a rough ride, and I can certainly appreciate that and the amount of work you have put in. The years that you have spent and the time and money working within how things have been set and the surrounding circumstances, such as the realignment of the road and the effect it has had on both this property and the ones around it really changed the abilities and the possibilities for the property. I think that everything with the Comprehensive Plan and the decisions that this Commission makes are at its core designed to be for what is good for the community. I think that this has shown through your own efforts and how the surrounding land has been regularly used and a residential use here is the best suited for it. There is also the precedent of the property along Duck Street already having been put into R-3. I think this is a great thing. I hope that everything goes well for you and you are able to do what you've been wanting to do for so many years now.

Vote: Yes – Marrazzo, Marshner, Neel
No – Gillispie
Abstain – N/A
Absent – Brooks

ROLL CALL VOTE

- **2400483** – A Special Use Permit Application submitted by The Salvation Army for an artistic mural, exceeding 60 sq. ft., on the west side of the building located at 296 South Street, identified by Tax Map 20A8-16-B. The property is zoned C-1, Community Business District.

Mr. Ware explained this application request was submitted by The Salvation Army for an artistic mural, exceeding 60 sq. ft. in size on the west side of the building located at 296 South Street. Mr. Ware reviewed sign definitions from the Town of Front Royal Zoning Ordinance. The proposed mural will be approximately 14.5' x 18.5 or 268 square feet in size and the proposed rendering is of a black bear and cub with the Salvation Army shield and Virginia bluebells at the bottom. Because the size will exceed 60 sq. ft. they are required to have a Special Use Permit. Staff did not receive any calls or comments regarding the application request.

Captain Ann Hawk of the Salvation Army said she has been at the Front Royal location since 2021. When she arrived, she was horrified at the conditions of their building and has been working towards improving the building and site since that time. She believes the mural will help to promote their business.

Chairman Marshner opened the public hearing. There were no speakers present.

Chairman Marshner closed the public hearing.



Commissioner Gillispie moved, seconded by Commissioner Neel to approve item #2400483, a Special Use Permit application submitted by the Salvation Army for an artistic mural, exceeding 60 square feet on the west side of the building located at 296 South Street, identified by Tax Map 20A8-16-B.

Commissioner Marrazzo believes the proposed mural will look great and that it is a great location for the mural as well as add beauty to the area.

Commissioner Gillispie shared that he appreciates all the work they are putting into improving the building.

Commissioner Neel thanked the Salvation Army for what they do as an organization. He felt this will not distract traffic, will be aesthetically pleasing, and fits into the theme of the Town.

After these comments a vote was taken.

Vote: Yes – Gillispie, Marshner, Neel, Marrazzo
No – N/A
Abstain – N/A
Absent – Brooks

ROLL CALL VOTE

OTHER

There were no comments.

COMMISSION MEMBER REPORTS

There were no additional comments.

PLANNING DIRECTOR REPORT

Ms. Kopishke reviewed the August monthly report.

At the next Planning Commission work session, the Commission and staff will construct a plan to review the draft zoning ordinance 2 to 3 divisions at a time.

Public works will be present at the next Planning Commission work session to answer Commissioner questions regarding the Town's infrastructure.



ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Marrazzo moved, seconded by Commissioner Gillispie to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Yes – Marrazzo, Gillispie, Neel, Marshner

No – N/A

Abstain – N/A

Absent – Brooks

VOICE VOTE

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Approved by Planning Commission

Date: 10/16/2024