



Roll Call by Clerk of Council

PRESENT: Mayor Lori A. Cockrell
Vice Mayor Amber F. Veitenthal
Councilwoman Melissa DeDomenico-Payne
Councilman Joshua L. Ingram
Councilman H. Bruce Rappaport
Councilman Glenn E. Wood

ABSENT: Councilman R. Wayne Sealock

OTHERS PRESENT: Interim Town Manager BJ Wilson
Town Attorney George M. Sonnett, Jr.
Clerk of Council Tina L. Presley
Various members of the staff and public

ACTION ITEM - Request for a VHDA Revitalization Area Designation Resolution Received from Jen Surber of Surber Development and Consulting LLC on Behalf of Harwood Place Va, LLC for an Area of Town to Include the Property for the Proposed 90-unit Apartment Community off E Criser Road – Ms. Surber gave a presentation “*Harwood Place Apartments – A proposed development to be located on E. Criser Road, Front Royal, VA*”. She noted that some of the information was taken from the Town’s Comprehensive Plan including the Goal Statement and Household Size/Income and showed the LIHTC (Low-Income Housing Tax Credit) data for the proposed development from lowest to highest. She showed a graph that indicated housing in Front Royal by year built, noting renter-occupied versus owner-occupied was driven by preference; and, that 35% of residents’ income was used on rent. She advised there were fifteen objectives/strategies to assist with affordable housing in the community pointing out three: 1) implement and continue research on methods for increasing the amount of affordable workforce housing, 2) encourage energy efficient rental housing development (like the installation of solar) and 3) encourage construction of more affordable apartments. According to a survey, she advised that affordable housing in Front Royal ranked third with schools only after safety and Town services, and second only after broadband access for future development. Ms. Surber continued with two points for revitalization criteria showing the definition and explaining what it meant. Town Attorney George Sonnett advised that the intent of defining the revitalization area was included in the first sentence of the explanation “*The tract in question is part of the redevelopment of the East Criser Road to South Street area, from Remount Road to South Royal Avenue, a 1.8-mile area of Town....*” There was much discussion about how the area described had seen development and redevelopment since the 1960’s meeting the definition perfectly; and based on the data shown tonight the community needed it.

Councilman Wood moved seconded by Councilman Rappaport that Council approve, pursuant to Virginia Code §36-55.30:2, a Revitalization Area Designation Resolution for Harwood Place Va, LLC for an area of Town to include the property for the Proposed 90-unit Apartment Community off E. Criser Road, as presented.

Mr. Sonnett advised that the resolution included in the packet called for a description of the revitalization area and the sentence noted previously satisfied the intent. Councilman Ingram voiced concern that the public did not give their input on the designation of this area as a revitalization area. It was noted that the Comprehensive Plan referred to affordable housing and the public gave their input during the rewrite of the Comprehensive Plan.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Wood, Veitenthal, Rappaport, DeDomenico-Payne

No – Councilman Ingram

Absent – Councilman Sealock

Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL



NEW BUSINESS

A. Request for Revisions to Subdivision Development Plan for Happy Creek Knolls, Section 4, Lots 4, 5, 6, 29 & 30 by Maronda Homes, Inc. – Deputy Zoning Administrator/Town Planner I John Ware explained the Town Code Sections that related to this request, specifically sections 148-315 [Major Subdivision Submission Requirements and Review Procedures] and 148-860 [Environmental Improvements, specific to steep slopes]. He advised that originally the houses were to be split level homes with a steeper front yard and more level backyard; however, the plans for a different style of house changed with flat front yards and steeper back yards requiring the construction of retaining walls or submission of a Slope Stability Analysis. The applicant chose to submit a Slope Stability Analysis from their engineer Soil Consultants Engineers (SCE). The engineer reported, in their professional opinion, that the slopes were stable. Mr. Ware reviewed each lot depicting the grade of slope and location of a possible retaining wall. Council confirmed that the developer knew ahead of time what the expectations were as it related to the steep slopes noting that the Slope Stability Analysis was a cheaper option than constructing retaining walls and allowed by Town Code. Council voiced concern about drainage of water into residents' yards, houses and Town sidewalks. Mr. Ware explained and showed where the swales and ditches were located for runoff. Mr. Ware reminded Council that the request before them was to approve or deny the revision of the original plan noting that the Planning Commission and staff's recommendation was to deny. Council voiced concern about the Town's liability issue. Mr. Ware reiterated that the Slope Stability Analysis from their engineer advised that the soil was stable. He advised that their analysis was sent to a consultant who reported that the analysis was from the front part of the lots and stated that cut slopes typically failed as soils get saturated from the rain. There was continued discussion about the possibility of drainage issues in the future. Council agreed to add the March 24th Regular Council Meeting under Business Items.

B. Request for Final Subdivision Plat Approval for Major Subdivision by Ali Billoo from One 3.52 Acre Parcel into (8) Residential Lots, One Stormwater Management Lot & a Residue Lot at 336 W. Strasburg Road – Mr. Ware gave a brief overview of the request noting that the Planning Commission approved the preliminary plan and the next step was the site development plan that would include the stormwater management performed by DEQ. He advised that the development would not affect the resident's property who voiced concern of runoff at the February 24, 2025 Council meeting. Council agreed to add to the March 24th Regular Council Meeting under Business Items.

C. Request for Reimbursement of Special Use Permit (SUP) Application Fee from Warren Coalition – Mr. Ware gave a brief overview of the request and Mr. Sonnett read state law that enabled a donation from a local body to a non-profit organization. Council agreed to add the March 24th Regular Council Meeting under Consent Agenda Items.

D. Request for Curb/Gutter and Sidewalk Waiver for 1011 and 1013 Virginia Avenue by Aaron Hike – Mr. Ware explained that the request was for the waiver of curb, gutter and sidewalk and that the Town's 2026 paving plan had infrastructure work planned for this area of Virginia Avenue. Interim Town Manager BJ Wilson explained that the infrastructure work was planned to be budget for 2026 but that was yet to be determined as Council enters budget discussions. He explained the cash surety bond procedure as an option to the waiver. Council agreed to add to the March 24th Regular Council Meeting under Business Items.

CLOSED MEETING

Vice Mayor Veitenthal moved seconded by Councilman Wood that Town Council convene a closed meeting, pursuant to Sections 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia, for the following purpose: 1) *pursuant to §2.2-3711(A)(1) of the Code of Virginia, for the discussion, consideration, assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body, more specifically the Town Manager Position and 2) pursuant to §2.2-3711(A)(3) of the Code of Virginia, discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property,*



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.

where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, more specifically, the sale of a vacated portion of Kibler Street abutting 219 E. 7th Street.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Wood, Veitenthal, Rappaport, Ingram, DeDomenico-Payne

No – N/A

Absent – Councilman Sealock

Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL

Councilman Ingram moved seconded by Councilman Wood that Council certify that to the best of each member's knowledge, as recognized by each Council member's affirmative vote, that only such public business matters lawfully exempted from Open Meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the Closed Meeting by Council, and that the vote of each individual member of Council be taken by roll call and recorded and included in the minutes of the meeting of Town Council.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Wood, Veitenthal, Rappaport, Ingram, DeDomenico-Payne

No – N/A

Absent – Councilman Sealock

Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL

Adjourned approximately 9:10pm.

Approved by Town Council

Date: 3/24/25