



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 January 21, 2026, at 7:00 PM at the Warren County Government Center.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Marshner called the January 21, 2026 meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Connie Marshner, Chairman
Allen Neel, Vice Chairman
Megan Marrazzo, Commissioner
Teresa Fedoryka, Commissioner
Andrew Brooks, Commissioner

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

ADDITION/DELETION OF ITEMS FROM THE AGENDA

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- December 18, 2025 – Regular Meeting

Commissioner Marrazzo moved, seconded by Vice Chairman Neel to approve the regular meeting minutes of December 18, 2025 as written.

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

ROLL CALL



PUBLIC COMMENTS (NOT RELATED TO PUBLIC HEARINGS)

Chairman Marshner explained the process for speaking at the meeting.

Nancy Lee, 214 Grand Avenue, Front Royal, VA. Ms. Lee spoke about the proposed rezoning application on Grand Avenue expressing that she was opposed to approving the application. She agrees with the need for affordable housing in Front Royal but felt those should be built in zoning districts that currently allow the type of houses the applicant is proposing to build (*duplexes*). Ms. Lee provided a signed petition of those against the proposed rezoning and a letter from a neighbor who was unable to attend the meeting.

Trey Stanford, 314 Salem Avenue, Front Royal, VA. Mr. Stanford expressed that he was against the proposed rezoning on Grand Avenue. He said there were plenty of other places in Town to build duplexes where they are currently allowed without seeking a rezoning.

Collin Steward, 425 Grand Avenue, Front Royal, VA. Mr. Steward shared that he was opposed to the proposed rezoning application on Grand Avenue and he felt the rezoning would impact their property values should duplexes be built on the vacant lots if the rezoning is approved

Pattie McHugh, 334 Grand Avenue, Front Royal, VA. Ms. McHugh thanked the Planning Commission members as public servants for all they do for the community. She stated she was in agreement with her neighbors being against the proposed rezoning on Grand Avenue. Ms. McHugh said there is a lot of history on Grand Avenue with generational families living there. She felt there is a risk of devaluing the properties if the rezoning is approved and duplexes are constructed and believes that either a single-family dwelling or two single-family dwellings should be constructed on the vacant lots.

CONSENT TO ADVERTISE

1. **2500610** – A Special Use Permit Application to allow a Short-Term Rental, as defined in Town Code §175-3, submitted by Veronica Tello, and located at 214 Lee Street, identified by Tax Map 20A7-4-93. The property is zoned R-3, Residential District and is located in the Historic Overlay District.
2. **2600013** - A Rezoning Application submitted by Dana Cline requesting an amendment to the zoning map to reclassify vacant lots on Grand Avenue identified by Tax Map 20A6, Section 6, Block 4, Parcels 11A and 14A, from R-1, Residential District to R-3, Residential District.
3. **2600021** – A Special Exception Application submitted by Monteverde Engineering & Design Studio on behalf of Squirrel Hill 1 LLC, requesting an exception from Town Code Chapter 148-860.6.e. retaining wall height requirements of six feet (6'), and requesting to increase the maximum allowable wall height, for properties located on Orchard Street, identified by Tax Map 20A6, Section 5, Parcels 8-1, 8-2, 8-3, 8-11, and 8-12.



Commissioner Brooks moved, seconded by Vice Chairman Neel to approve the consent agenda to publicly advertise for a public hearing in February as presented.

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

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Ware noted there were three (3) Special Use Permits for public hearing on the agenda. He reviewed portions of Town Code related to Special Use Permits.

1. **2500571** – A Special Use Permit Application, submitted by Gary Bunch, to allow an Automobile Garage/General Repair Shop, located at 3 West 14th Street, identified by Tax Map 20A2-3-63-24A, 25, 26, 27, B 63. The property is zoned C-1, Community Business District and is located in the Entrance Corridor.

This Special Use Permit application is to allow an automobile garage/general repair shop at 3 West 13th Street. The property sits at the curve at W. 14th Street and N. Royal Avenue. The property currently operates as an automobile service station. Mr. Ware gave a virtual presentation showing the structures, as well as the entrances and exits on the property. In the future, the applicant does propose to expand the business. They would like to attach another building to the existing structure hence the need for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to expand the business from a service station to general auto repair. If the SUP is approved the size of the new structure would be dictated by the size of the lot, parking requirements and the required setbacks.

Staff placed conditions with an approval of the SUP application. Those conditions were listed in the staff report. Ms. Kopishke reiterated that the proposed conditions were recommended by staff especially the closure of the entrance off of 14th Street. From a public safety concern, Public Works recommended there be one entrance and exit off of N. Royal Avenue.

Commissioner Marrazzo referred to recommendation number 3 in the staff report that outdoor storage be screened to obstruct its visibility from any public street and asked if that would include signage. She wanted clarity that display and signage are not considered the same thing.

Mr. Ware explained that the area to be screened is part of the performance standards in the C-1 zoning district for that type of use.

The applicant, Mr. Bunch shared they would like to construct a facility in the rear of the existing building and turn it into a garage repair facility instead of a service facility. He noted that he agrees with closing the entrance onto W. 14th Street.



Chairman Marshner opened the public hearing.

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

In furtherance of the purposes and objectives contained in Town Code 175-1(B), Commissioner Marrazzo moved, seconded by Commissioner Brooks that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval to the Town Council for Special Use Permit #2500571 to allow an Automobile Garage/General Repair Shop, located at 3 West 14th Street, and identified by Tax Map 20A2-3-63-24A, 25, 26, 27, B 63 with the following conditions:

- 1. The entrance off 14th street shall be removed and replaced with curb and gutter.**
- 2. All work shall be conducted within an enclosed building.**
- 3. All outdoor storage or display shall be screened to obstruct its visibility from any public street.**

VOTE: Yes – Marrazzo, Marshner, Fedoryka, Brooks, Neel

No – N/A

Abstain – N/A

Absent – N/A

ROLL CALL

- 2. 2500573** – A Special Use Permit Application, submitted by Property Connection, LLC, to allow an Automobile Parking Lot, Commercial (tow yard) located on a vacant lot on Kibler Street, identified by Tax Map 20A4-4-5. The property is zoned C-1, Community Business District.

Mr. Ware read the definition from Town Code for Automobile Parking Lot, Commercial: “*A lot or portion thereof, other than an automobile sales lot, held out or used for the storage or parking of six (6) or more motor vehicles for a consideration, where service or repair facilities are not permitted. Such parking lot shall not be considered an accessory use; nor shall it be used for the storage of dismantled or wrecked vehicles, parts thereof or junk.*”

The request is for a Towing Operator as defined by Town Code in Chapter 158. This would allow them to secure a lot to have vehicles towed there. There are general requirements with the storage of vehicles. Those requirements are part of the conditions noted in the staff report. The Vehicle Storage Facility shall be fully enclosed by a commercial grade fence at least six feet (6”) tall. Also, the storage lot shall have a gravel or paved surface. If the application is approved, the applicant will obtain a business license from the Town. Depending on the storage facility the lot is required to be at least 1,500 square feet and for heavy towing the requirement is 3,000 square feet. This will determine the fenced in area of whether they are doing a regular towing service or a heavy duty towing service.



The property is located at the end of Kibler Street on a vacant lot. The plat submitted with the application showed a fence around the perimeter of the vacant lot. Mr. Ware reviewed the conditions recommended by staff.

Commissioner Marrazzo asked if there were any concerns with traffic going in and out or during times of night they would be operating as this is used as a residential area.

Mr. Ware stated that Town Code does address this under the vehicle and traffic section. There are operating hours and signage that needs to be posted if the applicant will be doing this as a vehicle storage facility.

Commissioner Fedoryka referred to condition number 4 in the staff report: “wrecked or damaged vehicles shall not remain onsite for a period longer than forty-eight (48) hours upon arrival on the lot” and questioned how this would be enforced.

Mr. Ware said this would be enforced by Code Enforcement.

Ms. Kopishke explained this would mostly be complaint driven. If staff received a complaint that a vehicle was sitting there for weeks on end, staff would investigate that complaint.

Chairman Marshner opened the public hearing.

There were no speakers present and Chairman Marshner closed the public hearing.

In furtherance of the purposes and objectives contained in Town Code 175-1(B), Vice Chairman Neel moved, seconded by Commissioner Fedoryka that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval to the Town Council for Special Use Permit #2500573 to allow an Automobile Parking Lot, Commercial (Tow Yard) located on a vacant lot on Kibler Street, and identified by Tax Map 20A4-4-5 with the following conditions:

- 1. The Vehicle Storage Facility shall be fully enclosed by commercial grade fence which does not restrict the flow of water and is at least six feet (6') tall.**
- 2. The north, west and south sides of the lot shall be screened to always obstruct view from the adjacent properties and public street with an Evergreen Hedge at least six feet (6') feet in height.**
- 3. The Vehicle Storage Facility lot shall have a graveled or paved surface.**
- 4. Wrecked or damaged vehicles shall not remain on site for a period longer than forty-eight (48) hours upon arrival on the lot.**

VOTE: Yes – Fedoryka, Marshner, Neel, Marrazzo, Brooks

No – N/A

Abstain – N/A

Absent – N/A

ROLL CALL



-
3. **2500581** – A Special Use Permit Application, submitted by AJM, LLC Front Royal VA on behalf of The Boisseau Family LC ET AL, to operate a shopping center in the C-1 zoning district pursuant to Town of Front Royal Municipal Code Section 175-39(B), located on South Street, identified by Tax Map 20A18-5-7. The property is zoned C-1, Community Business District.

Mr. Ware explained this application is to bring the existing shopping center (Royal Plaza) into compliance with Town Code. This shopping center was constructed before Town Code was written for shopping centers. Any expansion of the existing shopping center would require a Special Use Permit be in place. This should have happened previously when the Martins was expanded.

Mr. Ware noted a parking plan was submitted with the SUP application. The number of parking spaces for the shopping center are dictated by Town Code. Some of the parking spaces in the rear area behind Royal King may need to be restriped. The number of existing parking spaces would be in compliance with Town Code. If the Special Use Permit is approved staff is recommending the potential for restriping some areas in the rear of the shopping center behind Rural King. In addition, staff is recommending that the applicant shall remove all off-premise signs from the property. There is currently a billboard on the property located on Remount Road that is advertising a business that is not there which is classified as an off-premise sign. Town Code §175-106.4 billboard sign definition: Billboard Sign – see “Off-premises sign”. In §175-106.4 the Off-Premises Sign definition states: “A sign which directs attention to a business, commodity, service or establishment conducted, sold or offered at a location other than the premises on which the sign is erected”. Town Code §175-106.5.a – Prohibited Signs: The following signs are expressly prohibited unless specifically stated otherwise: a. Billboards and Off-premise signs.

Answering questions from Chairman Marshner, Ms. Kopishke explained the difference between a ground mounted sign and a billboard.

Commissioner Marrazzo asked why billboards were prohibited across the board.

Mr. Sonnett explained that local Zoning Ordinances are enabled by state law to regulate signs. There are certain signs that are exempt from local regulations but those have to do with ones along the interstates and national roads in the state. These are regulated at the state or federal level. Mr. Sonnett noted that it goes back to Lady Bird Johnson who had a campaign to remove billboards nationwide for beautification. There is also the safety argument that billboard signs distract drivers.

Ms. Kopishke stated that billboards are considered “sign pollution” and are unnecessary. In addition, she noted that there is sufficient parking that is striped at the shopping center.

Joe Brogan, Brogan Land Surveying stated he was representing the applicant. Mr. Brogan explained their office had prepared the parking plan and he was there to answer questions.

Chairman Marshner opened the public hearing.



There were no speakers and Chairman Marshner closed the public.

In furtherance of the purposes and objectives contained in Town Code 175-1(B), Commissioner Brooks moved, seconded by Commissioner Fedoryka that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval to the Town Council for Special Use Permit #2500581 to operate a shopping center in the C-1 zoning district pursuant to the Town of Front Royal Municipal Code §175-39(B), located on South Street, identified by Tax Map 20A18-5-7 with the following conditions:

- 1. Required parking spaces shall remain unobstructed and reserved solely for parking purposes. No other use, including storage, loading, or outdoor activity, shall be permitted within the designated parking areas. All parking spaces shall be permanently and clearly striped in accordance with applicable standards.***
- 2. The applicant shall remove all off-premises signs from the property.***

VOTE: Yes – Marshner, Marrazzo, Neel, Brooks, Fedoryka

No – N/A

Abstain – N/A

Absent – N/A

ROLL CALL

COMMISSION MEMBER REPORTS

There were no comments.

PLANNING DIRECTOR REPORT

Ms. Kopishke reviewed the December monthly report. She noted that staff was working on the 2025 Annual Report.

The goal for 2026 is to move both the draft Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance to public hearing and ultimately move them forward to Town Council.

In February the Planning Commission will be electing a Chairman and Vice Chairman and conducting the annual review of the Planning Commission By-Laws.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chairman Neel moved, seconded by Commissioner Brooks to adjourn the meeting.



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

VOICE VOTE

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Approved by Planning Commission
Date: 2/18/2026