

**Planning Commission
Town of Front Royal, Virginia**

May 18, 2016

Present: **Deborah Langfitt, Chairman**
 Douglas Jones, Vice Chairman
 Christopher Morrison, Commissioner
 David Gushee, Commissioner
 Joseph McFadden, Commissioner
 Connie Marshner, Commissioner

Staff: **Jeremy Camp, Director**
 Darryl Merchant, GIS Analyst/Planner/Surveyor
 Connie L. Potter, Sr. Administrative Assistant

The May 18, 2016 meeting of the Planning Commission for the Town of Front Royal, Virginia was called to order by Chairman Langfitt at 7:00 p.m.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no speakers present.

MINUTES

Vice Chairman Jones moved, seconded by Commissioner Gushee to approve the minutes from March 16, 2016 meeting with 2 small changes of wording.

VOTE: Yes – Gushee, Jones, Langfitt, Marshner, Morrison

Commissioner McFadden had not yet arrived.

PUBLIC HEARING

There were no items for public hearing.

CONSENT AGENDA

There were no items for review on the consent agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

- DEV16-03-229, Ressie Jeffries Elementary School Upgrades, a site plan application submitted by the County of Warren, for a 1,130 square foot addition and parking lot expansions at 320 E. Criser Road.

Mr. Camp explained that the proposed renovations are for the elementary school located on Criser Road. The improvements proposed are the addition of two parking lots, consisting of eighty new parking spaces. This increases the total number of parking spaces on the site to 171. They are also proposing a small addition, located in the front of the building. The 1,130 square foot addition is composed of two additional rooms and an entrance foyer. There will be landscaping for the new parking and some significant grading will be needed to accommodate the parking areas. A proposed sidewalk is also included on the site plan that will run from the eastern entrance of the school site to the entrance of the school. This will be a welcome addition for those walking to the school and will encourage walking in a safe way.

During the review process Town Staff identified a number of deficiencies and recommendations. Town Staff included a recommendation to the County to consider altering the traffic flow at the school site so that the primary entrance was the entrance closest to the library on the far eastern side and turn the other entrance into an exit only. This would allow the Town to move the left-turn lane further to the east, which would be a safety improvement and allow for more space for possible future street improvements and a trail along Criser Road by the Town. The response letter from Warren County states that this is being considered, but it is not addressed on the current plan.

Staff has recommended approval of the site plan. Mr. Camp noted that the plan is valid for five (5) years, however he believes the County will begin work much sooner than that.

Melody Sheppard, Assistant Superintendent of Warren County Schools stated that when the school has events at Ressie Jeffries Elementary School there is no available parking. People are parking on the grass and up on Criser Road which makes it dangerous for other people. This is the largest elementary school in the County with about 650 students and 100 staff. They plan to start the project later this summer and it should take about 12 months.

Vice Chairman Jones noted that much of the playground area would be removed and asked if there would still be a good deal of playground area.

Ms. Sheppard said they will be configuring an area on the other side of the school for K through sixth.

Vice Chairman Jones referred to the installation of curb and gutter and that it appears to go quite a bit into the right-of-way and asked if this would limit any further broadening of the road.

Ms. Sheppard stated they are adding the curb and gutter at the request of the Town.

Mr. Camp explained that the area where the curb and gutter is located has a significant grade which limits the Town with the Criser Road Trial. The issue is more further to the west.

Commissioner Gushee moved, seconded by Commissioner Morrison to approve DEV16-03-229, as submitted, for improvements at Ressie Jeffries Elementary School, conditional on final submission for signatures by Town Staff.

VOTE: Yes – Morrison, Gushee, Langfitt, McFadden, Marshner, Jones

OLD BUSINESS

There were no items for old business.

Chairman Langfitt welcomed the new Planning Commission members Joseph McFadden and Connie Marshner.

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Camp reviewed the monthly reports for March and April.

The Community Development Downtown Revitalization Committee have meetings coming up soon to discuss how to use and designate grant funds on the project. The next meeting will be May 24th. This is a special meeting to review several proposals for architectural services related to the façade improvement program that they are developing. The goal for the application is to have the revitalization plan finished this year and submit by March 2017 for implementation funding for implementing the revitalization plan.

Town Council will hold a public hearing on May 23rd for two items that the Planning Commission has worked on to include: Front Royal Limited Partnership and the R-1A Ordinance amendment that would allow for an option for smaller lots in the R-1A district, contingent on additional open space set aside and recreational amenities for the development. On May 23rd Town Council will also hold a public hearing on Front Royal Limited Partnerships Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

The Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) met May 17th where they considered two applications. One was an appeal in regards to a decision by Staff of a violation at 55 Westminster Drive related to a sign. The BZA upheld Staff's determination that it was in violation. The other application was for a variance request for a sign at the corner of 6th Street and Virginia Avenue. This application was continued until next month to give the applicant more time to make modifications to their existing sign that they constructed without a permit.

In May the Board of Architectural Review did not meet but will meet June 13th to review two applications.

Mr. Camp noted that there will be a work session following the Planning Commission meeting.

COMMISSION MEMBER REPORTS

Vice Chairman Jones said he was encouraged to see changes and repairs at the Ressie Jeffries Elementary School. He would like to commend the school board in getting those renovations underway.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Gushee moved, seconded by Commissioner Morrison to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Yes – Morrison, Gushee, Langfitt, Marshner, Jones, McFadden

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Connie L. Potter
Sr. Administrative Assistant