

MOUNT JACKSON
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING

July 6, 2015

Chairperson Good called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners in attendance included: Mses. Diehl, Fadely, A. Miller and Messrs. Bowyer, Hackenbracht and Hand. Guests included Doug Arthur, Town Attorney; Heather Taylor, Town Clerk; Ray Burkholder and Robert Whitehurst as well as approximately 23 people from the community.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA: None

Mr. Tom Harris, resident of Shenandoah County and property owner near the Whitehurst property shared that he traveled to Chambersburg, PA. He brought photographs of his travels to the meeting showing a vacant mega-site that he stated "had been empty for some time". He raised two questions, "Would you want this in your backyard? Do you want Mount Jackson to be known for this?"

MINUTES- Commissioner Hackenbracht MOVED, seconded by Commissioner Hand, to APPROVE the minutes of the June 1, 2015 Work Shop, Joint Public Hearing and Regular Meeting.

VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Commissioner Bowyer		
“ Diehl		
“ Fadely		
“ Hand		
“ Hackenbracht		
“ A. Miller		

6 AYE, motion carried

OLD BUSINESS: Ordinance 02-2015 Extension of the Town Boundary by the Annexation of Certain Territory in the County of Shenandoah, (Whitehurst and Payne Properties). Chairman Good said that she would entertain a motion to approve or disapprove an annexation on this property at this time.

Commissioner Hand asked for time for discussion. He found an extensive study, 80+ pages, out of University of North Carolina on EDAs in small towns ranging from 37 people to 30K people. Commissioner Hand wanted to highlight the following in regard to the Town of Mount Jackson.

- Mount Jackson has a north & south entrance into town with both including I-81 access.
- Bryce travelers need to go through Mount Jackson. What does the town have to offer?
- Approach with improvement-always bring improvement.
- Encourage entrepreneurship. Leaders, encourage it. Bring it into our schools. Have business owners go into our schools.
- Traffic increase, that's a good thing. When we need a light at Rt. 263, that will be a good thing and it means people are coming into this area.
- Have controlled new growth and handle it with constructive dissatisfaction.

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Commissioner Hand reminded the guests that the property being discussed for annexation was already scheduled to be annexed even if it were to become residential.

Chairman Good commented that not many years ago it was asked, "Which study areas would be approached 1st, 2nd and 3rd? The Caverns Road area was decided to be the first area addressed for growth and development before the other areas on the east side and the northern side. Chairperson Good mentioned that she's had discussions with Kevin Fauber and Town Attorney, Doug Arthur to ask if this process can address the land use Comprehensive Plan. "Nothing can happen on the land as it's currently annexed. To get prepared for rezoning, the Comprehensive Plan needs to be rewritten. The town has to come up with what they agree to as to the type of development, as well as the limitations and strengths. Ordinances must also be caught up to the land use changes. We must follow ordinances. It was decided 15 years to annex this land into the town."

Commissioner Bowyer reiterated, "Annexing the property would make the property available to discuss as part of the town's plan. Action wouldn't be taken on rezoning until we revisited the Comprehensive plan."

Chairperson Good gave a time frame of one year on the process including meetings, looking at the land(s), considering availability and discussing the types of development that the town might need in the next 10 to 25 years.

Mr. Doug Arthur addressed the question, "Why wouldn't we also include the county government in this?" His response, "Ten to 15 years ago the Town and County entered into an annexation agreement/contract where the town could annex certain properties. This area was called a Study area and it included the property being discussed. It has already been agreed upon being called an Annexation Agreement."

The question, "Would there be any economic impact on the town?" was asked. Chairperson Good stated, "No, there would be economic impact to the town. Mr. Whitehurst would pay the town taxes."

Commissioner Fadely reiterated, "This would simply be the land that Robert Whitehurst owns and the one to two acres of the Payne's. Any bordering land would still be in the county."

Commissioner Diehl MOVED, seconded by Commissioner Hand, "Based on the original plan, the study area & knowing we have every intention to update the land-use portion of the Comp. Plan with that particular land specifically in mind and knowing full well that rezoning and Special-Use permits must be approved before any action can take place, I move that we accept Ordinance 02-2015."

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VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Commissioner Bowyer		
“ Diehl		
“ Fadely		
“ Hand		
“ Hackenbracht		
“ A. Miller		

6 AYE, motion carried

Mr. Doug Arthur asked for an opportunity to explain that the role of the Planning Commission is to advise the Council. “Their role is not an authoritative role but an advisory role and the public needs to understand this. Town Council will take the Commission’s motion and give it credence because it’s been unanimous and they will take it, look at it and work with it.”

Commissioner Hackenbracht gave the Town Council report. “In regard to the Water Treatment plant, the Dept. of Health has given approval to this and it’s now in the hands of the engineer and the state agency that’s responsible for the financing of the project.

The small sidewalk from Daniel Gray to Save-A-Lot, some driveways have been poured this week and demolition of the present sidewalk and paver installation will begin next week.

The bigger sidewalk project near the new Holtzman building has been given final comments by the town engineer and VDOT. There is a meeting scheduled and this can finally go to bid after two years.

Council is pursuing the purchase of playground equipment for smaller children where the old tennis courts used to be at the town park. The basketball courts have been repaved. The water tower has lights and we hope they are not offensive to anyone.

Commissioner Fadely MOVED to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner A. Miller.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Submitted:

Heather M. Taylor, Town Clerk

