

TOWN OF ABINGDON
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 25, 2016 – 5:30 P.M.

The regular meeting of the Abingdon Planning Commission was held Monday, July 25, 2016, at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was held in the Municipal Building, Council Chambers.

Mr. Wayne Austin, Chairman, called the meeting to order. Mr. Mathew Johnson called the roll.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mr. Kenneth Shuman, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Gregory W. Kelly, Secretary
Councilman Rick Humphreys
Ms. Janice Reeves
Ms. Maggie Costello
Mr. Chris Burcher

Comprising a quorum of the Commission

Members Absent: Mr. Wayne Austin, Chairman

Administrative Staff: Mr. Matthew Johnson, Director of Planning
Mr. Sean Taylor, Assistant Town Planner
Mrs. Deborah Icenhour, Town Attorney
Mr. John Dew, Director of Public Services

Visitors: Mr. Stephen Spangler
Ms. Cindy Patterson
Ms. Terry Groseclose

(2) Approval of minutes: Regular meeting, June 27, 2016.

Mr. Kelly moved to accept the minutes, as presented. Second by Councilmember Humphreys. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

(3) Request for Comprehensive Signage Plan (CSP): **Marathon Realty Corp., owners**, PO BOX 518, Abingdon, VA 24212; **Stephen Spangler, representative**. Proposed comprehensive signage plan to govern property within the 10 lot subdivision, property located near 440 Green Spring Rd, commonly known as the "Meadows" development project, zoned B-2 (General Business). **Including all or portions of Tax Map Numbers 105-A-39, 021-1-5B, & 021-1-5.**

Mr. Shuman indicated that he would be abstaining from the discussion due to the fact that he had a known conflict of interest. However, since he serves the Commission as the Vice-Chair, he would be chairing the meeting in Mr. Austin's absence.

Mr. Spangler presented a PowerPoint showing the proposed signage and presented proposed comprehensive signage plan language to the Commission. Much discussion about the proposed pylon signs ensued. Mr. Humphreys stated that he felt that the proposed pylon sign was too large and presented a concept from Richmond, VA, showing a similar – but smaller – version of a pylon sign for a large development. Mrs. Costello indicated that signs are typically sized according to the speed limits of traffic along the streets that the signs are located on. Mr. Humphreys indicated that he felt that a sign of 42 feet would be much more appropriate. Mr. Spangler presented a map showing all of the adjacent properties, signage on those properties, and heights of each. Mr. Kelly indicated that he felt that it was a “balancing act” to find appropriate sizes for all of the development's signs. Mr. Spangler did state that his potential tenants were interested in larger signage for better visibility. Mr. Humphreys indicated that he felt that larger signage did not necessarily mean more traffic for those businesses.

Mr. Johnson indicated that staff felt that the proposed monument signs internal to the development were too large and staff recommended that a maximum 8 ft. tall by 8 ft. wide limit be instituted by the Commission. Mr. Humphreys suggested that he would be agreeable to 10 ft. high monument signs and 42 ft. high for the pylon signs.

Mrs. Costello requested photo renderings showing a mock-up of the proposed pylon sign and how it would look from both directions on Cummings St. Mrs. Costello also indicated that she was concerned about the electronic billboard-style signs being permitted within the development. Mrs. Reeves requested that the applicant provide an elevation of the proposed pylon sign, similar to Mrs. Costello's request.

Following much discussion, Mr. Humphreys suggested that the Planning Commission table the discussion until further information might be provided by the applicant at a special work session. The Commission compared calendars and the date of August 11th at 5:30pm was selected for the special work session. It was agreed that no action would be taken at that meeting and that the purpose would be for discussion only.

Mr. Humphreys moved to table the discussion until the special work session scheduled for August 11th at 5:30pm in the Arthur Campbell Room, Town Hall. Second by Mrs. Costello.

Roll call vote as follows:

Mr. Kelly- Aye
 Councilman Humphreys- Aye
 Ms. Costello- Aye
 Ms. Reeves- Aye
 Mr. Burcher – Aye
 Mr. Shuman – Abstained

All in favor. Motion to table the discussion until August 11th was approved.

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(4) Public Comment.

None

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(5) Updates from Staff

a. Transportation Update – John Dew

Mr. Dew indicated that he would be coming to the Commission from time to time with any pertinent updates regarding the traffic improvements currently underway in the area.

b. Long-range Planning – Matthew Johnson

Mr. Johnson reminded the Commission of some looming dates on the horizon. The Comprehensive Plan must be updated by 2018 per Virginia law, which requires updates every 5 years. The last update was adopted in 2013. Mr. Johnson also indicated that he has been seeing the need for a comprehensive code update. The Sustain Abingdon Committee requested that code updates be completed which would address sustainability initiatives as well.

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(6) Updates from Commissioners

Mr. Humphreys thanked Mr. Spangler for his patience and indicated that the Commission was interested in seeing a quality project.

Mrs. Costello presented some information from the American Planning Association which is geared towards education for Commissions and Boards. The fee for signing up all members would be \$450. All members indicated that they would be interested and Mr. Shuman directed Mr. Johnson to proceed with registering all members.

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There being no further business, Mr. Humphreys moved to recess until the August 11th special work session at 5:30pm. Second by Mr. Kelly. All in favor, the meeting recessed at 6:51 p.m.

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Mr. Gregory W. Kelly, Secretary

Kenny Shuman, Vice-Chairman