

**TOWN OF ABINGDON
PLANNING COMMISSION
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2023, 5:30 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A meeting of the Abingdon Planning Commission was held on Monday, November 27, 2023,
at 5:30 PM in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

- A. Scott Wilson – Vice Chairman called the meeting to Order**
- B. Roll Call – Mayana Rice, Assistant Town Manager**

Members Present:

Mr. Wayne Austin	Present
Mr. Michael Weaver	Present
Mr. Jeff Johnson	Present
Mr. Scott Wilson	Present
Mr. Kirk Sproles	Present
Mr. Chad Pennington	Present

Members Absent:

Mr. Kenny Shuman	Absent
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Comprising a quorum of the Commission – Yes

Administrative Staff Present:

Mrs. Mayana Rice – Assistant Town Manager
Mr. Gabe Cristofari – Senior Planner/GIS
Mr. Caleb Conklin – Planner I

Guests: None

- C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: REGULAR MEETING, OCTOBER 23, 2023. (VIDEO 4:58 – 5:41)**
 - October 23, 2023, Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Weaver, the Planning Commission approved the Regular Meeting Minutes for October 23, 2023.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Wayne Austin	Abstain
Mr. Michael Weaver	Aye
Mr. Jeff Johnson	Aye
Mr. Scott Wilson	Abstain
Mr. Kirk Sproles	Aye
Mr. Chad Pennington	Aye

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

E. CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

1. *Certificate of Appropriateness – Aarons Rental, 398 Cummings Street, Abingdon, VA 24210 Applicant. Jason Rust; Representative. Certificate of Appropriateness for Signage. Located at 398 Cummings Street, Abingdon, VA 24210. (Tax Map 020-13-1) (VIDEO 6:00 – 11:13)*

Mr. Conklin provided the staff report.

Aarons Rental (Owner/Applicant) and Jason Rust (Representative) have requested approval of an Entrance Corridor Certificate of Appropriateness to remove the existing monument and wall signage, replacing them with new signage and changing the exterior paint scheme. Located at 398 Cummings Street, Abingdon (Parcel 020-13-1).

The property is within the General Business District (B-2) and is within the Entrance Corridor therefore requiring the approval of the Planning Commission prior to completion.

There is existing wall signage and signage located on the Abingdon Shopping Center monument sign structure.

The proposed freestanding signage will replace the existing signage on the Abingdon Shopping Center monument sign structure. The proposed sign will consist of 3M panagraphics III flexible replacement faces with vinyl graphics. The sign will measure 260.75 in. x 71.5 in. = 129.5 sq. ft. The size of the proposed signage matches the existing sign. The color of the sign will consist of: Bristol Blue Block Out and White Panaflex/Copy.

The proposed illuminated wall signage will be replacing the existing illuminated signage on the front of the structure. The sign will use flat cut out clear Lexan with white vinyl. The sign will measure 17 ft. 7-7/16 in. x 5 ft. 10-11/16 in. = 104 sq. ft. The maximum size of the wall sign can be 132 sq. ft., the proposed wall sign meets the requirement. The color of the sign will consist of: ALPOLIC Materials CFB Blue, White, and Bristol Blue Vinyl.

The applicant proposed to paint the front of the building using the colors: Software, Web Gray, and Big Chill.

The owner has been in contact with Jerry's Signs with looking to do a new design for the Abingdon Shopping Center monument sign structure. No decision has been made yet.

Mrs. Rice (Staff) stated that the town contacted the owner regarding redoing the entire monument sign design. The owner is in agreeance and is looking into a design. Mr. Weaver (PC) asked if Aaron's Rental will wait to do their sign until the new design is made. Jason Rust (Representative) stated that he thinks they will not wait. He is a subcontractor and cannot speak on behalf of the property itself. Mr. Pennington (PC) asked who owns the property. Mrs. Rice answered the Nicewonders.

On a motion by Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Pennington, the Planning Commission voted to approve the COA as presented.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Wayne Austin	Aye
Mr. Michael Weaver	Aye
Mr. Jeff Johnson	Aye
Mr. Scott Wilson	Aye
Mr. Kirk Sproles	Aye
Mr. Chad Pennington	Aye

- 2. Certificate of Appropriateness – Young Investment Company, 484 E. Main Street, Abingdon, VA 24210 Applicant. Interstate Sign Company; Representative. Certificate of Appropriateness for Signage. Located at 484 Cummings Street, Abingdon, VA 24210. (Tax Map 020-10-2) (VIDEO 11:14 – 14:24)***

Mr. Conklin provided the staff report.

Young Investment Company (Owner) and Interstate Sign Company, Inc. (Applicant) have requested approval of an Entrance Corridor Certificate of Appropriateness to remove portions of the existing monument signage and replace it with new signage. Located at 484 Cummings Street, Abingdon (Parcel 020-10-2).

The property is within the General Business District (B-2) and is within the Entrance Corridor therefore requiring the approval of the Planning Commission prior to completion.

There is an existing freestanding sign. The building is currently occupied by the Kroger Fuel Center.

The applicant proposed to remove the existing Kroger identification sign and the existing 3-product fuel price sign. The signs will be replaced with a new Kroger identification sign and new 3-product fuel price sign with LED digits. The size of Kroger identification sign will measure 120.25 in. x 26.125" = 21.8 sq. ft. The 3-product fuel price sign will measure 120" x 30.75" = 25.6 sq. ft. Both proposed signs will be the same size as the existing signs.

Mr. Johnson (PC) asked if the proposed LED lights are following the zoning code. Mrs. Rice (Staff) stated they were following the Town's standards.

On a motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Sproles, the Planning Commission voted to approve the COA as presented.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Wayne Austin	Aye
Mr. Michael Weaver	Aye
Mr. Jeff Johnson	Aye
Mr. Scott Wilson	Aye
Mr. Kirk Sproles	Aye
Mr. Chad Pennington	Aye

- 3. *Certificate of Appropriateness Amendment – Abingdon Commons, 238 W. Main Street, Abingdon, VA 24210. Nathan Berg; Representative. Certificate of Appropriateness Amendment for Signage. Located at 238 W. Main Street, Abingdon, VA 24210. (Tax Map 012-1-127) (VIDEO 14:25 – 57:29)***

Mrs. Rice (Staff) provided a brief overview of the comprehensive sign plan that was recently approved by the Planning Commission. The applicant is coming back to the board to get approval for a new sign design to amend the comprehensive sign plan.

Nathan Berg (Representative) stated that the previously approved design for the comprehensive sign plan was not the final design, and the new design submitted to the board will be the final product. The plan will not deviate substantially from what was previously approved. The major difference will be the lettering and color of the sign on the front elevation of the building on the W. Main Street side. The lettering would be painted onto the brick. Mr. Weaver (PC) asked if the black strip of lettering would be painted on the brick. Mr. Berg answered yes.

Mr. Austin (PC) asked if there would be any illumination on the front elevation of the building. Mr. Berg answered that the painted-on lettering would have no illumination, but the blade sign would. There will be goose neck lighting shining down on the lettering. The main purpose of the lettering is to provide the historic feel when the building was first built.

Mr. Johnson (PC) asked about the change of color flow from the front of the building to the side of the building. Mr. Berg answered that the aqua color is one of the main colors of the Abingdon Commons brand. Mr. Weaver asked if there would be signage in the individual arches. Mr. Berg answered that yes it will stay as approved in the comprehensive sign plan.

Mr. Berg stated that in the new design on the Main Street side of the building, the Abingdon Commons lettering would be moved up and the black strip would be put below. Mrs. Rice stated that the board will not be approving the language that is put in it, but the square footage allowed on the building. If the applicant decided to change the wording, they would come back to staff. Mr. Pennington (PC) asked if what is being asked for is allowable within the zoning ordinance. Mrs. Rice stated that it is not, however, with a comprehensive sign plan the applicant gets to ask for flexibility with the square footage of the signage.

Mr. Johnson asked about the color of the signage going from a mosaic to an aqua color and why the large change. Mr. Berg answered that the color stands out more and is a central color to the brand. Mrs. Rice asked if their website is up to show the brand colors. Mr. Berg answered that the website is not up yet.

Mr. Weaver asked if the mosaic sign is illuminated. Mr. Berg stated that it is not. Mr. Pennington clarified that they are voting on the allowable square footage, however there are no defined numbers to vote upon. Mrs. Rice stated that if the board likes the new proposed design that they approve it and make the condition that the applicant submit the square footage to the staff. If the board does not approve, then the original plan doesn't change. It is more to determine how much flexibility in the square footage the board will allow. Mr. Berg stated that he doesn't feel comfortable giving an exact number in the square footage requested at this point without the numbers in front of him. Mr. Johnson asked if the applicant were to submit the numbers to staff after approval would it create a baseline. Mrs. Rice stated that it would. Mr. Pennington clarified that the square footage would be increased through the request, however the board does not know how much of an increase that may be.

Mr. Wilson (PC) asked if the signage shown in the drawings would be the exact representation of what will be on the building. Mr. Berg answered that it will be. Mr. Weaver asked if the applicant would have to come back again if they wanted to change the lettering. Mrs. Rice stated that the applicant would not need to come back to the board. If the applicant changed out a square foot with another square foot of lettering the applicant would need to let staff know. Mr. Johnson asked if the applicant could come in and ask to change "Abingdon Commons" name on the front of the building. Mrs. Rice stated that he could, for example they could tell staff they wanted to change it to "Abingdon Square", however the new word would have to fit in the square footage as the old word. Mr. Johnson asked if the applicant could move the square footage on the building or is the square footage in a stationary position. Mrs. Rice stated that it will be in a stationary position.

Mrs. Rice asked if the aqua blue color was a part of the original color palette. Mr. Berg stated that the lighter blue was changed to the aqua blue as the final color palette. Mr. Berg stated that they will be asking for an additional 70 square feet to go along with the bottom black strip below Abingdon Commons sign and that the Abingdon Commons sign be

moved up on the building. Mr. Austin asked the board members what they think of the contrasting colors. Majority of the board members liked the colors proposed. Mr. Berg stated that there will be shade umbrellas on the patio that will incorporate the aqua brand colors. There will be other finishes and fixtures that will have the color too.

Mrs. Rice asked the size of the letters on the Abingdon Commons sign. Mr. Berg answered that they are about 16 inches in height. Mrs. Rice approximated that there will be around 150 square feet of signage on the wall of Main Street side. With the zoning code allowing 2 square feet for every 1 linear foot of a building, the requested square footage would be 10 square feet over. Mr. Johnson asked if the staff has a problem with the square footage of the signs. Mrs. Rice stated no, but it is up to the board to vote on the appropriate size and color of the design. Mrs. Rice stated that the code has been amended where window signage would be limited to 10% of the window square footage. Mr. Berg stated he knows of the change.

On a motion by Mr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Johnson, the Planning Commission voted to approve the amendment to the comprehensive sign plan with the new design submitted that includes an addition of one sign with the condition that the sign shall not exceed 70 square feet and that the applicant provide staff the correct square footage for the sign.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Wayne Austin	Aye
Mr. Michael Weaver	Aye
Mr. Jeff Johnson	Aye
Mr. Scott Wilson	Aye
Mr. Kirk Sproles	Aye
Mr. Chad Pennington	Aye

4. Memorandum – Yurts (VIDEO 57:30 – 1:11:44)

Mrs. Rice provided the staff report.

Mrs. Rice (Staff) provided a brief overview of what a yurt consists of. She explained that there has been interest in the town to construct yurts. Additionally, there have been questions about the topic. Before the town said that they are like tents, and they fall more into camping because they do not meet the requirements for the Virginia Building Code. Recently the Commonwealth of Virginia has changed their view on yurts and are now being considered a structure. The topic has come to the Planning Commission to provide an interpretation on the zoning side.

Mrs. Rice explained that there are already alternative types of dwelling units such as mobile

homes that are allowed in mobile home parks. If someone wanted to build a stick built home or manufactured home on a permanent foundation, then it would be considered as a normal home. The board's decision would be to determine if a yurt is considered a normal home or be considered as a mobile home with a specific zoning category and other design parameters. A list of dwelling unit definitions were stated.

Mr. Wilson (PC) stated that he has stayed in a few and that in state parks they go through a strict process to build. Mr. Wilson asked what standards those are built to give a baseline for the board to view. Mrs. Rice stated that it would be a design concern of how to consider a yurt. Mr. Johnson (PC) stated that he views yurts as fancy tents and incorporates yurts with campgrounds. Concerns about yurts being constructed for just short-term rentals around town would not be appropriate. Mr. Austin (PC) brought up how diverse yurts can be and how it would be difficult to legislate. Mrs. Rice stated they haven't limited building yurts if the yurt meets the building code. Mr. Sproles (PC) stated that yurts should be put in developments and not single family lots spread across the town. Mr. Johnson asked if there is a minimum acreage defined. Mrs. Rice answered that there are for campgrounds.

F. OLD BUSINESS/MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA (VIDEO 1:11:45 – 1:12:59)

- **335 Cummings Street, COA Waiver, Fascia Repair**
- **340 W. Main Street, COA Waiver, Awning**
- **December 18th Planning Commission Meeting Discussion**

Mrs. Rice stated that the next Planning Commission meeting will be on December 18th, 2023. However, if nothing is submitted to staff, a cancellation notice will be sent out.

G. ANNOUNCEMENTS

H. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Sproles, seconded by Mr. Johnson, recommending that the meeting be adjourned with no further business to address.


The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Wayne Austin	Aye
Mr. Michael Weaver	Aye
Mr. Jeff Johnson	Aye
Mr. Scott Wilson	Aye
Mr. Kirk Sproles	Aye

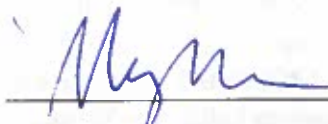
Mr. Chad Pennington

Aye

Adjourn Time 6:38 p.m.



Scott Wilson, Vice Chairman



Mayana Rice, Director of Community

Development