

**Town of Amherst
Planning Commission Minutes
September 5, 2007**

A meeting of the Town of Amherst Planning Commission was called to order by Chairperson June Driskill in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall at 7:30 PM on September 5, 2007.

It was noted that a quorum was present as indicated below:

A Jason Campbell	P William Jones
P June Driskill	A Steve LaBar
A Lyle Garrette	P Richard Wydner
P William Hathaway	

Town Attorney Tom Berry and Town Manager Jack Hobbs, in his capacity as Secretary to the Commission, were present.

Comprehensive Plan Amendment for the Ambriar Area

The Secretary reported that an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan that would affect the area off S. Main Street from Waugh's Ferry Road to the southern corporate limits of the Town of Amherst had been duly advertised for the meeting. If approved, the plan would establish the Town of Amherst's long-range development strategy for the area and would affect future land use, water and sewer infrastructure development, and traffic management there. It was noted that the proposal had been substantially revised after the Commission's July 3, 2007 public hearing in an attempt to simplify and clarify what is being proposed.

At 7:02 PM a public hearing was opened on the proposal.

Gary Jennings asked about the new road configuration noted in the proposal.

Barry Thompson expressed appreciation for the proposed 100' buffer but expressed concern about the two lots currently zoned residential but shown commercial in the proposal and about whether the traffic count on S. Main Street would ever reach 19,000 vehicles per day.

John Batman expressed concern about the effort to preserve right of way along S. Main Street for future road widening, especially as it affects property he has an interest in that is located across from Amherst County High School. It was explained that the Commission plans to develop regulations that would prohibit

new buildings in the reserved right of way area but that the "reserved" area would not prohibit the installation of parking lots and stormwater management ponds. Mr. Batman expressed concern regarding the language that indicates that limitations should be put on the number of entrances allowed per group of parcels under one ownership.

Paul Kilgore explained that everyone desires good planning but that property owners want to fully understand the impact of proposed regulations on the future development of their lands. He expressed his belief that the language regarding consolidation of entrances will affect only the property owned by Mr. Batman (formerly the Ambler property).

There being no one else who wished to speak, the hearing was closed at 7:56 PM.

Mr. Jones made a motion to recommend the proposed Ambriar Area comprehensive plan amendment to the Town Council for approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wydner and carried 4-0 according to the following:

Jason Campbell	Absent	William Jones	Aye
June Driskill	Aye	Steve LaBar	Absent
Lyle Garrette	Absent	Richard Wydner	Aye
William Hathaway	Aye		

Dulwich Commons Site Plan

The Secretary reported on a site plan that shows how a total of 29 multifamily dwelling units could be installed off Dulwich Drive. The development plans reviewed encompass the initial development only which includes approximately 420 LF of 6" water main and one fire hydrant, 912 LF of 8" sewer main with 6 new manholes, and 10 new multifamily dwelling units.

It was noted that this development is being built under the multifamily dwelling rules and not the townhouse and subdivision rules. All parking is behind the dwelling units and off the internal access driveway due to the narrow width of the access roads. The initial development will be installed without signage. It was noted that a series of rainwater infiltration areas are proposed which will eliminate the need for the usual stormwater management pond.

The Secretary reported the following concerns to the Planning Commission:

1. Screening for the adjacent apartment complex may be lacking if all existing trees are removed. No screening is proposed, but §18.1-920.07 might be interpreted to require this.
2. The treatment of the edge of pavement along Dulwich Drive is a concern. No curb, gutter or sidewalk is proposed here, and signs are proposed that would designate this area a "no parking" zone. It was noted that Dulwich Drive is expected to be the main entrance into the Poplar Grove development and that appearance of the development as viewed from the street should be a concern.
3. Although the water and sewer utilities have been designed to meet all Town requirements, the Town Council will need to approve a contract for the installation of Town water and sewer facilities, easements dedicated, a Town-licensed contractor identified, and fees paid before permits can be issued.
4. Landscape bonding requirements apply even if the plantings have been installed per §18.1-920.02.

Steve Eubank came forward to represent the owner/developer. He explained that the proposed use is "by right" and that the individual dwelling units in the project would be for sale and not for rent.

Chris Sonne explained why only one fire hydrant is proposed and why it is located as shown.

Mr. Hathaway made a motion to approve the proposed Dulwich Commons site plan as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jones and carried 4-0 according to the following:

Jason Campbell	Absent	William Jones	Aye
June Driskill	Aye	Steve LaBar	Absent
Lyle Garrette	Absent	Richard Wydner	Aye
William Hathaway	Aye		

The minutes of the August 1, 2007 Commission meeting were approved on a motion by Mr. Wydner, seconded by Mr. Hathaway, and carried 4-0 according to the following:

Jason Campbell	Absent	William Jones	Aye
June Driskill	Aye	Steve LaBar	Absent
Lyle Garrette	Absent	Richard Wydner	Aye
William Hathaway	Aye		

Worksession on Comprehensive Plan Project

Kelly Hitchcock and Bob White from the Region 2000 Local Government Council lead a worksession on the update to the Town's comprehensive plan. There was some discussion about the inconsistencies of the data due to the 1994 annexation which makes much of the 1990 census data difficult to use.

The Secretary reported that the three ordinances - Relief from Front Setback Rules (§18.1-804), Replacement of Nonconforming Structures (§18.1-601.2), and Flood Plains (§18.1-915) - recommended by the Commission in August are scheduled for public hearing before the Town Council on September 12.

The Secretary gave a report on the Town Council's effort to improve E. Court Street and form a downtown organization.

There being no further business, Mr. Wydner made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Jonew and carried 4-0 according to the following to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 PM:

Jason Campbell	Absent	William Jones	Aye
June Driskill	Aye	Steve LaBar	Absent
Lyle Garrette	Absent	Richard Wydner	Aye
William Hathaway	Aye		

June Driskill, Chairperson

Attest: _____