

**Town of Amherst
Planning Commission Minutes
August 5, 2015**

A meeting of the Town of Amherst Planning Commission was called to order by Chairperson June Driskill in the Council Chambers of the new Town Hall at 174 S. Main Street at 7:30 PM on August 5, 2015. It was noted that a quorum was present as indicated below:

A Kevin Belcher	P William Jones
P June Driskill	P Kenneth Bunch
P Ted Finney	P Rachel Thompson
P Clifford Hart	

Town Manager Jack Hobbs was present in his capacity as Secretary to the Commission.

Minutes from the May 6, 2015 Commission meeting were approved on a motion by Mrs. Thompson, seconded by Mr. Hart, and carried 6-0 according to the following:

Kevin Belcher	Absent	William Jones	Aye
June Driskill	Aye	Kenneth Bunch	Aye
Ted Finney	Aye	Rachel Thompson	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye		

Centra-Ambriar Site Plan

The Town Manager gave a report on the site plan for Centra's proposed "ambulatory care center" behind Ambriar Shopping Center as follows:

All items appearing to have been in order, on July 7 a sign was posted on the site to notify the public that the Planning Commission would be asked to consider approving the site plan for Centra's new clinic during its meeting on August 4.

The following drawings have been processed as an application for site plan approval:

- An edition of the Ambriar Shopping Center subdivision plat dated July 19, 2015,
- A site plan package titled "Amherst Medical Center" and sealed on July 16, 2015, and
- A water line design package titled "Waterline Plans for Ambriar Shopping Center" sealed on July 16, 2015.

The proposed development involves a new 20,000 SF "ambulatory care" clinic building with a landscaped, 116-space parking lot. The property is zoned General Commercial District B-2 and is a portion of the existing 29.5 acre Ambriar Shopping Center parcel, about 18 acres of which would be carved off for sale to Centra for the new building according to the previously approved preliminary plat. Coordinating a series of contracts, plans, plats, etc. involving numerous individuals has complicated the plan review process, and it appears that the site plan approval is the final "board level" approval remaining for the project.

Joe Archambeault from Centra Health came forward to present drawings depicting the exterior appearance and floor plan of the proposed Centra building, outline the services to be provided there, and provide a forecast of the construction timetable.

Per the staff recommendation, Mrs. Thompson made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Hart to approve the Centra site plan with the understanding that the following items would be resolved prior to issuance of a zoning permit:

1. Property lines on site plan Sheets C1.0, C2.1 and C3.0 are to be amended to be consistent with the configuration shown on the approved preliminary subdivision plat.
2. Although outdoor (parking lot) lights are shown on Sheet E300 of the site plan, the proposed **direction of, power, and time and use of outdoor lighting** must be shown on the site plan as required by 18.1-1104.05.8 of the Town Code, and a note to indicate that **all lighting facilities shall be arranged so that light is directed downward, and not horizontally or at adjacent properties, with special care to as to not negatively impact residential areas** per Sec. 18.1-921 of the Town Code is to be added to Sheet E300.
3. A freestanding sign is shown near the new building, but since this cannot be seen from a public street it is not regulated by the Town. No building-mounted signs are proposed. However, Sheet E300 shows a sign on S. Main Street so **details on the information on the location, size and design** need to be provided per Sec. 18.1-1104.05.10 of the Town Code. This sign should be planned so as to accommodate future tenants on the extended Centra campus and thereby allow other operations to be identified from S. Main Street.
4. Provide elevation drawings per 18.1-1104.05.12 of the Town Code.
5. The location of all fire hydrants is to be approved by the Fire Marshal.
6. The demarcation point for the fire service line is to be shown at the valve in Structure 207 on Sheet C1.0 of the water lines drawings.
7. Irrigation plans need to provide details for the required backflow prevention device, such as the model number of an approvable contamination-prevention device and a configuration to ensure freeze-proof positive drainage.
8. The developer is advised that a landscape maintenance bond will be required per 18.1-920.02 of the Town Code.
9. Full approval of the plat and the water and sewer features of this project is contingent upon Town execution of the appropriate documents and the recordation of the plat, surety agreement, easement and other documents. Conditions on the approval of the plat at the April 1 Planning Commission meeting continue to apply.

The motion carried 6-0 according to the following vote:

Kevin Belcher	Absent	William Jones	Aye
June Driskill	Aye	Kenneth Bunch	Aye
Ted Finney	Aye	Rachel Thompson	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye		

Ambriar Area Traffic Study

Rick Youngblood from VDOT came forward to outline his agency's proposal to work with the Central Virginia Metropolitan Planning Agency to update the 2007 Ambriar traffic study in early 2016.

House Bill 2

Mr. Youngblood outlined his agency's new "HB2" project prioritization process. Potential projects the Town could nominate through the county or MPO include the sidewalk project on Rt. 60 east of the traffic circle and a new "roundabout" at the S. Main Street/Lancer Lane intersection.

Urban Development Area Initiative

Mr. Youngblood outlined the state's effort to promote "traditional neighborhood development" that involves identifying areas where a planned mix uses of land would be supported by appropriate transportation infrastructure. He outlined a competitive "grant" program sponsored by VDOT where its consultant could help the Commission study development patterns relative to Town ordinances and the Comprehensive Plan for the analysis of Town "Urban Development Areas". It was noted that areas where development pressure are of some concern include the Ambriar area due to the quantity of vacant commercial real estate there, traffic from the high school, potential impact of changes at Sweet Briar College and proximity to the bypass. It is possible to designate the whole Town of Amherst as an "Urban Development Area" which would probably help the Town score well on future grant funding applications.

On a motion by Mrs. Thompson, seconded by Mr. Hart, and carried 6-0 according to the following, the Commission agreed to ask the Town Council to pursue the development of an Urban Development Area by applying for the VDOT study "grant" program:

Kevin Belcher	Absent	William Jones	Aye
June Driskill	Aye	Kenneth Bunch	Aye
Ted Finney	Aye	Rachel Thompson	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye		

On a motion by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. Bunch, and carried 6-0 according to the following, the Commission agreed to ask the Town Council to nominate a pedestrian safety/sidewalk project along Rt. 60 east of the traffic circle to the VDOT project "HB2" prioritization process and to also support such a project in other VDOT funding programs:

Kevin Belcher	Absent	William Jones	Aye
June Driskill	Aye	Kenneth Bunch	Aye
Ted Finney	Aye	Rachel Thompson	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye		

Worksession on Comprehensive Plan

The Commissioners commented on an updated draft of the community profile document which would be edited before further review in September. It was understood that this document could support a more extensive comprehensive plan project which might follow the upcoming urban development area and Ambriar traffic study efforts.

Patteson Variance Application - 610 Waughs Ferry Road

The Commission reviewed the Patteson variance application per §18.1-1006.02 of the Town Code. It was noted that approval of the Patteson proposal would result in a 2-lot subdivision on a road that is not in the VDOT maintenance system, there is no formal road maintenance plan for that portion of Waughs Ferry Road and that there are other properties along this "road" that could be subdivided if the public road frontage requirement articulated in §18.1-405 of the Town Code is not enforced.

On a motion by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Finney, and carried 6-0 according to the following, the Commission agreed to recommend that the Board of Zoning Appeals deny Mr. Patteson's variance request since the new lots would not have 25' of frontage on a public road:

Kevin Belcher	Absent	William Jones	Aye
June Driskill	Aye	Kenneth Bunch	Aye
Ted Finney	Aye	Rachel Thompson	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye		

Potential Ordinance Amendments

The Commission agreed to hold public hearings on amendments to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance relating to (a) increasing the allowed size of real estate signs in commercial areas to 32 square feet and (b) updating the definition of variance and the standard for deciding variances at the September meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM on a motion by Mr. Finney that was seconded by Mrs. Thompson and carried 5-0 according to the following:

Kevin Belcher	Absent	William Jones	Aye
June Driskill	Aye	Kenneth Bunch	Aye
Ted Finney	Aye	Rachel Thompson	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye		

June Driskill, Chairperson

Attest: _____