

**Town of Amherst Planning Commission  
Minutes  
March 6, 2024**

A meeting of the Town of Amherst Planning Commission was called to order by Chairperson June Driskill, on March 6, 2024, at 7:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers of Town Hall at 174 S. Main Street.

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

P	June Driskill	P	Michael Driskill
A	William Jones	P	John Vandervelde
P	Anne Webster Day	P	Veda Butcher
P	Clifford Hart		

Town Manager Sara McGuffin, and Clerk of Council Vicki K. Hunt in her capacity as Secretary, were also present.

The Chair opened the floor for citizen comments.

There being no one present in person or otherwise who wished to speak, no comments were made.

The Chair opened a duly advertised public hearing at 7:01 P.M., on the Town of Amherst FY24-25 Capital Improvement Program proposal that identifies acquisition, construction and improvement of town facilities, and acquisition of capital equipment, copies of which were distributed to the Commissioners.

There being no one present who wished to speak on the matter, the public hearing was closed at 7:01 PM.

After discussion and a report by Town Manager McGuffin, Mr. Hart made a motion that was seconded by Ms. Day to make a recommendation to Town Council to approve the Town of Amherst FY24-25 Capital Improvement Program proposal, as recommended by staff.

There being no further discussion, the motion carried 6-0 according to the following:

June Driskill	Aye	Anne Webster Day	Aye
Michael Driskill	Aye	John Vandervelde	Aye
William Jones	Absent	Veda Butcher	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye		

The Chair opened a duly advertised public hearing at 7:02 P.M., on a proposed amendment to the Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance Section 24-2 - Definitions and rules of construction, that would, if approved, add definitions for Outdoor Display and Outdoor Storage.

There being no one present who wished to speak on the matter, the public hearing was closed at 7:02 PM.

After discussion and a report by Town Manager McGuffin, Mr. Hart made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Driskill to make a recommendation to Town Council to approve the proposed amendment to the Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance Section 24-2 to add definitions for Outdoor Display and Outdoor Storage, as recommended by staff.

There being no further discussion, the motion carried 5-1 according to the following:

June Driskill	Nay		Anne Webster Day	Aye
Michael Driskill	Aye		John Vandervelde	Aye
William Jones	Absent		Veda Butcher	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye			

The Chair opened a duly advertised public hearing at 7:06 P.M., on a proposed amendment to the Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance Section 24-576 – Signs permitted in all sign districts, that would, if approved, add new subsection (3)(c) providing for “open” flags and chalkboard displays.

Tim Ware, Town of Amherst business owner, came forward in support of the proposed amendment.

There being no one else present who wished to speak on the matter, the public hearing was closed at 7:15 PM.

After discussion and a report by Town Manager McGuffin, by consensus the matter was deferred to the April 3, 2024, meeting.

The Chair opened a duly advertised public hearing at 7:16 P.M., on a proposed amendment to the Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance Section 24-75 Developments subject to site plan review, that would, if approved, include a minor site plan process.

There being no one present who wished to speak on the matter, the public hearing was closed at 7:18 PM.

After discussion and a report by Town Manager McGuffin, Mr. Vandervelde made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Hart to make a recommendation to Town Council to approve the proposed amendment to the Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance, Section 24-75 Developments subject to special site plan review, to include a minor site plan process, as recommended by staff.

There being no further discussion, the motion carried 6-0 according to the following:

June Driskill	Aye		Anne Webster Day	Aye
Michael Driskill	Aye		John Vandervelde	Aye
William Jones	Absent		Veda Butcher	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye			

The Chair opened a duly advertised public hearing at 7:18 P.M., on a proposed amendment to the Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance Section 24-511 Surfacing, that would, if approved, amend subsection (a) to include duplexes, and accessory dwelling units in a residentially zoned district; amend subsection (b) to include surface treatment; and add new subsection (c) to define parking spaces and driveways.

Jerry Martin, Town of Amherst business owner, came forward in opposition to the existing ordinance on surfacing and whether the Town government has authority to explicitly limit surfacing only to impervious surface treatment.

Steve Martin, Town of Amherst business owner, came forward to comment on the amount of parking spaces required and requested that permeable surfacing such as gravel be included in surfacing of commercial property.

There being no one present who wished to speak on the matter, the public hearing was closed at 7:23 PM.

After discussion and a report by Town Manager McGuffin, Mr. Vandavelde made a motion to make a recommendation to Town Council to approve the proposed amendment to the Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance Section 24-511, Surfacing, to amend subsection (a) to include duplexes, and accessory dwelling units in a residentially zoned district; amend subsection (b) to include surface treatment; and add new subsection (c) to define parking spaces and driveways, as recommended by staff. Prior to the chair calling for a second Mr. Vandavelde withdrew the motion and by consensus the matter was deferred to the April 3, 2024, meeting.

The Chair opened a duly advertised public hearing at 7:36 P.M., on a proposed amendment to the Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance that would, if approved, add New Section xx-xxx under Article VIII. – Supplemental zoning regulations, defining short term rental and management plan and process.

There being no one present who wished to speak on the matter, the public hearing was closed at 7:37 PM.

After discussion and a report by Town Manager McGuffin, Mr. Hart made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Vandavelde to make a recommendation to Town Council to approve the proposed amendment to the Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance to add New Section xx-xxx under Article VIII. – Supplemental zoning regulations, defining short term rental and management plan and process, as recommended by staff.

There being no further discussion, the motion carried 6-0 according to the following:

June Driskill	Aye		Anne Webster Day	Aye
Michael Driskill	Aye		John Vandavelde	Aye
William Jones	Absent		Veda Butcher	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye			

Town Manager McGuffin gave a report on a request from Amherst Presbyterian Church, to consider a parking plan for the church addition.

Grant Massie was present on behalf of the church to comment and answer questions.

By consensus, the Amherst Presbyterian Church was allowed to use a cooperative parking agreement with the County to satisfy the parking requirement and Town Manager was directed to present the full site plan to the Commission for review.

Town Manager McGuffin gave a report on a request for an amendment to the Amherst County Public School approved site plan for the Amherst County High School to modify the site plan to remove the concrete islands around the six light poles in the new parking lot., increasing the parking capacity from 100 parking spaces to 112.

Gary M. Roakes, Maintenance Supervisor, and Tim Hoden, Deputy Superintendent, Amherst County Public Schools, were present to comment and answer questions.

Mr. Vandavelde made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Hart to approve the amendment to the Amherst County Public School approved site plan eliminating the landscaping islands, as recommended by staff.

Mr. Driskill made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Hart to approve the minutes of the February 7,

2024, meeting.

After discussion, the motion carried 6-0 according to the following:

June Driskill	Aye		Anne Webster Day	Aye
Michael Driskill	Aye		John Vandervelde	Aye
William Jones	Absent		Veda Butcher	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye			

There being no further business, on motion of Mr. Driskill which was seconded by Mr. Vandervelde, and carried 6-0, the meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM, according to the following:

June Driskill	Aye		Anne Webster Day	Aye
Michael Driskill	Aye		John Vandervelde	Aye
William Jones	Absent		Veda Butcher	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye			

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June Driskill, Chairperson

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_