

Richlands Planning Commission

January 5, 2021

Members Present

Rod Cury
Michelle Elswick
Elliot Joyce
Randy Smith
Richard Smith
Gaynelle Thompson

Staff and Town Officials Present

Adrienne Cordle
Nathan Keen
Tim Taylor

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Richard Smith at 7:30 pm over Zoom.
2. Gaynelle Thompson gave the invocation; Elliot Joyce led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. The agenda was presented. There were no additions/deletions; Rod Cury made the motion to accept the agenda; Randy Smith seconded the motion. All members voted “aye” and the agenda was accepted.
4. The Minutes from the December 2, 2020 regular meeting were presented. Rod Cury made the motion to approve the minutes as written and Elliot Joyce seconded the motion. All members voted “aye”, and the minutes were approved.
5. New Business:
 - Rod Cury gave an update on the Flood Task Force. Richard Smith spoke with potential members. Nathan had, also, emailed each of these individuals. Each of them had responded they would be in attendance. The only people in attendance at the meeting were Rod and Shea Cook. Because of this, they were unable to hold the meeting. Shea is concerned with the lack of participation. Rod states that he does not know how to fix the lack of participation. He did suggest they set a regular meeting time of the third Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm. Richard reported that he did not have a commitment from the Brown family. York Lindsey said he would be in contact after the holidays but he had not heard from him as of the meeting. Jaimie Tuggle could not come to that particular meeting due to a conflict with the Cedar Bluff Town Council meeting. Rod asked if we should send an email to each of the potential members with the meeting date information. Richard agreed we should. Nathan stated he did not have email addresses for the new members. Richard said he will contact each to get an email address.
6. Old Business:
 - Rick Chitwood had planned on being at the meeting to discuss the Clinch River Walking Trail. However, due to illness, he was unable to attend. We would like to have him at our February meeting. Richard would like for Rick Barton, Rick Chitwood and Connie Allen to be at our February 2nd meeting to talk more about the Clinch River Walking Trail.
 - The final report was presented on the Richlands Professional Building Housing Study. This report will be available on the Town website soon. Mr. Davis and the House Authority are very pleased with the progress that has been made. Mr. Davis is ready to move

forward with the project. The projected cost of the project was 3.5 million dollars for two floors. The actual cost, according to estimates, is going to be closer to 5 million. This includes a new elevator, which may not be necessary at this time. Mr. Davis agrees the walking trail would definitely enhance downtown.

- It was discovered our newest member, Elliot, did not know about the project. Tim briefed Elliot on the Richlands Professional Building. Tim stated the project was to eventually change all floors, with exception of the first, of the professional building to mid/upper-level housing to contribute to downtown.

7. Miscellaneous/Members' Concerns:

- Tim will provide us with his thoughts/ideas before he retires.
- Rod would like to discuss tourism zoning. He would like to invite Pam Warden to the March meeting to talk about tourism zoning.
- Richard suggested we bring Rick Chitwood and Connie together to talk about getting funding for the Clinch River Walking Trail. He suggests we research on our own for possible funding and report at our next meeting. He, also, suggests we check in to health grants.
- Rod suggested we contact the Cumberland Plateau and have a kick-off meeting to start discussing funding possibilities.
- Richard brought up the Brickyard section and said he thinks we should start there in our discussion on mixed use zoning. He asked Nathan to send us a map to look at through email before our next meeting. Nathan agreed to do that. Tim stated the mixed zoning has caused a lot of extra work for the town and is antiquated in certain areas. He, also, stated the town Attorney would like to get this straightened out or get professional help from someone like Summit to sort it out. Richard asked if council would pay for it and Tim said yes. Rod asked how we should approach council. It was suggested we need to grow comfortably and not haphazardly. Richard asked if we could get an estimate from Summit to take to the council. Tim suggested we go into the Comprehensive Plan and pick what needs to be addressed. Then, take it to an urban planner like Summit and they will provide us with a number to take to council. Richard asked if we should get a letter from the attorney stating the importance of working on this matter to take to council. Tim said he will get with the attorney, Nathan and Adrienne and help get that together. Good zoning will avoid lawsuits in the future.
- Gaynelle asked about those that are there but are non-conforming. It was stated they are there until the business closes. What happens then, we are not sure.
- Richard says we must have something with substance to hand to council.
- Rod stated that what we do, makes Council's job easier. Richard stated the walking trail could be the crown jewel that businesses build around. Rod said no one has the natural side of the Clinch flowing through their town like we do. Rod asked if we have the full zoning ordinances online. Tim said he would try to get that online as soon as possible.

8. With no other business, Gaynelle Thompson made the motion to adjourn; it was seconded by Rod Cury and all members voted "aye". Meeting was adjourned.

9. The next meeting for the Planning Commission is scheduled for Tuesday, February 2, 2021 at 7:30 pm.

Submitted by: Michelle Elswick, Secretary