

MINUTES
LURAY PLANNING COMMISSION
MARCH 15, 2006

The Luray Planning Commission met on March 15, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. in regular session. The meeting was held in the Luray Town Council Chambers at 45 East Main Street, Luray, Virginia. Chairman Clifton Campbell presided over the meeting.

Commissioners Present:

Clifton Campbell, Chair
Peyton Baughan
Bob Borgie
Sam McNeely
Tom Potts
Judy Suddith

Others Present:

Rick Black, Assistant Town Manager, Assistant Zoning Administrator
Jerry M.Schiro, Town Manager, Zoning Administrator
Ligon Webb, Town Planner

Commissioner Terry Dodson was absent.

Chairman Campbell called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

Commissioner Baughan asked if the Town had received a copy of the minutes of their joint meeting with the County for our records, and Mr. Schiro said they had not been received.

Jerry Schiro introduced the new Town Planner, Ligon Webb. Ligon has been a Planner with Rockingham County for the past two years.

Approval of the Minutes of the February 15, 2006 Meeting:

There being no additions or corrections to the minutes, the minutes stand approved as written.

New Business:

Request from Mr. Gary Modjeska concerning a Concept Plan for a condominium project beside the Mimslyn.

Mr. Gary Modjeska stated that his partner is Bob Allman and they represent Area Properties, LLC of Bethesda, Maryland, which is a real estate and brokerage company. They have done large projects in Loudoun County, VA and Frederick County, MD. Looked at Baby Boom generation and how their housing choices are going to be made over the coming years. They purchased five acres adjoining the Mimslyn Inn in September 2005. Friends of theirs, the Asams, purchased the Mimslyn around Thanksgiving 2005.

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Mr. Modjeska stated that they intend to develop the property as a residential condominium community marketed to older adults and retirees. He stated that the present owners of the Mimslyn Inn share in their vision of creating a connection between the Mimslyn Inn and any future development that might occur on this 5 acre tract. They have hired the firm of Sympoletica with offices in Woodstock for their site development proposals. The buildings are proposed to have a front profile of three residential levels and a rear profile to allow for garages. There are also opportunities for the residents to share in the amenities of the Mimslyn. A pedestrian connection between the Mimslyn and the development is being planned.

Mr. McNeely asked how many units would be in each building. Mr. Modjeska said between 20 and 25 units per building. They would typically be two bedrooms about 1,300 sq. ft. up to 3,000 sq. ft.

Mr. Campbell commented that at this time we do not have condominiums listed in our Zoning Ordinance. This is something that would have to be added. We need to define it and have public hearings on it which will be a time consuming project. Presently, the Town's B-1 zoning district allows for "apartment houses" by special use permit with a height restriction of 45 feet or less. Mr. Modjeska discussed the similarities between apartments and condominiums via the Virginia Condominium Act. Members of the Planning Commission expressed a preference for separating the two uses within the Town's zoning ordinance thereby creating the need for defining and finding an appropriate place within the Town's zoning ordinance for condominium uses. Mr. Borgie asked if Mr. Modjeska would help us obtain a copy of the Condominium Act and point out in the State Code those things that pertain to condominiums so we can define and make our ordinance correct. Mr. Campbell asked Mr. Ligon Webb if he could get that for us. Mr. Webb will research how condominium uses are addressed in the zoning ordinances of nearby municipalities and attempt to find a place in Luray's zoning ordinance that would be a logical fit for this use, with the assumption that such a use would be by special use permit.

Mr. Campbell commented that we will work on it at our next regularly scheduled meeting on April 12 and if we get information before that, we can have a work session and bring something back for the next regular meeting. Mr. Webb commented that once his research is completed, he will set up a work session with the Planning Commission before the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting on April 12.

The Commission members discussed at length how to better the Town's communication with its residents. All agreed that an expanded use of the Town's website and Channel 15 would be a great help.

Mr. Black commented that for the future he would like to have the events scheduled and the agenda posted on the web site seven days prior to the meeting so if there's something on the agenda that somebody is interested in, there is ample opportunity to come in and discuss it.

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Peyton Baughan suggested that we put the minutes on the web site.

Jerry Schiro cautioned that some of the information presented by the "Public" at the public hearing was incorrect. We have to be careful in a public hearing situation that we are not advocates of the outcome. I think that the staff had made certain recommendations and the information went out to Council ahead of time, but the purpose of a public hearing is to get input from the public. You are going to see a lot more detailed staff reports. Going to see specific recommendations from the Planning staff and put staff reports on the web site. We will put the agenda and attachments to the agenda on the web site which includes staff analyses.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard M. Black
Assistant Zoning Administrator
Luray Planning Commission