

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LURAY PLANNING COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 24, 2010**

The Luray Planning Commission met on Wednesday, February 24, 2010 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 at which time there were present the following:

Commissioners Present:

Tom Potts
Peyton Baughan
Clifton Campbell
Larry Hakel
Sam McNeely

Absent:

Mary Menefee
John Meaney

Others Present:

Bryan Chrisman, Assistant Town Manager
Ligon Webb, Town Planner
Jason Spitler, Town Attorney
Gary Modjeska
Bob Allnut
Mr. Masincup
Mrs. Clark
Meredith Ward, Consultant
Travis Clark, President - PMH

Chairman Tom Potts called the meeting to order and everyone joined in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Commissioner Baughan and seconded by Commissioner Hakel that the minutes of October 14, 2009 be accepted as presented. The vote was as follows: YEA: Commissioners Potts, Baughan, Campbell, Hakel and McNeely. **APPROVED: 5-0**

A motion was made by Commissioner Hakel and seconded by Commissioner Baughan that the minutes of December 17 be accepted as presented. The vote was as follows: YEA: Commissioners Potts, Baughan, Campbell Hakel and McNeely. **APPROVED: 5-0.**

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A motion was made by Commissioner Hakel and seconded by Commissioner Campbell that the minutes of the January 13, 2010 meeting be accepted as presented. The vote was as follows: YEA: Commissioners Potts, Baughan, Campbell, Hakel, and McNeely.
APPROVED: 5-0

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions, deletions or corrections to the agenda.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Mr. Webb stated that there is a public hearing for Page Memorial Hospital on a special use application for a medical office in an R-3 zoning district. Page Memorial is proposing to construct a 19,000 sq. ft. medical office which will accommodate nine (9) physicians, support staff, clinical areas and administrative offices. The site plan shows that this is adjacent to their current Page Health Care Associates building with out-patient services provided. Mr. Webb talked to Mr. Clark at the hospital and with this new facility they will be adding a few more doctors and also will be adding another 5,000 sq. ft. from the existing building. The second phase of their improvement is the old Page Health Care Associates building would then be turned into a specialty use medical care for radiology and oncology services. The third phase will be actual demolition and then reconstructing a newer hospital. The current footprint will be slightly larger but as far as the beds, they do not expect to add any more beds to the 25 beds they have now. In talking to Mr. Clark, it looks like all of these items would be done by 2012-2013. We talked about Memorial Drive and Mr. Clark gave an overview of things happening on Memorial Drive. The hospital seems to be looking to have most of their improvements done within five years. The B-1 property and MontVue Nursing Home which has 50+ duplex units may be subject to change but we don't know. Lots of the developments going on there are up in the air and timing is difficult to predict. Because of the current geometry of slope of Memorial Drive you don't have the greatest sight distance and it is important that we take careful consideration in planning the traffic improvements to make sure the one principal access to the hospital for emergency squad does not err at some point because of the potential development becoming backlogged. You may have seen VDOT around town putting down count strips, and we have the numbers for West Main Street, Lee Street, S. Court Street but we do not have any counts on Memorial. We have an analysis that was done as an assessment of peak traffic which, when you are planning traffic, you really are planning for the peak. Using the peak traffic hour which is a known number which was

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done in a traffic study, Memorial Drive now gets approximately 1,500 trips per day. Lee Street gets 1,100 trips per day which is actually a VDOT count. Generally the number you have for peak traffic is slightly over 10% of the annual daily traffic. We have tried to determine what the existing conditions are out there with all of the different developments he just mentioned, and not knowing when they are all coming on line, tried to build some sort of formula of what it could become. From the hospital's perspective, the one facility that will probably increase the traffic is a small increase from having a larger building that can serve more people. Basically, he sees the potential that once this corridor is developed, you could see the traffic on Memorial Drive almost double.

Mr. Webb did a breakdown using the IT standards of how many trips can be generated. For every type of use, IT will give you a number of trips for a hospital based on the number of beds. They will give you the number of trips for a doctor's office based on the square footage. Using this he was able to give a snapshot on the chart of how many people going down Memorial Drive are going to the hospital, and how many are going to the Health Department and has estimated that about 60% of the traffic on Memorial Drive at some point are going to the hospital or the Health Care Center. In post development, you are still looking at even if the B-1 property is developed to its highest use, you are still looking at 50% of the trips going to the hospital. He has talked to several people about this and most have agreed that this is probably a fair and accurate analysis. We don't have a firm commitment at this moment. In the short term, he doesn't see a huge traffic increase, but it is definitely something that we need to come to terms with the hospital and all the people in that corridor. It is not a matter of convenience; it is a matter of safety. He thinks it would be appropriate to allow Page Memorial Hospital to proceed with construction of the proposed medical office without a formal agreement regarding contributions towards improvements to Memorial Drive. We need to take immediate action to convene all entities in this corridor to discuss, plan and execute needed improvements.

Commissioner Baughan stated that you didn't take into account any increased traffic from the proposed subdivision from S. Court Street. That has multiple access points. At least part of that development is right on the road at Memorial Drive. Most of it would go 211 or 340. Was there any reason for no consideration in this analysis? Mr. Webb stated that with regard to that particular development, there is no question once it is built out, that you are going to have some traffic coming from Memorial. There are multiple points of ingress and egress to this development; five different points. You might see a slight increase in the number of trips here, but at this point, because of the five different entrances and exits and what they are proposing to improve, it doesn't make a difference in this analysis. We also know that we don't know when this will be developed.

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Commissioner Campbell stated that at this point PMH will discuss with these others the possibility of cooperating and working with improving Memorial Drive and also the entrance. As he sees it, Memorial Drive somewhere along the line, needs curb, gutter and sidewalks to Main Street. Mr. Webb stated curb and sidewalks has been brought up but has not been formally proposed, but if they want to do a more formal analysis, sidewalks would be appropriate, but right now he doesn't think it's part of the plan.

Commissioner Campbell stated we should have a Master Plan for that area. As discussed in the last meeting, adding one foot on each side of Memorial Drive as a paved area and to make it wide enough for emergency vehicles.

Commissioner Baughan stated that the Town should have a discussion with the entities to ask these people to participate in the cost of making improvements on that road is entirely proper. The one thing missing from this packet is the Town of Luray. The Town of Luray participates in some of these improvements just because of the welfare of the whole area.

Commissioner Potts stated his deepest concern of all of this is piecemeal improvements. The issue of who is going to pay for improvements needs to be addressed up front. Need to identify the impact of those things that have to be done now; adding new sidewalks, street needs to be enlarged, and concerned about promises that may or may not happen. It is important that as we move forward we actually plan on improving and getting part of it funded and making improvements to the road there. Looking for commitment to pay. Don't know if there has been any discussion on that. He doesn't have any objection to the buildings, no objection to the discussion of the expansion of the parking lot and those things but is concerned about Memorial Drive and what is going to be done with it in the short term.

Commissioner Potts then opened the Public Hearing.

Travis Clark – President of Page Memorial

Mr. Clark gave a background of the project and said they are very excited about this project and think it would be a great enhancement to health care in our community. Started looking at this project about three years ago and conducted a strategic plan that had six main goals. One of those goals was to evaluate the medical office space. We knew we were very cramped at Page Health Care. It was built for four doctors and we have about six that practice out of the office on any given day. We have physicians that are sharing offices. One of the plans was to put an addition to Page Health Care. As this was going along, realized they were going to merge with Valley Health. As they went through the process with Valley Health one of the things they requested was the medical

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office space we needed. Over the past year we have been working on the design for this and came up with a 19,000 square foot building. Our primary goal was to retain the physicians we have. What we want to do is move the physicians in the practice from Page Health Care into this new building which will give us the opportunity to decompress our space issues and also give us room for future growth. Once we open up the new Page Health Care, our multi-specialty clinic which is up next to the ER will move down to Page Health Care. We would like to have this construction done next year. To tie into the new hospital component, the best case scenario is that it will be done by 2014. He has talked to Ligon and they appreciate and understand the needs of the road. We understand as we build a new hospital that this would probably be something we would certainly help out with. At this point with the new office building he doesn't have dollars budgeted for that at this time.

Meredith Ward, Valley Engineering:

She is here on behalf of Valley Health and Page Memorial Hospital and to explain our need for the new medical office building and how this impacts the current campus. Page Memorial Hospital is located on two parcels totaling approximately 15 acres fronting on Memorial Drive and Court Lane. The new office building will be one story in height. There will be a basement. The two levels will contain approximately 19,000 square feet. The campus currently meets the Town's parking requirements, so the new parking lot factors in all the new parking spaces needed. We are going to use that for staff parking so we can free up spaces closer. We are also going to provide additional handicapped parking spaces. Other site features include location of a dumpster pad and move it to the rear of the hospital that will allow for better traffic maneuvering to drop off people at the front. Going to have to relocate a fire hydrant in that same location. Other improvements are landscaping within the parking lot and around the building. Since this is the first building in the process, we are placing a lot of effort on the planning and design of this and it is an ongoing process. When we are ready for the new hospital, we can then be committed to a master plan development at that point.

Commissioner Hakel asked Ms. Ward how many square feet you have now in the current facility? She said 5,600.

No need for a TIA right now but we will have to look further into that when the new hospital comes.

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Gary Modjeska – Luray Properties

They own the Luray LLC property which is the 4.8 acres on Memorial Drive and Main Street. They are in support of this new development and will do everything they can to see that it happens. The only point that is important to note is a couple of years ago they were here also seeking a special use permit that called for three residential condominium buildings. With our special use permit we were required as a condition of that to make this improvement before we even built the first building. That first building of 25 units would have significantly less traffic impact than a 19,000 square foot office building. We haven't gone forward for several reasons; obviously the expense of that, but more importantly, the housing market. Not only is Memorial Drive super important for the hospital as their entrance but it is also our point of access also.

Commissioner McNeely asked if he understood that the Master Plan eventually will do away with the existing hospital and build a new one on the same site. Mr. Clark stated yes. What will remain of the current hospital is the square footage we built in 1999. The remainder of the hospital will be torn down to build the new one.

Ms. Clark stated the only question she had in mind was about the right-of-way that's on her right between her and Alice Willis. Is there any plan for that? Mr. Clark said no, it's not. All of our buildings will be on the north side of the campus. We've never talked about that.

Commissioner Potts asked if you are going to be satisfied to have the trash dumpster and everything else at your back. Ms. Clark said she guessed so.

Mr. Webb stated he would put something together for the next month or so and get together with the hospital, Mont Vue, and Mr. Modjeska. Looking at what Mr. Webb puts together, decide if you want to go forward with a more formal analysis. Mr. Clark stated they are willing to sit down and discuss it and his only concern is the timing of it. How does that affect the timing if we are granted approval of a special use permit. How does that affect the timing of getting the project started. Mr. Webb stated if you are granted a special use permit, it would not affect it at all.

Commissioner Campbell stated he sees no problem with anything except getting the folks together with the Town and commit to do something about Memorial Drive and also the entrance. Mr. Webb stated what's happening on Memorial Drive is going to take place over many years so the improvements will be phased in.

Commissioner Baughan stated you would like to have a commitment from them as to the cost, and he assumes they have some reasonable engineered cost in mind for this

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improvement. How much is the Town going to participate and how much is each one of these individuals going to participate or whether all will commit. As far as his particular project, which is now for 19,000 square feet, he seeks a special use permit and gives a commitment that he will participate in the discussion, but as far as funding, he wants to throw that into the next phase of the hospital because that's where it's going to have the most impact. He has to go back to the powers that be to get the funds approved and he doesn't particularly want to make this special use permit subject to finalizing that commitment because they would like to move on with their project. He thinks that's a reasonable compromise but he thinks it's also recognizing that something needs to be done there. The intersection, as it is right now, is not adequate for the traffic that's on there at the present time or if it is, it's barely adequate. He thinks you seek these commitments from the various people and you are going to have to work out a reasonable time table as to when these funds would be provided and when the improvements are going to be made.

A motion was made by Commissioner McNeely that we approve this special use permit as presented and motion was seconded by Commissioner Campbell with the idea that something will be done with Memorial Drive.

The Commission then began a discussion.

Commissioner Potts asked what's the next special use permit required in this discussion. Mr. Webb stated that when they move from the old PHC building to the new facility, once the new facility is built within the year, they will move all operations over to that one and eventually may get specialists to come in. Mr. Clark stated these specialists are the same ones we have today; they are just using other space on the campus. Mr. Webb stated the question is once that building is vacated, do you then come back and get a special use permit to start using that one again. He thinks as a general rule use has to be discontinued for two years, so as he sees it, they would not need a special use permit to start using the old building which is the current building, based on that notion that a use has to be discontinued for two years.

Mr. Spitler stated based on the notion that you are presumably granting them a special use permit for use as a general hospital, to him that would apply to one building or anything that constitutes a general hospital. If there are concerns coming from the Commission or from Council, you could certainly make your approval conditioned or contingent upon further review at other stages. While that might seem like a good idea in terms of insuring commitment and insuring contribution coming from the various entities that are going to be increasing the traffic impact on Memorial Drive, that could pose problems for Valley Health as well as other entities as far as their future plans and being able to give the assurance needed by their principals. It's a little bit of a catch 22 there.

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Commissioner Potts asked did you just say we won't need a special use or any further hearings for the new hospital. Mr. Spitler answered yes sir. If the Town Council was to grant a special use permit for the construction or use of a general hospital on that parcel, in his opinion, whether that general hospital consist of a dozen buildings, you've granted them that right as long as they go by the plan they have presented to us. The only thing short of that would be to grant them the permit conditioned upon and only specifically addressing the Page Health Care building and basically reserving the authority to review this matter again once they construct other buildings or create other uses. If you simply give them a special use permit allowing them to construct and use a general hospital as long as they continue to use the hospital for that purpose that's going to be their right. Commissioner Campbell stated they could come back voluntarily for a review if they so desired.

Commissioner Baughan stated you want to be careful with the blanket approval of a special use permit. Mr. Spitler stated if that's a concern expressed by the Commission, we may want to clarify either in terms of the motion that has been presented or in terms of further discussion. If it be the case, are you looking to approve at this point or recommend to the Town Council that they approve the use of this property as a general hospital so long as it substantially conforms to this plan as opposed to we get this built out and we put up twelve other buildings without having to come back. Mr. Webb stated the only building that we are talking about is this one. If you tear down the old building and build basically a new building back, you really haven's changed anything. This could in theory be the only time they come before this Commission or Town Council for a special use permit, but that doesn't mean that the Town doesn't still have the opportunity to discuss roads because they knew and approved the site plan. If they amend their site plan by moving a dumpster pad or build a new building that's going to be slightly larger, or occupying an old building, they still need to come back to us after this is potentially approved for site plan approval that's handled administratively. During that time we can also talk about off-site improvements. Commissioner Campbell asked can we approve a special use permit as you have suggested and ask for a review on each change that's made after that.

Commissioner Baughan stated he would be satisfied to have language to say that we will approve this. As far as increasing the size of the facility, say by 25%, you are going to have to come back here. If you want to make more parking, go over 25% more, you will have to come back here. If you are going to increase the size over all by 20% to 25%, then you need to come back here and get your special use permit extended.

Mr. Spitler stated he would suggest that based on the concerns he is hearing from the Commission, rather than simply stating that we recommend approval of your request and

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grant you the authority to construct a general hospital on the site, whatever that may or may not be, he would suggest you at least consider clarifying in terms of the motion that we are granting a special use permit for you to construct and use the facility as a general hospital in substantial conformity with the master plan that has been submitted.

Mr. Chrisman stated that the advertisement speaks of a single structure in addition to the existing campus and so his opinion is that this special use application as advertised deals only with the yellow building up there on the screen and nothing else as currently advertised. If we want to address something other than that, we would need to advertise that and properly go through a public hearing for that. Mr. Spitler stated he had not reviewed the advertisement, but that being the case, he would agree with Mr. Chrisman.

Commissioner Baughan stated he would suggest we make the motion to approve as advertised. Mr. Webb stated as far as the future, we will discuss that, if we determine there's no special use permit needed, that doesn't mean we don't have site plans and we can look at road improvements just as if it was a special use permit.

Commissioner Hakel stated let's clarify the motion. The motion is as advertised and as presented. Commissioner Baughan stated we have a motion by Commissioner McNeely and it was seconded by Commissioner Campbell. Commissioner Potts stated he was uncomfortable with not having something that says you are responsible for doing something to improve Memorial Drive. If we are going to do it, he would like to hear something that says specifically permission to build a 19,000 square foot building. Mr. Webb asked if he was correct in saying your second is that the approval is as advertised for a 19,000 square foot medical office building as advertised as presented. Commissioner Campbell stated he had a condition in the second; a meeting with the Town of Luray staff and the other entities involved.

Commissioner Potts then closed the Public Hearing.

The vote was as follows: YEA: Commissioners Hakel, Baughan, Campbell, and Mr. McNeely. NAY: Commissioner Potts **APPROVED: 4-1**

OLD BUSINESS:

Proposed Definitions: Winery & Microbrewery

Mr. Webb stated he put together some proposed definitions. At the last meeting we talked about a winery and microbrewery and adding them to our ordinance as a definition. We would have it as a by-right use in B-1 district and any other districts you want to add.

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Commissioner Hakel asked if these would require a public hearing and Mr. Webb stated that if you are comfortable with the definition, make them both by-right in B-1 and M-1 as a special use. Mr. Webb will show it to Town Council for their blessing.

Review: Proposed changes to Town's sign ordinance

Mr. Webb stated he sent a letter to the design contractors as suggested by the Town Council and we received only one comment back. What he would like to do is get pictures of the signs on the 29 corridor in Albemarle County. Maybe also take a field trip for you to see these signs. It's a great example of a corridor that has very easy to see and attractive signs and essentially what we proposed. That's his next strategy to show more concrete examples of what we are talking about. He would like to have something for Town Council in May. Mr. Chrisman stated he agreed with Ligon that right now, at best, if this goes to Council, it would be a tie vote. At worst, it would be voted down in its current form. He thinks we have a chance a getting a very similar thing passed by Council with representations from another community that currently has something like this in place. That may satisfy some folks and make them feel a little more at ease. Mr. Potts stated so you are coming back to us next month with a new proposal and some pictures. Mr. Webb stated he wants to have to Council by May. Commissioner Potts stated next month you are going to have something for us to discuss in March, take it to the working session at the end of March, and we'll possibly have a hearing on it in April.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for consideration, a motion was made by Commissioner Baughan and seconded by Commissioner Hakel that the meeting be adjourned. Meeting was adjourned at 8:12 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan T. Chrisman
Assistant Town Manager

ATTEST:
