

PRESENT: K. A. Shiflett, Chairman
J. D. Tilghman, Vice-Chairman
S. N. Bridge
T.H. Byerly
W. F. Hite
J. Shomo
D. L. Cobb, Director of Community Development and
Secretary
R. L. Earhart, Senior Planner

ABSENT: J. W. Curd

VIRGINIA: At the Called Meeting of the Augusta County
Planning Commission held on Tuesday, May
11, 2004, at 3:30 p.m. in the Board of
Supervisors' Conference Room, Augusta
County Government Center, Verona, Virginia.

The Planning Commission assembled in the Augusta County Government Center to discuss two Comprehensive Plan Amendments, two rezonings, and the upcoming items on the BZA agenda. The Planning Commission traveled to the following sites which will be considered by the Commission at their regular meeting:

1. Jeffrey D. Puckett – Rezoning
2. Gregory Wayne and Cheryl Ann Hensley, Trustees – Rezoning
3. Laurel Hill Community Development Area – Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Chairman

Secretary

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R. L. Earhart, Senior Planner

VIRGINIA: At the Regular Meeting of the Augusta County
Planning Commission held on Tuesday, May
11, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Meeting
Room, Augusta County Government Center,
Verona, Virginia.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Ms. Shiflett stated as there were seven (7) members present, there was a quorum.

MINUTES

Mr. Shomo made a motion to approve the minutes of the Called and Regular meeting held on April 13, 2004. Mr. Byerly seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Jeffrey D. Puckett – Rezoning

A request to rezone from Exclusive Agriculture to General Agriculture approximately 6 acres owned by Jeffrey D. Puckett located on the south side of Carson Mill Road (Route 838) approximately 0.6 of a mile west of the intersection of Carson Mill Road (Route 838) and Lyles Road (Route 838) in the Riverheads District.

Mrs. Earhart explained the request.

Jeffrey D. Puckett, 322 Carson Mill Rd., Spottswood, VA 24476, stated he wanted to get his property rezoned to General Agriculture so that his wife could keep an elderly woman in their home. In order to do this they needed to get a Special Use Permit which is not allowed in their current zoning.

There being no one desiring to speak in favor of, or in opposition to, the request, Ms. Shiflett declared the public hearing closed.

Mr. Shomo made a motion to recommend approval of the request.

Mr. Byerly seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

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Gregory Wayne and Cheryl Ann Hensley, Trustees – Rezoning

A request to rezone approximately 2 acres from General Agriculture to General Business and .5 acres from General Business to General Agriculture owned by Gregory Wayne and Cheryl Ann Hensley, Trustees located on the east side of East Side Highway (Route 340) approximately 0.1 of a mile south of the intersection of East Side Highway (Route 340) and Sandy Ridge Road (Route 621) in Dooms in the Wayne District.

Mrs. Earhart explained the request and stated the following proffer had been submitted:

1. At such time as the existing house on parcel 1 is converted to a business use, the northern most driveway entrance to the parcel will be closed and all access will be limited to the 2 remaining entrances (one on parcel 1 and one on parcel 3) on to Route 340.

Greg Hensley, 183 East Side Highway, Waynesboro, VA 22980, stated he owns the property under consideration. The reason he is trying to get it rezoned is for storage for their existing business.

There being no one desiring to speak in favor of, or in opposition to, the request, Ms. Shiflett declared the public hearing closed.

Mr. Curd made a motion to recommend approval of the request with the proffer.

Ms. Tilghman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

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Laurel Hill Community Development Area Expansion – Comprehensive Plan Amendment

A request to amend the Comprehensive Plan by enlarging the Laurel Hill Community Development Area in the Beverley Manor District.

Mrs. Earhart explained the amendment and stated the enlargement was approximately 1800’ along Pleasant Grove Road. The proposed land use will be Low Density Residential.

Mr. Hite indicated because he was a property owner in the request he had a conflict of interest. He would not be taking part in the discussion or voting on the amendment.

Darris Cash, 413 Pleasant Grove Road, Staunton, VA 24401, asked why the plan had to be amended to get the water to the area.

Mr. Cobb indicated this was a Potential Community Development Area and the state law requires the area to be in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan in order to have public water extended.

Mr. Cash asked if this was a new state law.

Mr. Cobb indicated it wasn’t more than 10 or 12 years old.

William Elliott, 161 West Amber Rd., Staunton, VA 24401, asked who was initiating the amendment.

Mrs. Earhart stated there had been a petition to the Augusta County Service Authority to extend public water to the area and in order to be able to do that the Comprehensive Plan needs to be changed.

There being no one else desiring to speak in favor of, or in opposition to the amendment, Ms. Shiflett declared the public hearing closed.

Ms. Tilghman stated this was initiated by the homeowners requesting public water. She indicated this does require a Comprehensive Plan amendment. She made a

motion to change the Comprehensive Plan designation from Potential Community Development Area to Community Development Area with a land use designation of Low Density Residential.

Mr. Shomo seconded the motion.

Ms. Shiflett stated since this would not open up a lot of area for development she could support the amendment.

Motion carried with a 6 to 0 vote, with Mr. Hite abstaining from the vote.

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Route 636/640 Corridor Study – Comprehensive Plan Amendment

A request to amend the Comprehensive Plan by adding the Route 636/640 corridor study to the Comprehensive Plan and changing the projected land uses along a portion of Route 636 in the Wayne District.

Mrs. Earhart explained the amendment and gave the following presentation:

ROAD

Road improvements to the Route 636 Corridor have been in the planning stages for many years. In fact, when Fairmont Subdivision was built back in the mid-1990s, land to the rear of the development was left undeveloped in anticipation of the future road corridor. With the rapid development that is occurring on Route 636 around the hospital and on Route 640, the Board of Supervisors became increasingly concerned about the capacity of the roads to handle the traffic loads being created. In 2003, the Board hired Timmons Group, the County’s consulting engineers, to look at the Route 636/640 Corridor. They were charged with studying the transportation needs of the corridor and tying into existing VDOT projects at either end. VDOT had already studied and held public meetings on the Route 636 relocation project in 2002. VDOT had also already done some preliminary design work on relocating the Route 640 intersection with Route 250 so that it lines up with its northern intersection. The County asked Timmons to begin and end at the two VDOT projects and tell us what the corridor needed to look like to handle the expected traffic in the year 2025, using a 3% traffic growth rate. Basically, that will double the traffic that is currently using those roads by the year 2025 and in fact it could happen earlier than 2025 if the growth continues at its current rate, which is faster than 3%. Their recommendations, along with the two VDOT projects are the subject of the public hearing tonight.

The County would like to include the Route 636/640 Corridor recommendations in the County’s Comprehensive Plan so that as people come in to talk about developing their properties and apply for rezonings to accomplish their plans, we

know what the ultimate road needs are and how their developments will factor in to the road plans. The corridor recommendations are:

1. Establish a minimum 90' of right-of-way along the entire corridor.
2. Parts of the corridor, from west of the hospital property on Route 636 to the Caldwell Lane intersection on Route 640, are envisioned to be a 4-lane divided highway section, tapering down to 2-lane road sections with center turn lanes on either end.
3. Limit and separate conflict points- so the number of full crossovers (1000-1300') and directional crossovers (600-800') will be limited and spaced out.

While the study recommendations were based on needs through the year 2025, the need for improvements, based on the growth we are seeing in the corridor right now may be much sooner. In fact, computer modeling of the intersection at Route 285 indicates the need for dual left turn lanes right now. The other point that is important to make at this point, is that the two-lane overpass over Interstate 64 will continue to be a "choke-point" and ultimately improvements to Route 285 and the interstate interchange will have to be made to accommodate the increasing traffic using the roadways in this area.

This is not a public hearing on the road design, other than conceptual design, nor is it a funding public hearing. At this point in time, there is little funding available for the road projects. Money is being set aside in the Secondary System Construction Program (the old 6 Year Plan) for the Route 636 relocation project which begins just west of the hospital development and extends to Route 250. Construction of the project, including bridging over the railroad tracks, is expected to be about \$12 million. To date, a little over \$1.5 million has been allocated to that project, most of which went to preliminary engineering. At the end of the Secondary System Construction Program which covers a 6 year time-frame, the project is still short more than \$5.5 million dollars. There is also money in the Secondary Program to study the feasibility of relocating the Route 640 intersection to align with the northern intersection with Route 250. The study budget is almost funded, but there is nothing in the plan for construction and no estimate of how much that would cost. A short-term solution will be the installation of a traffic light at the northern intersection with Route 250, which should create enough of a break to help cars at the southern intersection get out on the road. There is nothing in the budget for the remaining portions of Route 636, 640, or the intersection with Route 285. The budget for that portion of the corridor is estimated by Timmons to be about \$5 million without right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation- both of which can be costly items.

Amending the Comprehensive Plan to include the corridor recommendations will give the County the information they need to make sound land use decisions in the area and work with developers to insure that the improvements can be made in the future. One area that gave us concern was the ability to access Tinkling

Spring Drive from Route 285. This intersection has been studied as part of the Route 608/285 corridor study that was done in the late 1990s and again during this study. It remains problematic. At full-build out, there is no full cross-over planned on Route 285 for Tinkling Spring Drive. The road will be a 7 lane facility with dual left turn lanes, a right turn lane, and 2 lanes in either direction. Even if a full cross-over was built, assuming that it could meet VDOT safety regulations, etc., it would be virtually impossible to get across all of those lanes safely. Pending further study of the intersection and the exact design of the Route 285 road improvements, Timmons is recommending that two alternative means of accessing Tinkling Spring Drive be included in the Comprehensive Plan. One would access Route 640 and could potentially line up with one of the entrances to the Wilson development, but that will require coordination with them soon. The other would be a connection to the existing Caldwell Lane, which is further east on Route 640. Staff concurs that these alternative means of accessing Tinkling Spring Drive be included in the corridor study and recommends that the corridor study be included in the Comprehensive Plan.

LAND USE

After looking at the development potential in this corridor, we also looked at the expected land uses planned for the corridor. After looking at the land uses along the Route 640 segment of the corridor, there didn't seem to be a reason to change those. The current Comprehensive Plan calls for a mix of Business and Medium Density Residential Development, while a portion of the corridor, that portion without public water and sewer currently, remains in a Potential Urban Service Area. Staff recommends that those designations remain.

The Route 636 corridor has seen remarkable changes since the Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1994. Originally, a good deal of this land was planned for industrial development. However, the development along the corridor has been of a business and residential nature, not industrial. Therefore, the current land use designations of industrial do not seem to fit- even along the railroad track. Therefore, staff is recommending that changes be made to the future land uses at the following locations:

1. Northwest of the hospital to the railroad tracks- Business
2. From Village at Goose Creek to the railroad tracks- Medium Density Residential
3. From the railroad tracks to approximately 500' south of Route 250- Medium Density Residential
4. Along Route 250- Business
5. West of Birch Gardens- High Density Residential

Julian Moffett, 171 Annandale Farm Lane, Staunton, VA 24401, stated he was representing the Board of Trustees for Tinkling Springs Church. He stated they were very concerned about access to the church property. He indicated U-turns would not be feasible. They are also concerned about access going through the vacant land to Route 640; this would cut the property into two (2) parts. He

would urge the Commission to pay strong attention to access to Tinkling Spring Drive.

Mr. Shomo asked Mr. Moffett if they purchased the land to protect the church.

Mr. Moffett stated yes, it was purchased to protect the church. It would control what was happening around the church and allow for the expansion of the cemetery.

Mr. Curd asked if access would be better closer to the Interstate.

Mr. Moffett stated they could look at that, but they would be concerned with the impact on the old cemetery.

James Earhart, 29 Birchwood Rd., Staunton, VA 24401, stated he didn't think the road was needed. He asked why Mule Academy Road was done. He stated his in-laws' house would be taken if this 90' right-of-way were to happen. He indicated he didn't want Medium Density or High Density Residential planned for the area. He is afraid it would allow for apartments. He would like to see Low Density Residential. He again stated he was opposed to the road.

Earl Thompson, 176 Fairmont Dr., Staunton, VA 24401, stated he was closest to the proposed road. He would also rather not see the road. He agreed with Mr. Earhart, he would like to see a lower density in the area. He stated he enjoyed seeing the cows and the view of Betsy Bell Mountain.

Mrs. Earhart explained Medium Density Residential refers to a planned density of three (3) to four (4) dwelling units per acre and that would be compatible with what exists in Fairmont. The Higher Density Residential that is planned for the Staunton side of Birch Gardens would allow for a higher density and could potentially allow for townhouses, duplexes or apartment complexes. Normally, Medium Density Residential is three (3) to four (4) dwelling units per acre and it would be up to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to decide what they wanted to zone it.

Vrla Leach, 37 Woodlawn Dr., Staunton, VA 24401, stated she is in opposition to the amendment and the road. She would like it to be lower density and she would also like to see it well planned out. She stated she is also opposed to the 133 acres available for development coming out at the Woodrow Wilson complex. She indicated it was already a busy intersection especially with the new middle school coming in. She urged the Commission to make it Low Density and to take out the Business portion.

Michelle Sprouse, 17 Lynn Lane, Staunton, VA 24401, stated over the past couple of years she has sat in meetings regarding the new middle school. She is concerned about the impact on the middle school with it being Medium Density Residential.

There being no one else desiring to speak in favor of, or in opposition to, the amendment, Ms. Shiflett declared the public hearing closed.

Mr. Cobb stated this is in an Urban Service Area where the County wants 70% its growth.

Mr. Shomo asked when they were planning for the middle school, did the School Board look at this for development.

Mr. Cobb stated the School Board looked at the land that is already zoned as well as land that is set aside for residential zoning. He wasn't sure if they included anything additional.

Ms. Shiflett re-emphasized these parcels would have to be rezoned in order to allow for development. They would have to go through the public hearing process with the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Byerly stated when he came on the Planning Commission this corridor was considered a sleeper interchange. Since then, it has awakened and the traffic movement has to be cared for.

Mr. Curd stated if we don't get the corridor study in the Comprehensive Plan, it could be a potential mess in the future. He was concerned about access on to Tinkling Spring Drive. He didn't think the two (2) alternatives that were presented are that great for the church. He stated he would like to see a full cross-over somewhere on Route 285.

Mr. Shomo stated they would not be setting anything in stone. This is just a corridor study to be added to the Comprehensive Plan. It needs to be in the plan to be studied properly.

Mr. Byerly made a motion to recommend changing the land uses along Route 636 and adding the Route 636/640 corridor study to the Comprehensive Plan with alternative accesses to Tinkling Spring Drive.

Mr. Shomo seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

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OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Earhart announced the Martin F. Lightsey rezoning request was withdrawn.

STAFF REPORTS

A. CODE OF VIRGINIA – SECTION 15.2-2310

Ms. Shiflett asked if there were any comments regarding the upcoming items on the BZA agenda. The Commission took no formal action on the BZA items.

B. Better Models Worksession

Mrs. Earhart reminded everyone of the Better Models for Development worksession scheduled for Monday, May 24, 2004. Dinner will begin at 5:00 p.m. in the kitchen with the worksession scheduled for 6:00 p.m. in the Smith Transfer East and West rooms.

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There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.

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Chairman

Secretary