

TAPPAHANNOCK PLANNING COMMISSION
OCTOBER 4, 2023
7:00 P.M.

PRESENT

Vice Chair: Dianna Carneal
Commission Members: Maria Pitts
Elaine Hilowitz

ABSENT

Chair: Timothy Bradshaw
Commission Members: Yvonne Vaughan
Scott Cannady

- **CALLED TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Carneal called the meeting to order.

Vice Chair Carneal stated since we do not have a quorum tonight there will be no action for a vote.

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND TOUR OF TOWN EXCURSION SUMMARY REPORT
TABLED**

The approval of the September 6, 2023, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes and the Tour of the Town Excursion Summary Report will be tabled since no quorum is present.

OLD BUSINESS

Mural Document

Vice Chair Carneal reported that she and Connie Dalton have been working on a final draft of the mural documents to present to the planning commission members for review at the next meeting.

Training

Vice Chair Carneal stated that she is working on coordinating joint training with another locality and once she has more information, she will present it to the members.

VDOT – Outstanding items

Vice Chair Carneal stated that the outstanding VDOT items she saw were closed by the Town Council. She suggested the members read the Town Council minutes for updates and that the minutes will determine if an item needs to remain open, be reviewed again or has been closed.

October National Planning Month

Vice Chair Carneal stated the proclamation will be presented to the Town Council at their October 10, 2023, meeting and she invited the members to attend.

Commission Member Hilowitz stated she has a Farmers Market sign-up sheet available if anyone is interested in signing up. She reported that she and Commission Member Vaughan will be in attendance

the whole time. She reported that she has not received confirmation from the person in charge of scheduling the vendors for the Farmers Market to confirm if they have received her application yet. She stated she plans on having items from the Essex County Library and the Essex County Museum for display. She stated that the traffic survey will not be available because it is not ready.

There was some discussion.

Commission Pitts asked Vice Chair Carneal if she received the traffic survey document she submitted.

Vice Chair Carneal stated she received Commission Pitts traffic survey document but that was the only one she received.

Commission Member Hilowitz reported she submitted one to the Chair and she assumed that he forwarded it to Vice Chair Carneal but she will submit it again.

Vice Chair Carneal recognized Connie Dalton and asked her to provide the members with an update on the meeting she had with the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Connie Dalton stated that first she would like to provide some clarification on some items that were previously discussed.

Connie Dalton explained the steps for the draft of the mural ordinance would be once the draft mural ordinance is ready a work session would be scheduled prior to the regular planning commission meeting where it would be reviewed and discussed by the commission members, schedule a public hearing with the planning commission members for public input, the planning commission votes on a recommendation to move forward or deny the ordinance, schedule a Joint Public Hearing with the Town Council to review planning commission recommendations and take a vote to adopt or deny ordinance.

Connie Dalton stated that because there will be more than two members attending the Farmers Market that a public notice will be posted.

Connie Dalton stated she attended a VDOT introduction meeting. She reported there is funding available for different projects through several sources. She stated since we are a Town within Essex County, the Town applications must be filed with Essex County and they cannot be filed on our own. She stated that based on the Smart Scale study the ones that are the most appealing to the Town Manager are some pedestrian options. She stated once a decision is made on the projects that the Town and Essex County would like to move forward on then applications could be filed.

Commission Member Hilowitz stated she was also working on the connection road from the Airport to Marsh Street but it was not completed because she never received any signatures from the Town Officials or Essex County officials.

Connie Dalton thanked her for the report. She stated that she had not received any direction from the Town Council to move forward. She stated she has been asked to work with Essex County and the Essex County School Board on enlarging their maintenance facility because extra land is needed. She stated that it has been indicated to her that the access easement road would serve as a connection road that would be used as a private road for the use of buses and emergency vehicles only. She reported the discussion has just begun of a possible access easement alignment because of existing utilities in the area.

- **NEW BUSINESS**

Public Representation as Planning Commission Members

Vice Chair Carneal stated when the commission members represent themselves in a public meeting, make sure that you identify yourself as a citizen and not speaking on behalf of the Tappahannock Planning Commission. She stated that several offices had received phone calls where it was interrupted that the person was speaking on behalf of the Tappahannock Planning Commission.

There was some discussion.

Summary Reports of Committees and Departments

Vice Chair Carneal stated if the members are going to attend meetings regarding the interests of the planning commission and make a report then the report should be concise and to the point so that it would be less time consuming for the public. She reminded the members that the meetings are being recorded.

Future Work Session Topics

Vice Chair Carneal stated if the commission members have future work session projects, she suggested that it be worked on from home and the members be prepared to present and have discussion to move things forward.

Open discussion

Vice Chair Carneal asked the Commission Members if they had anything they would like to discuss.

Vice Chair Carneal recognized Connie Dalton.

Connie Dalton gave the Commission Members the following updates.

- A new staff employee, Lauren Colley, Planning and Zoning Assistant will be attending next month's meeting.
- Attended a Historic Downtown Tappahannock (HDT) design committee meeting and the next project is painting of three business on Church Lane. (Tire doctor, Barber Shop and Art Studio)
- Processed forty-seven zoning permit applications in the calendar year 2023.
- Downtown Street Signs proposal to be presented to Town Council for review and approval at the October meeting.

Commission Member Hilowitz asked if the request to paint the buildings on Church Lane needs to be approved by the Historical Overlay Committee members.

Connie Dalton stated that the buildings are not located in the Historical Overlay District so they would not need approval from the Historical Overlay Committee members.

Vice Chair Carneal asked if the street sign proposal would need approval from the Historical Overlay committee members.

Connie Dalton stated that it is a budget item proposal that will be presented to the Town Council for their consideration and she is unclear of the approval process.

There was some discussion.

Connie Dalton stated there are ongoing conversations with Essex County regarding a resolution of the boundary discrepancy issues and once that is completed then the Comprehensive Plan can be completed and presented.

Connie Dalton discussed the boundary discrepancy process.

Connie Dalton gave the Commission Members a list of the businesses that have opened or soon to be open in the Town.

Connie Dalton stated that Carlos Dias, GIS Coordinator for Essex County, is working hard to correct some of the isolated discrepancies.

Commission Member Pitts commented that she will be communicating through email with the group, to get some insight on how as a planning commission member they would answer questions from the public at the Farmers Market.

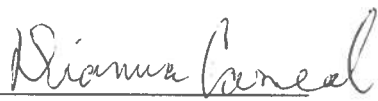
Vice Chair Carneal stated that the planning commission members should not voice their opinion regarding specific town business and if anyone had any questions to encourage them to come to one of the meetings.

Connie Dalton stated she would encourage the members to show enthusiasm and talk about some of the efforts that some of the Town is working on that are considered planning efforts. She suggested that they make the public aware they are beginning the construction stages of the Tappahannock Central Park, or funding was provided for the Hoskins Creek Project and funding is available for the Economic Development with the old Airport Project and feel free to share the Downtown Revitalization Plan that was done last year.

There was some discussion.

Vice Chair Carneal asked if the members had a chance to read the By Laws of a planning commission member. She asked the members to review because she feels that there are some items that need to be discussed further and she asked them to keep track of their questions.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.



Dianna Carneal, Vice Chair



Patsy K. Scates, Secretary