

**REGULAR MEETING OF  
LURAY PLANNING COMMISSION  
January 10, 2018**

The Luray Planning Commission met on Wednesday, January 10, 2018 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:

Ronald Good, Chairman  
John Shaffer  
Grace Nowak  
Brian Sours  
Tracie Dickson

Absent:

Gail Kyle

Others Present:

Bryan Chrisman, Acting Town Manager  
Brooke Newman, Planning & Zoning Assistant  
Charles Seal  
Kevin Seal  
Danny Chu  
David Reed

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Ronald Good, at 7:00 p.m. and everyone joined in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Motion:** Commissioner Brian Sours made the motion to accept the minutes with noted changes from the November 15, 2017 regular Planning Commission; seconded by Commissioner Tracie Dickson.

YEA: Chairman Ronal Good, Commissioners John Shaffer, Grace Nowak, Brian Sours, and Tracie Dickson

**Approved 5-0**

**ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

Chairman Good opened the floor for election of chair and vice-chair of the planning commission. He mentioned the bylaws state election of chair and vice-chair are to take place at the first meeting of the calendar year. Commissioner Brian Sours made the motion to nominate Ronald Good for chairman and it was seconded by Commissioner Tracie Dickson. Commissioner John Shaffer nominated Grace Nowak as vice-chair and it was seconded by Commissioner Brian Sours.

YEA: Commissioners John Shaffer, Brian Sours and Tracie Dickson **Approved 3-0**

## **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Chairman Good opened the floor for citizen comments. Mr. Reed noted that he was in attendance for agenda update and discussion item A. Preliminary Subdivision Plat.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **A. Special Use Permit 18-1 Charles & Melissa Seal, Self-Storage Business in B1**

Chairman Good opened the public hearing for special use permit 18-1 and presented the notice published in the Page News and Courier December 28, 2017 and January 24, 2018. As noted in the advertisement in the paper, it is a special use permit to construct a self-storage business consisting of 136 units and an office on roughly 130,000 square foot parcel zoned B1. Storage units are permitted by special use permit in B1. The property is on Tannery Road (a private road). All information such as the parcel plat and staff report have been provided to the planning commission.

Brian Chrisman opened discussion with the maps of the site plan sketch provided by Mr. Seal. He stated the planning and zoning department would be adding a section in the staff report which references the sections of the code that are related to the subject matter on the agenda. Mr. Chrisman addressed the special use permit and that the process would be that the planning commission would take this project under advisement and make a recommendation to the town council for approval or denial or they could also make a recommendation for changes that would be necessary to any of their submittals. At which point they could bring the topic up again at the February meeting or forward to the town council. Public notice has been provided. Other items for discussion, listed in the staff report, are drainage concerns. There are no concerns for drainage since the parcel is relatively flat. Mr. Chrisman made reference to the topo map provided in the agenda packets. There is a drainage ditch along the back side of the property. There is water available adjacent to the property, both on the north side of the property and closest to Turner's Auto Body. The sewer lines are on the south side of the parcel, closest to the back of the Slye Insurance building and near the town shed. They show both of these on the site plan, making sure they have connections available to the office. The main issue is the town sewer main that travels down through a portion of the property. Although we have not seen a scaled site plan with the location of these lines in relation to the buildings on the property, there does not seem to be an issue. They are aware of their location and we will require a scaled site plan after the special use permit is approved. The recommended conditions would be, we be able to evaluate the use of the property at any time to make sure it is in conformance with the special use permit. If there is an operational change of the parcel or an ownership change on the parcel, we recommend the town be allowed to make a review of the operation. This is to ensure that the operation at the time of ownership change or operational change conforms to the criteria set forth in the special use permit and zoning of the property. At some point prior to the special use permit being issued to the applicant, we will receive a site plan from the applicant that conforms to the applicable criteria in section 515, which governs what items have to be included in that formal site plan. Appendix A, Article V - Zoning Ordinance.

Chairman Good asked if there had been any contact from the joining property owners. Brooke Newman stated we have not received any feedback from property owners. Bryan Chrisman stated that the certified letter sent to Mr. Dovel, who owns the building on the other side of Turner's Auto Body, was not accepted and come back to our office.

Commissioner Shaffer asked if the property is visible from Main Street and if the trees shield the view shed. Mr. Chrisman stated, there is a line of trees. Right at the rail road crossing you can see down into the property but it tucks down a little lower. The southern end of the parcel is below an embankment where the road comes in. The remaining neighbors are M1 Industrial property. One thing Mr. Chrisman pointed out is that the parcel is served on a private road. Issues about entrances and roads would not apply because they are not located adjacent to a public road that they are going to be connected to. This could present some issues. However, there are two existing businesses served by Tannery Road. The road was never brought up to street standards nor was it dedicated to the town. At this point it would not be accepted by the town in its current condition. It would have to be brought up to secondary street standards.

Chairman Good opened the public hearing.

Commissioner Dickson mentioned her recent experience in finding a storage unit. Mr. ? interjected stating he had no objection to Seal opening a storage business. He feels they will look clean and offer a nice service to the town and citizens.

Chairman Good closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Nowak asked if this would affect the pocket park. Mr. Chrisman stated the Seal property extends to the brick wall and that the pocket park would not be affected. It was dedicated to the town and the town now maintains it. The parcel owned by Mr. Seal is zoned B1 because it uses to have frontage on main street versus all the others being M1 which did not access on main street.

Mr. Chrisman stated so long as we can see a site plan to scale to make sure there are no conflicts prior to the special use permit being issued to the applicant by the council. It is a special use, but given the location and the need, we do not have any objections to the site plan as proposed.

Chairman Good asked if the site plan would be reviewed by the staff. Mr. Chrisman stated yes, the staff would review the site plan and then provided comments directly back to the applicant if there were any. Unless we get the site plan between now and the February 12, town council meeting, our recommendation to the town council will be; if you approve it that is ok but we would like to make that approval contingent upon the site plan being sufficient and satisfactory to the standards of the town.

**Motion:** Commissioner Grace Nowak moved to forward the special use permit request for the 136 storage units with the conditions to council; Seconded Commissioner Brian Sours  
YEA: Chairman Good, Commissioners Nowak, Shaffer, Sours, Dickson **Approved 5-0**

## **UPDATES AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **A. Preliminary Subdivision Plat – Crazy Crow Holdings LLC**

Chairman Good referenced the application, plat, additional GIS maps and staff report from the agenda packet. Mr. Chrisman introduced Mr. Reed, who was in attendance to represent the applicant Crazy Crow Holdings LLC. The client is proposing a subdivision of a parcel that is nearly 25,000 square feet in the R3 District. The parcel is adjacent to HWY 211 and near the intersection of Bixler's Ferry Road and Mechanic Street. Mr. Chrisman stated if you look at the contour lines, they will drain from southwest to northeast.

The utility map shows water and sewer lines along with an existing drainage ditch that is adjacent to the property. A simple two lot minor subdivision is being proposed. There will be two parcels, each just a little over 12,000 square feet. Water and sewer is available and they will both have ingress and egress onto Bixler's Ferry Road. Parcel A will not be able to get an entrance onto Mechanic Street. Across the road is R3 as well, with single family homes. Mechanic Street is to the east and US 211 to the north. The applicant is dividing this parcel roughly in half. The building set backs are shown to scale on the plat. The one concern listed on the staff report and that Mr. Reed and Mr. Chrisman talked about is the building envelope on parcel B is relatively shallow. It doesn't have a lot of front to back depth where you could construct the primary structure, especially on the southwest side. This will be a challenge and up to the builder. At this point it is just a division of land and not a use of land. Mr. Reed and his client will go through the preliminary plat phase tonight and at the February council meeting. If everything checks out and both bodies are ok with the process, he can then advise his client and his surveyor to produce a final survey plat. The staff report references R3 zoning, subdivision and preliminary plats. Access points for driveways were discussed. Drainage is not an issue provided the owner does not drastically change the contours of the property. These lots are the sizes of R1 and R2 lots and this is in an R3 district. Other than single family dwellings, another consideration is to build duplexes which are allowed in R3.

Chairman Good inquired about the narrow construction envelop. Mr. Chrisman referred to parcel B and the dash lines on the inside of the parcel which represents the building setbacks. The concern discussed was on the southwest corner, near the Elik Brown properties, the building area gets small front to back. On this end of the house you could attach a deck or a carport which would provide what they need and meet the setbacks.

Chairman Good opened the public hearing.

Mr. Reed spoke on behalf of the applicant. He added the surveyor laid out a 30X52 dwelling on the left-hand side lot which does fit the setbacks making it as large as possible to fit within the setbacks. He and his client are aware that it is tight on that parcel but workable. He mentioned there is an existing driveway on parcel B which will likely be utilized for parcel B. The challenge in putting in a driveway on parcel A is the rise of the lot above Bixler's Ferry Road.

Chairman Good noted that what is being proposed is residential and that is what exists across the road at this time. Mr. Chrisman pointed out that there is a drainage ditch on the property adjacent to Mechanic Street. Mr. Reed and he talked about this. When they get into the deed drafting for the division he will look to see if there is an existing drainage easement. This will take drainage from Mechanic Street and Bixler's Ferry Road where these two lots will drain and direct it down toward US HWY 211. Mr. Chrisman recommended to Mr. Reed to advise his client to make sure the drainage for both parcels as they are developed, comes out toward Bixler's Ferry Road because there is an existing ditch line. If they drain out back on to US HWY 211, the Virginia Department of Transportation has to provide a comment on that process. Mr. Reed stated they are aware of the existing drainage and will be looking for an easement. This will most likely be the drainage used since it already exists.

Chairman Good closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Shaffer moved they forward to council with the recommendation for approval of this subdivision. Seconded by Commissioner Nowak

YEA: Chairman Good, Commissioners Shaffer, Nowak, Sours, Dickson **Approved 5-0**

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2018 – CHAPTERS 10, 11, & 12****Section 10: Education & Healthcare**

Mr. Chrisman mentioned the big changes to this chapter are the completion of the hospital and the rehab facility. The recommended additions to this chapter would be the new future location of Lord Fairfax Community College campus. One thing not mentioned is the Page Free Clinic, which is a big health care provider in our community. What this section needs to be about is what type of improvements do we want to see in our healthcare and what type of improvements do we want to see in our education? With our new healthcare facility, new school and now the new location for Lord Fairfax Community College which will offer two and four-year degrees, we seem to be offering what we need to our community. He recommended we look at access for education healthcare for a greater majority of the population. Are there programs that will enable us to get to that point and make healthcare available. For example, extending hours, helping to provide funding assistance to some after hour components like the free clinic that can help meet people's needs at odd hours. Or for the people who don't have insurance or cannot afford primary care. And the same for education, are there ways for us to more easily transport people from their community to these things. Can we find ways to support the development of the new Lord Fairfax Campus which would help make that a success? We could provide enhanced road access, wide streets, and nice parking lots. These would be good planning tools to make sure it is successful.

Commissioner Shaffer mentioned that the comprehensive plan is written as history as opposed to a plan. Mr. Chrisman agreed that we can easily write about what we have now but what we are looking for is to get away from our history and get more towards where we want to be fifteen to twenty years from now and how do we get there. The comp plan is a road map of how to get from Point A to Point B. Mr. Chrisman mentioned the town motto is Forward. It is on the town seal and has been there since the town was created. He mentioned incorporating the town's motto "Forward" into the title of the comp plan.

Chairman Good mentioned reaching out to Lord Fairfax and asking them what we can do to help. Mr. Chrisman stated fund raising is the issue at this point. And the key part being what else can they offer at the new campus that they are not able to offer now. One question is will this campus have a culinary kitchen to do culinary classes and hospitality type things that will directly support our tourism industry? Or possibly provide a meeting space with the culinary kitchen in support of that where students can prepare meals for business meetings. These are much needed skills sets for our community.

**Section 11: Arts & Culture**

Mr. Chrisman mention that we have an established arts and cultural district. The incentives are the state and federal grants available to those located in the arts and cultural zone. We are also an Appalachian trail community. In this chapter we can talk about how we use these to advance our community. One thing in the cultural component not mentioned is the history museum the caverns has constructed.

Mr. Chrisman mentioned the Vision Statement and its place in the comp plan. A better location would most likely be to place this statement in the front of the plan. An idea for the vision statement is to provide a panoramic view of Luray and print it so it runs the entire span across the vision statement pages. The vision statement seems to be symbolic of our community. One suggestion made by Commissioner Sours is to separate it's a good place to move to and it's a good place to grow up in. Commissioner Shaffer referenced our connection to Shenandoah National Park. He suggested we call ourselves a vibrant

national park community. Mr. Chrisman mentioned we are also a Shenandoah River community and a George Washington Jefferson National Forest community.

**Section 12: Community Design**

Mr. Chrisman noted page 53 might need to be moved to the transportation section. This section is a great place for the CDAC study. The professor from this class contacts the town once a year to inquire if there are any community projects they can do. Are there any rejuvenation projects in and around Luray that can be done? We also want to ask the tree and beautification committee what their ten-year plans are for Luray? And we also want to ask those involved in tourism, what are things that can happen in the next decade or two that they see as being important to the continuation and enhancement of tourism in our community? Commissioner Shaffer spoke about Luray's bright future. Luray's tourism is going up due to the trends in the industry. Luray has what people want as far as outdoor recreation. We are a national parks town and we are moving towards being a dark skies community. Mr. Chrisman mentioned that all 734 street lights in town will become downward pointing and directional white blue LED's. These lights put out less current than the yellow high-pressure sodium's, but they are directional and the light is focused down and out. We will be a dark sky community in 2019.

**Other Business**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:47 P.M.

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Bryan T. Chrisman  
Acting Town Manager

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Prepared by: Brooke Newman  
Planning & Zoning Administrative Assistant