

**REGULAR MEETING OF  
LURAY PLANNING COMMISSION  
FEBRUARY 11, 2015**

The Luray Planning Commission met on Wednesday, February 11, 2015 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  
Mark Malone  
Brian Sours  
Grace Nowak  
Jerry Dofflemyer  
Tracie Dickson  
John Shaffer

Others Present:

Ligon Webb, Town Planner  
Charlie Hoke, Town Manager  
Jason Spitler, Town Attorney

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:**

A motion was made by Commissioner Nowak that the minutes of the January 15, 2015 Regular Meeting be approved and motion was seconded by Commissioner Dofflemyer with the vote as follows: YEA: Commissioners Good, Malone, Sours, Nowak, Dofflemyer, Dickson and Shaffer. **Approved 7-0**

**REVIEW FOR UPCOMING PUBLIC HEARING: ADDITION OF VIRGINIA  
ENTERPRISE ZONE TO TOWN'S ZONING ORDINANCE**

Mr. Webb stated the way the Enterprise Zone works is that it is an ordinance and what they do is create an enterprise zone map. It's a map based ordinance and you have to be in the zone in order to qualify for benefits. The map can be amended once a year; it's a state program. When we did this, we went through and looked at potential places that might be good for business. The Caverns is in there and all of the Main Street and some industrial properties but if someone is outside, you could expand it by an amendment that you can do once a year. You have three zones; one is in Stanley, one is in Shenandoah and the other in Luray.

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The Enterprise Zone is a state act and has been around since the early 80's. Basically what it allows you to do is individuals in the zone can take advantage of some state incentives; one of which is if you are creating up to four jobs, and the other one is if you are investing in real estate. For instance, the Laurence Property could take advantage of the Real Property Investment Grant and get a potential rebate for rehabilitating a building. Those are the two state benefits that you could take advantage of.

A. Capital Investment Grant – You can receive back 75% of property taxes paid on machinery and tools, business personal property and/or real estate, as measured by the increase in assessment. Basically it freezes whatever you invest in a property. If you buy property in an enterprise zone and you make a minimal investment of \$100,000, your taxes will be assessed at your old rate. The idea behind the zone is that what you have today they would still collect taxes on, but any new investment, you would be able to get a rebate that would come back in five, ten, or fifteen year increments depending on the amount of money invested.

B. Business/Professional/Occupational License, Local Sales Tax, Meals and/or Lodging Tax Refund are tied to the number of jobs. This would allow for new jobs in an existing business as employees, or if a new business comes in and has at least five employees, they would be able to qualify for a discount. If you are a restaurant paying meals tax or if you are an accounting firm you would be able to take a percentage off your business/professional/occupancy tax.

C. Business Development Loan Program – This is a loan fund that the Page County EDA has money to loan. If you was in the Enterprise Zone you could potentially tap those funds.

D. Commercial Rehabilitation Real Estate Tax Exemption – This is another one that the Laurence owner is planning on utilizing. This again freezes the pre-improvement taxes and you would get a discount off the amount of dollars you invested, so depending on the amount of investment it can be a 5, 10 or 15 year rebate. The cost of rehabilitation must be at least 40 percent of the property's pre-improvement assessment prior to the commencement of rehabilitation work with a minimum investment of no less than \$50,000. We figured out what the Laurence on a 10 year tax rebate, on the town taxes if we froze that for 10 years at the current assessment, this owner could potentially save somewhere around \$14,000 and the county something like \$60,000; so they would get approximately \$75,000 rebate.

At this point, the only time they are going to be rebated as far as capital improvements in real estate is after they have paid one; they have to finish the improvements and get them assessed and they wouldn't be eligible until probably 2016.

Mr. Webb stated he has sent the Enterprise Zone information to Shenandoah, Stanley, and the County and he believe all of them will move forward with adopting this ordinance.

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Mr. Webb stated next month we will have a public hearing, and then forward it on to Town Council after that.

Mr. Hoke stated Enterprise Zone also asked to have this approved the start of January 1. Ligon was very prompt and researched all the other jurisdictions and put this one out and share it with the three towns and county. We all discussed verbally how it was going to be administered. It's probably better for everyone to administer it through Stephanie's office. She's asked for this and presented it.

Mr. Hoke stated the Enterprise Zone is fixed for one year and you can modify it once a year. This ordinance is required by the State. Page County has to adopt one and the three towns have to do it. They would like to see that within sixty days from the start.

Mr. Webb stated we will have a public hearing on Tuesday, March 10.

Mr. Spitler stated he would encourage each of the various bodies to discuss it independently because you guys are going to see things that maybe Stanley and Shenandoah doesn't see and vice versa, but if it would be helpful in terms of the timing and trying to get this done or trying to make sure that everybody is approving ultimately the same ordinance, we do have the authority for all three towns and the county to conduct a joint meeting where they all considered it and voted to approve or disapprove it at the same time. I don't know if that is a huge concern. We have done that in the past. The county would have to amend it and everybody else would have to change it if it's amended. Mr. Hoke said this is just accepting it.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Ligon Webb  
Town Planner

**ATTEST:**

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