

**Town of Round Hill  
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes  
October 6, 2020  
7:00 p.m.**

A meeting was held by the Round Hill Planning Commission on Tuesday, October 6, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, this meeting was conducted electronically pursuant to *Ordinance 2020-04: Providing for Continuity of Government*, adopted by the Mayor and Town Council on April 28, 2020. The Chairman, Planning Commission Members, and Staff attended this meeting electronically using Zoom. The public was given the opportunity to attend the meeting electronically.

**Planning Commission Members Present**

Manuel Mirabal, Chairman  
Peter Buxton  
Frank Etro  
Michael Hummel  
Todd Tschantz

**Staff Members Present**

Melissa Hynes, Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator  
Danielle Albright, Town Planner

**Members of the Public Present**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

**IN RE: CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Mirabal called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.; with Planning Commission Members Hummel, Buxton, Etro, Tschantz, and Chairman Mirabal present, a quorum was established.

**IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no comments from the public.

**IN RE: DISCLOSURES AND COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

There were no Disclosures and/or Commissioners' Comments.

**IN RE: APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commission Member Hummel made a motion **to approve the Agenda, striking Item 9, Town Council Report**. He noted he had nothing new to report. Commission Member Etro seconded the motion. A vote was held; the motion was approved 5-0. The vote is recorded as follows:

<b><u>MEMBER</u></b>	<b><u>VOTE</u></b>
Manuel Mirabal	Aye
Peter Buxton	Aye
Frank Etro	Aye
Michael Hummel	Aye

Todd Tschantz

Aye

**IN RE: APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Following discussion about formatting issues with the minutes, Commission Member Hummel made a motion to **approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes of July 14, 2020**. Commission Member Tschantz seconded the motion. A vote was held; the motion was approved 4-0-1, with Commission Member Etro abstaining. The vote is recorded as follows:

<b><u>MEMBER</u></b>	<b><u>VOTE</u></b>
Manuel Mirabal	Aye
Peter Buxton	Aye
Frank Etro	Abstain
Michael Hummel	Aye
Todd Tschantz	Aye

**IN RE: BUSINESS ITEMS**

**a. Proposed Text Amendments: Landscape Chapter (*Types of Trees and Other Plantings*)**

Town Planner Albright presented this item. She noted the changes she made based on the Planning Commission's recommendations, including adding grasses, ground cover, and perennials to the list and including native and readily available plants. Ms. Albright reviewed the changes for Section 14.9. A discussion ensued regarding the wording for this section. Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator Hynes drafted the following changes to this section with input from the Commissioners, which staff will incorporate into the final version of the proposed text amendment:

*Native species adapt to the local climate and soil conditions, require less water and pesticides, and provide multiple benefits to both people and wildlife including shelter and food. The flora listed below are native species approved for use; any other species used to meet the requirements of this Article requires the approval of the Zoning Administrator.*

Ms. Albright then reviewed the new section that was added for Groundcover/Grasses. In response to a question from Commission Member Hummel, Ms. Albright stated the list was developed with input from a Master Gardener. She also added a requirement under section 14.10 for groundcover spacing to be a minimum of 12 inches apart. Following discussion, this requirement was modified as follows: Groundcover: spacing: *planted based on the species growth habit*.

Commission Member Buxton noted that there are no provisions regarding the color of lighting in Article 14. Ms. Hynes explained that the Zoning Ordinance typically does not regulate design or color. Mr. Buxton explained his question further to ask about current residents having obnoxious color choices for their front yard lights. Ms. Hynes explained that the Zoning Ordinance is used only to regulate a business or a new land development application. She said that property maintenance and nuisances by current residents is regulated under separate article of the Town Code, and the Town Council would need to amend the Town Code to regulate lights as possible nuisances.

Following discussion about moving the proposed text amendments forward for public hearing, Chairman Mirabal stated he would accept a motion **to accept Article 14, as edited tonight by the Planning Commission, for sending to the Town Council for a Joint Public Hearing**. Commission Member Etro so moved; seconded by Commission Member Buxton. A vote was held; the motion was approved 5-0. The vote is recorded as follows:

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Manuel Mirabal	Aye
Peter Buxton	Aye
Frank Etro	Aye
Michael Hummel	Aye
Todd Tschantz	Aye

**b. Master Park Planning: Review Loudoun Street Town Park**

Town Planner Albright presented this item. She provided background on the Loudoun Street Park and reviewed the Park Mission Statement. Commission Member Etro questioned if the park is three separate parcels or if it had been combined into one parcel. Commission Member Hummel confirmed that the County's tax records show the park is still three parcels. A discussion ensued about the Park Mission Statement and whether there should be one overarching mission statement or specific mission statements for each park. Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator Hynes explained that the Park Mission Statement was written 20 years ago when the Town only had one Park; staff will be working on unique mission statements for each park.

Ms. Albright reviewed the Town Park Policy which was developed in 2014. She discussed the Town Park's original layout and amenities and the two additional parcels that have been added over the years. She also discussed the events that are held at this location, including the Home Town Festival, Christmas Tree Lighting, Movie Night, and Easter Egg Hunt. Ms. Albright then reviewed the Round Hill to Franklin Park Trail which is currently under development and discussed proposed future development at the Town Park, including new playground equipment, passive uses for the undeveloped parcels, and community murals. She noted that parking can be a problem for people attending events at the Town Park. She reported that all of the FY2020 Capital Improvement Plan projects for Town Park have been completed, including new benches and tables, and adding electric service.

Ms. Hynes explained that staff will prepare a draft document for the Planning Commissioners to review and develop recommendations for the Town Council's consideration. Commission Member Buxton suggested that the Town Park include something that recognizes the Town's veterans, similar to what Lovettsville does for veterans. Commission Member Etro said that the Town Park is used for the Memorial Day Ceremony; he noted that when the Town Park was first developed, there was discussion about having a veterans' memorial at the entrance to the Park. Ms. Hynes said that staff will include this idea in the Master Park Plan.

**c. Review Draft Parking Study (Draft 2 for Staff Presentation Purposes)**

Town Planner/Zoning Administrator Hynes presented this item. She reviewed the new sections that had been added to the Draft Parking Study including results from the 2014 Community Survey and relevant sections of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Hynes discussed several of the current possible solutions including shared parking lots, shared entrances, and shared stormwater management facilities; she did not recommend a *Fee in Lieu* unless it was tied to the idea of building a public parking lot.

Ms. Hynes noted that Ms. Albright has been working on a presentation for the properties included in the study. Commission Member Etro asked if there was a reason the Methodist Church was not included. Ms. Hynes stated that was an oversight and the church should have been included. Ms. Albright then reviewed the information she had compiled for each business included in the study, including the use, zoning requirement for parking, gross floor area, required number of parking spaces, the available number of spaces, and staff comments about foot traffic.

Ms. Hynes pointed out that the Main Street Project will result in a reduction of parking spaces. She explained the existing parking challenges with one business [Etc!] that is grandfathered in on a residential lot; this business does not have an official parking lot and other parking options are limited. Staff will be reaching out to businesses ahead of time to let them know about the changes in parking availability on Main Street as a result of the completion of the Main Street Project. Ms. Hynes then discussed the letter sent to business owners about the Parking Study and asking for their input by October 16, 2020.

Ms. Hynes explained that she and Ms. Albright will continue to work on the Master Park Plan and Parking Study. When the final drafts are completed, the Planning Commission will receive copies to begin their work on the Master Park Plan and Parking Study. The Commission members will then direct staff to add, delete or edit these documents until the documents are in a final form that the Planning Commission can agree upon.

Chairman Mirabal asked what the process is for getting a Parking Study and if there is a budget. Ms. Hynes explained the study is being prepared internally by staff; if the Council does not like what is presented, they can pay for a professional parking study. She noted that the Town Council did not include the Parking Study in their Action Plan or provide funding for the study; it was the Planning Commission that offered to take on the project. Chairman Mirabal discussed the benefit of having outside help to develop the Parking Study or having a representative from the Planning Commission integrated directly with the process. Ms. Hynes noted that Martha Semmes, who is a Fellow with the American Institute of Certified Planners and serves on the Loudoun County Design Team, is assisting with the Parking Study. A discussion ensued about the overall need for additional parking and how that could best be accomplished, such as the Town purchasing a suitable parcel in the downtown area. Ms. Hynes said she could reach out to her contacts at the County about reviewing the study and look at other town's parking studies. She also asked the Commission Members to contact her if they would like to be more involved in the study.

## **IN RE: ACTION ITEMS**

### **a. Recommendation to Town Council – Member of Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)**

Commission Member Tschantz offered to serve on the BZA. Commission Member Hummel made a motion **that the Planning Commission make a recommendation to the Town Council to appoint Todd Tschantz to the BZA.** Commission Member Buxton seconded the motion. A vote was held; the motion was approved 4-0-1, with Commission Member Tschantz abstaining. The vote is recorded as follows:

<b><u>MEMBER</u></b>	<b><u>VOTE</u></b>
Manuel Mirabal	Aye
Peter Buxton	Aye
Frank Etro	Aye
Michael Hummel	Aye
Todd Tschantz	Abstain

## **IN RE: TOWN COUNCIL REPORT**

This item was removed from the agenda.

## **IN RE: TOWN PLANNER REPORT**

Ms. Hynes reported on use of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Funds and the upcoming Town Council Strategic Planning Meeting, which will kick off the budget season.

Ms. Albright reported on the Poplar Hill Subdivision. She is working with the Town Attorney on preparing comments for the second submission to the County. The Town Attorney is also reviewing the deed of subdivision to make sure the Town's comments were addressed.

In response to a question from Commission Member Etro, Ms. Hynes stated that Poplar Hill will be an extension of Fallswood and will include 10 new homes. She noted that Ms. Albright is also working on the bond acceptance for Poplar Hill. Commission Member Hummel explained that the Town is only involved in this from a water/sewer standpoint; it is not a subdivision in Town, it is a County subdivision. Ms. Hynes stated the subdivision was originally approved in 2005 or 2006 and has been dormant due to the recession.

Chairman Mirabal asked staff to send him the County's questions regarding the Town's first submission. Commissioner Etro also requested a copy. A discussion ensued about the Town's role in reviewing subdivisions in the Urban Growth Area. Ms. Hynes explained that in this instance the subdivision has already been approved and the Town's role at this point is to review the water/sewer easements and the deed. She noted there is some concern about the Town's ability to serve an 11<sup>th</sup> lot that is 1,000 feet from the rest of the lots. A discussion ensued about whether this lot should be on well and septic. Ms. Hynes explained that while the Town does not have zoning authority or approval for new subdivisions located outside of the Town limits, the Town is a referral agency to make comments and recommendations.

Ms. Albright gave updates on the grants she is working on with the Round Hill Outdoors Committee and the upcoming virtual Arbor Day celebration. She noted that Sleeter Lake Park will

be closing for the season in early November; she is working on getting electric installed at the Park by the time it opens next year.

**IN RE: NEXT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

Following discussion, the Planning Commission Members agreed to meet on November 10, 2020 as previously scheduled.

Chairman Mirabal asked for an update on the Joint Public Hearing date. Commission Member Hummel stated the Town Council will be selecting a date at their meeting on October 7 and they will let the Planning Commission know.

Commission Member Hummel asked if the Planning Commission had adopted a Vice-Chairman. Chairman Mirabal said that had not been done yet; he suggested doing so at the next meeting on November 10.

**IN RE: ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Mirabal adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Manuel Mirabal, Chairman

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Harriet West, Town Clerk