

Joint Public Hearing
March 25, 2015

A joint public hearing was held by the Mount Jackson Town Council and the Mount Jackson Planning Commission on March 25, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at 5901 Main Street. Planning Commission members in attendance: Mark Bowyer, Heather Diehl, Nancy Fadely, Bonnie Good, Larry Hand and Anita Miller. Council members in attendance: Bucky Miller, Mayor, Whitney Miller, Donnie Pifer, Roger Rudy and Rod Shepherd. Ken Hackenbracht represented both the Planning Commission and the Town Council. Also in attendance: Kevin Fauber, Town Manager, Doug Arthur, Town Attorney, Heather Taylor, Town Clerk. Visitors present: Paul Bryant of F & R Consulting, Ray Burkholder, James Patton and Steve Semones of Balzer & Associates Engineering, Eleanor and Robert Whitehurst as well as 70+ citizens from the community.

Chairman Bonnie Good called the meeting to order.

The first hearing was a Rezoning Request, (01-2015) Property owner Todd Holtzman, 5727 Main Street to be rezoned from Residential 1 (R-1) to Residential 2 (R-2). Town Manager Kevin Fauber presented the request as a remodel changing the current structure to two residential dwellings. Chairman Good requested if anyone wanted to speak to this and Gerald Forsberg asked, "How many more special rezonings is Mr. Holtzman going to keep asking for?" Mr. Holtzman responded by stating that his projects are on a case by case basis and have been successful. One unit is vacant out of twenty. The structures were dilapidated before construction upgrades including 5727 Main Street. Mr. Forsberg also questioned whether there was enough parking at this location which requires 2 parking spots per unit. Chairman Good addressed this and confirmed that there are enough parking spaces available.

Chairman Good reviewed the rules necessary for the meeting to run smoothly.

The second hearing was a Rezoning Request, (02-2015)-Frederickson Properties/Robert Whitehurst, Jr./Betty Lind Barbatsuly-Rezone in-town properties along Turkey Knob Road. Tax map 091-A-040, 091-A-041E, 091-A-040A, 091-A-041D and 091-A-041C from Agriculture to Limited Industrial (I-1). Kevin Fauber stated that as a result of a recent meeting with VDOT that Mr. Whitehurst has offered and submitted the following proffer: *"Prior to the approval of a Site Plan on the subject parcel currently within the town of Mount Jackson and/or the annexation of any property owned by the applicant or successor a Traffic Impact Analysis, (TIA), will be submitted to VDOT pursuant to Virginia VA Code 15.2-2222.1. All transportation improvements identified during the review and VDOT approval process of the TIA will be the responsibility of the applicant or successor and shall be implemented prior to the issuance of occupancy permit."* This proffer has been reviewed and approved by VDOT.

Public Hearing
March 25, 2015

-2-

Ray Burkholder, an engineer from Balzer & Associates began his presentation mentioning that this project is a process with many steps. The rezoning being discussed is the 136 acres within the town of Mount Jackson. The opportunities Mr. Burkholder highlights include more state involvement with plans and projects to engage the town, local growth and opportunities, jobs, and improved infrastructure. He mentioned that there is no By-Right-Use. This will be a controlled design & approval process to protect the small town feel and sensitive areas. Revenues would be expected to increase for the town and the county and with this unique property/location it is in close proximity to I-81, I-64 and I-66. There is no other property this size in the state of Virginia. Through the annexation process several studies would take place including environmental, geotechnical, traffic flow, land-use buffering, utilities, (public and private), and storm water run-off. Mr. Burkholder stated that a company would be looking for a property with close proximity to their target market, raw materials and transportation. A company would want site readiness and any company coming in is going to want a good fit.

Keith Click, lifetime Shenandoah Valley resident, asked "What is the negative impact of the additional truck traffic on the southern school campus? How does this tie in with the Comprehensive Plan?"

Tony Dean from Pinewood Road asked several questions including "are the 13 lots from Baldwin Hills Subdivision going to be annexed in to the town limits?" Robert Whitehurst said "no" they would not be. Mr. Dean stated, "There are other industrial parks that look like ghost towns. How is this going to be different from what we have? The presentation mentioned what the wages could be. If you know the wages then can you say who would provide the jobs? Who is coming here?"

Gary Lantz from Cannon Hill Road Mount Jackson commented on the Annexation Rights Agreement from May 8, 2001, items 6 & 9. Will this mega-site cause storm water run-off problems that will affect the river? Adverse environmental & economic affect? Infrastructure impact? (Negative impact on the landfill, police department, fire and rescue, public safety, increased taxes.)

Rob Frazier-Director of Health & Safety, Frazier Quarry. "As an employer in the area, there are a lot of people who don't have jobs. We must be capable of ushering in sustained growth."

Joint Public Hearing

March 25, 2015

-3-

Jordan Rinker, resident of Mount Jackson who owns property on Wissler Road specifically highlighted the 5-11 Caverns Road Area A1-Residential (Traditional Neighborhood Development) of the Comprehensive Plan. His questions included "Why do this project here? Strasburg has a complex that is sitting empty. This is a dying territory with all the vacancies already in the valley. The downtown area will die with jobs going out. When Mount Jackson annexed did they go through Richmond courts for permission to go from A to I?"

Curtis Roy from Howard Lick Lane Mount Jackson commented on how narrow Rt. 698 is and asked "if this road was widened to carry the extra traffic from this project would this cause people to have to give up their property along the road?"

Taby Whitacre resident of Garlic Hollow Road Edinburg highlighted page 24 of the Annexation Rights Agreement specifically the "protection of agricultural properties which includes 3 provisions,"

Jack Frady of Wissler Rd. Mount Jackson commented on the damage done to Wissler Road by the trucks over the years. The road has not been maintained. "Has the town checked on the mega-sites that are available in the state and around the state of Virginia to see if there are interested parties to come into this mega-site? What is the town willing to offer to these industries when they do come in? What is it going to take to get the railroad to open up? This is being called Limited Industrial. What's the limit to this?"

Dexter Mumaw of Cave Ridge Road Mount Jackson commented on how strict VDOT is with approving sites.

Steve Stein of Georgetown Road Mount Jackson asked "How did word get out about this gathering?" He asked, "Was there any advertising about the hearing? What advertising took place?" He didn't feel adequate lead time was given to be informed on this matter.

Todd Holtzman of Main St. Mount Jackson highlighted that there are no By-Right uses for the property. It has to be studied, calculated and controlled through tight controls through the able bodied people on the Planning Commission and Town Council.

Gerald Forsberg from Shannon Avenue Mount Jackson asked, "What is the definition of a mega-site?"

Joint Public Hearing

March 25, 2015

-4-

Chairman Bonnie Good stated that it was premature to vote and that the Planning Commission needed time to learn the answers to as many questions as possible. There are positives to this and there are negatives to this and no one can predict the right or the wrong in advance. This is an opportunity to look into but there are too many questions raised that need to be answered.

Russell Pritchett from Turkey Knob Road in Mount Jackson questioned VDOT approving access to I-81-Rt. 11.

On two occasions Mayor Miller addressed the group clarifying that the discussion on the docket is only about the 136 acre rezoning that is already town property.

Donald Shirley, who lives in the town limits of Mount Jackson, commented on the number of studies needing to be done and asked the cost. Mr. Whitehurst stated that the studies would cost approximately \$150K. As part of this process, it is necessary to gather this information and for the town to then decide if they are onboard.

Wendell Cochran of Georgetown Road Mount Jackson asked, "Will there be a Public Hearing on the Annexation and who votes on the Annexation taking place?"

A woman from the audience asked "What is the time frame for the studies to be completed?" She was told that the studies are going on right now and will take a few weeks. Prior studies will also be utilized.

"Will there be improvements to the roads? New exit ramps?"

"Does Council have resources to get information about this project? Have they sought outside council to help them evaluate the information? Would the improvements, based on the information from the Traffic Impact Analysis Study, include the entry and exit ramps off of I-81?"

A recommendation to close the Public Hearing was requested by Mr. Gary Lantz. The Public Hearing ended at approximately 8:54 p.m.

CLERK

MAYOR