

Mount Jackson
Planning Commission Meeting

April 1, 2024

- 1 -

Regular Meeting

Chairman Larry Ambrose called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the council chambers at 5901 Main Street. Commissioners Evelyn Burner, Karen Costie, Jim Hines, and Anita Miller were in attendance. Also present were Olivia Hilton, Town Manager; and Barbara Riggelman, Town Clerk. There were no visitors.

Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes: None

Introduction of Guests: None

Hear from Visitors: None

Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes – Commissioner Miller MOVED, seconded by Commissioner Burner to APPROVE the Minutes of the February 5, 2024 Regular Meeting.

VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Commissioner Burner			
Commissioner Costie			
Commissioner Hines			
Commissioner Miller			
Commissioner Ambrose			
5 AYES, motion carried			

Old Business: None

New Business:

1. Orchard Street Site Plan Review

Ms. Hilton stated that the Orchard Drive subdivision was submitted several weeks ago by DR Horton, the developer, and The Timmons Group, the engineer. The background of the project is that the Town has been in conversation with the groups for several months, since about September. Internally, Karl Shaeffer with Pennoni; Randy Lonas, Public Works Supervisor; and Ms. Hilton with a zoning perspective, have reviewed the project. They are proposing conditional approval, given that the developers do need to extend over to Jackson Street across the railroad, although it is not a requirement. Ms. Hilton stated that there were a few changes starting with one area on Jackson Street where they are trying to add an additional manhole rather than installing sewer below Jackson Street, which is unnecessary. The Town is asking the developer to add the manhole so that sewer doesn't have to go all the way down Jackson Street. In case something was to happen, workers can access the manhole rather than digging up the street. Every home would have its own water meter, and Staff is recommending an 8-inch main rather than the current 6-inch main.

Discussion ensued on lot sizes. Ms. Hilton stated that lot sizes were mostly 8,000 sq ft., with several at 8,500 sq ft., and some of the corner lots closer to 11,000 sq ft. The project is planning for 120 homes. Ms. Hilton stated this would add \$1.8 million in sewer and water tap fees. Prices for a lot and home would range from \$250-350,000. With the size of the development, this would include a 25' setback on the front, 20' on the rear, and 10' setbacks on the sides. Ms. Hilton stated that inclusion on tonight's agenda was for infrastructure, lot sizes, and underground utilities. Discussion ensued on houses. Ms. Hilton stated that Staff was requesting some single-level properties in hopes of helping the aging population.

Mount Jackson
Planning Commission Meeting

April 1, 2024

- 2 -

The Planning Commission requested two entrances be required for the subdivision – Jackson Street and Mill Creek Lane. Ms. Hilton was requested to inquire into the number of single level vs. two-story houses, average square footage of the homes and average prices, and where the developers are at in conversations with Norfolk Southern. Mr. Hines inquired if the school system could handle a rise in school population. Ms. Hilton answered that after talks with Evan Vass, County Administrator, this is not seen as a problem. Mr. Hines asked if the water treatment plant would be affected by the additional water and sewer. Ms. Hilton answered that there is a pumping station on Jackson Street that is underutilized and would be able to handle the additional flow. The only changes would be the addition of a few manholes and the 8-inch main.

2. Proposed Zoning Amendment

Ms. Hilton stated that she is proposing a zoning change to eliminate the minimum lot size for B-2 and B-1 areas, especially for B-1 buildings. Current requirements are for a minimum of 6,000 sq ft, particularly in the downtown area. While such rules usually ensure preservation and safe development, they can sometimes impede growth in the downtown area. The County suggested this change, along with the owner of the Nelson Theater. Since the theater building is currently 10,000 sq ft, splitting it in half – with the bottom part being the theater and the upper level being office and apartment space – each part would fall below the 6,000 sq ft requirement.

Board of Zoning Appeals Report: None

Town Council Items: Ms. Burner reported that all proposed ordinance changes were approved by Council.

Zoning Administrator Report:

1. FY24 Permit Database

Ms. Hilton stated that she has been taking note of the Commission’s feedback and putting it into action. Ms. Hilton stated that she would prefer the permit database to be set up as a simple spreadsheet of basic facts. This would include permits that have been approved, which area they are for, the applicant’s purpose and location, and if they have been approved. Ms. Hilton will provide these updates every month.

2. Permit/Form Upgrade

Ms. Hilton stated that the website developer is working on a new website for the Town, with hopes of having this ready by June or July. Ms. Hilton asked for recommendations on updating the current Zoning Application.

3. Comprehensive Plan Refresh

Ms. Hilton stated that the Comprehensive Plan is required to be updated every 5 years. The last update was in 2017, so the Town is a bit behind. Ms. Hilton recommended looking into Shenandoah County’s plan as a model, using some of their information. The hope is to start working on the Plan this upcoming winter.

Board Members’ Items: Chairman Ambrose inquired again about the construction at the former South End Grocery and someone potentially living in the house out back. Ms. Hilton stated that she was told that there is no one living there. Ms. Costie reported that she had recently observed people lounging on the porch.

Commissioner Miller made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Burner, to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 PM.

Submitted by: Barbara M. Riggleman, Town Clerk

Transcribed by: Thomas C. Neale, Public Administration Intern