

Bland County Planning Commission Minutes of the Regular Meeting on January 10, 2005.

Members Present:

Elmer Chewning, John Dodson, , Stephen Kelley, Jerry Mercer, Deborah Looney, Allen Newberry, Jim Baker, Allen Newberry, R.B. Anderson and Guy Boone

Members Absent:

Henry Blessing and Robert Trobaugh

Others Present:

Jonathan D. Sweet, Planning Commission Secretary and Charles Starks, Applicant

CALL TO ORDER

At 6:30 PM, Planning Commission Chairman, Jerry Mercer called the meeting of the Bland County Planning commission to order at the Bland County School Board Office in Bastian, Virginia.

ROLL CALL

Commission Secretary Jonathan D. Sweet took the roll call and announced that there was a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Mercer requested a motion to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2004 meeting. Vice Chairman Chewning made the motion to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2004 meeting, Commission Member Kelly provided a second to the motion, and it passed unanimously as written by acclamation.

ITEMS TABLED FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

None

PUBLIC HEARING ON CUP APPLICATION

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Rezoning Application – Charles Starks

Chairman Mercer presented the floor to Mr. Charles Starks to brief the Commission on his proposed zoning change and intended use as mentioned in the Conditional Use Permit Application to rezone a 6.38-acre tract from agricultural to commercial for the purpose of inducing commercial enterprise.

Mr. Starks addressed the Commission and elaborated on his desire to market the property and noted that the purpose of his rezoning effort was to make the property conducive for such commercial enterprises that would be a logical fit for that location along I-77.

Secretary Sweet provided that Mr. Starks' notion to rezone the denoted 6.38-acre site should compliment the existing patrons located at that particular interchange and provide an opportunity for new developments needed to optimize the portion of I-77 that traverses Bland County.

Mr. Starks concluded by enumerating the obvious qualities of the site and how it lends itself to multiple opportunities due to the existing infrastructure, the topography and proximity to I-77. He additionally noted that he is a proud native of Bland County and grew up in Hicksville. He mentioned he spoke to his family regarding this venture and he received their support.

Chairman Mercer requested a motion to approve Mr. Starks' application to rezone the sited 6.89-acre tract from agricultural to commercial and move to schedule a public hearing on February 7, 2005.

Commission Member Newberry made the motion to approve Mr. Stark's application to rezone the sited 6.38-acre tract from agricultural to commercial and move to schedule a public hearing on February 7, 2005. Commission Member Baker provided the 2nd. The motion passed unanimously

Bland County Zoning Proposal

Chairman Mercer prefaced the Bland County Zoning Proposal by providing his opinion of what this effort would mean. He postulated that the partnership between the Bland County Zoning Department and the Bland county Sheriff's Department could be most fruitful and provide the needed assistance to resolve unattended zoning violation. Chairman Mercer then requested Secretary Sweet to further explain the proposal.

Secretary Sweet began by introducing the proposal as a Bland County Zoning Initiative that would engage a cooperative partnership between the Bland County Zoning Department and the Bland County Sheriff's department for the purpose of aiding the County with the identification and collection of zoning violations to improve the safety, welfare and beauty of our community. Secretary Sweet went on to walk the Commission through the remainder of the proposal (*See attached) and elaborated on the possible challenges that the Zoning Department would face. These challenges were to get consistent and enthusiastic cooperation form the Bland County Sheriff's Department; the tremendous amount of time it will take to address the potential amount of violations that could be reported through this imitative; handling the influx of questions and complaints from the public and those involved in the violation; the amount of time spent in court and court related activities; the potential of public perception issues due to the participation from the Sheriff's Office.

The Commission collectively discussed the initiative and agreed that this proposal could be an effective tool in combating the numerous zoning infractions that Bland County has and is currently experiencing. The Commission raised a question as to the level of interest Sheriff Thompson

conveyed regarding this partnership. Secretary Sweet responded that the Sheriff was receptive to the proposal but needed to discuss with his staff and investigate liabilities and other issues considered due diligence prior to commitment.

Chairman Mercer requested a motion to accept this proposal as another tool to combat the County's existing zoning violations and to move forward in constructing a partnership with the Bland County Sheriff's Department that could creatively and successfully address this matter.

Commission Member Anderson made the motion to accept this proposal as another tool to combat the County's existing zoning violations and to move forward in constructing a partnership with the Bland County Sheriff's Department that could creatively and successfully address this matter. Commission Member Dodson provided the 2nd. The motion passed unanimously

ADJOURNMENT

Commission Member Looney made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Chairman Mercer obliged – the meeting was adjourned.