

PLANNING COMMISSION

October 9, 2024

Regular Meeting Minutes

The Planning Commission met for a regular meeting at 7:30 PM on Wednesday October 9, 2024, at 7:30 pm, in the Vienna Town Hall Council Chambers. Commissioners present were Chairwoman Jessica Plowgian, Matthew Glassman, Keith Aimone, David Miller, Deepa Chakrapani, and Douglas Noble. Staff members present were Director of the Department of Planning & Zoning, David Levy, Deputy Director of Planning & Zoning, Kelly O'Brien, Town Engineer, John Sergent, and Clerk to the Commission, Jennifer Murphy. Stephen Kenney was absent.

Roll Call

Commissioner Kenney is absent.

Communications from Citizens and/or Commissioners: None

Public Hearing:

Item No. 1

Determination of whether the project to build a new library and parking garage at 101 Maple Avenue East conforms with the adopted Comprehensive Plan, as required by §15.2-2232 of the Code of Virginia.

Deputy Director, Kelly O'Brien presented staff's report, stating that a library has been in use at the subject location since 1913. The original building, known as the Little Library, was in operation on site until 1962. That building has since been relocated to the Town Green. The Patrick Henry Library, which opened onsite in 1971, is now under review for expansion. Presenting proposed plans, Deputy Director O'Brien stated that the application for expansion was formally submitted in February 2023, under the previous Chapter 18 of the Zoning Ordinance. As a result, the application must meet the provisions set forth under the previous C-2 zoning regulation. The application includes requests for modification from requirements for rear-yard and front-yard setbacks, tree canopy coverage, and loading space. Additionally, Virginia State Code §15.2-2232 requires that the Planning Commission review the proposed public building facility to determine whether it is in substantial accord with the Town's Comprehensive Plan. To date the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) has held four (4) work sessions to discuss the proposed design elements of the building.

Concluding staff's presentation, Chairwoman Plowgian invited public comment. There being none, a motion to close the public hearing was put forward.

Motion to Close: Glassman

Second: Miller

Carried by roll call vote: 6-0

Commissioner Miller motioned that the proposed project to build a new library and parking garage at 101 Maple Avenue East is in major accordance with the adopted Comprehensive Plan, as required by §15.2-2232 of the Code of Virginia.

Motion: Miller

Second: Glassman

Carried by rollcall vote: 6-0

Regular Meeting:

Item No. 1

Recommendations to the Town Council regarding 1) proposed modifications of requirements for front and rear yard setbacks, loading space, and tree canopy coverage and 2) the proposed landscape plans for Patrick Henry Library, located at 101 Maple Ave E.

Deputy Director O'Brien presented proposed modification details, stating that the required 15 ft front-yard setback is requested to be 10 ft and that the 10 ft required rear-yard setback is requested, at its narrowest, to be 3 ft. The side yard is located on the side of the lot that faces Vienna Elementary.

The third modification request is for tree canopy requirements. Due to access requirements most of the proposed trees have been added to the town's right-of-way, which is not permitted to be counted towards required canopy coverage. As a result, the applicant is requesting allowance for a 4% canopy coverage in place of the required 10%.

The fourth and final modification request is for a 15x35 ft loading area, required to be a 25x90 ft loading space. Concluding staff's presentation, Deputy Director O'Brien offered to answer questions.

Maryam Mostamandi, Project Manager with Fairfax County and Keith Leonard with RRM Architects were present representing the application.

Reviewing the proposed project elevations, commissioners discussed loading space access, increasing bicycle parking, the current corner configuration at Maple Ave/Center St. S, and town tree canopy requirements. The applicant was asked to update the loading area narrative, show sidewalk widths at the corner, and include Right Turn Only information. The realistic rendering was also asked to be updated to include to-scale overhead power lines. The traffic signal equipment and mast arms should match what is currently onsite.

Commissioners further discussed safety concerns for combining bicycle parking within the parking garage and anticipated parking counts for a regional library.

There being no further discussion, a motion was in order.

Commissioner Miller motioned that a recommendation be made to Town Council in support of proposed modifications of requirements on front and rear yard setbacks, loading space, and tree canopy coverage for the proposed development of the Vienna Library and parking garage, located at 101 Maple Avenue East.

Seconding the motion, Commissioner Noble stated that he favored 10-12 ft wide sidewalks in the Avenue Center (AC) area but understands its challenges. Although he supported the motion, he asked the applicant do what they could to add as much sidewalk space as possible.

Chairwoman Plowgian expressed disappointed with the proposed tree canopy coverage, stating that the town just passed legislation to improve tree canopy coverage. She will support the motion but continues to have concerns for the health of the trees situated next to Vienna Elementary.

Commissioner Chakrapani will not support the motion, stating she has concerns with the front yard setback, tree canopy, and safety issues in the parking garage. She would like to see a 3,000 sq. ft. reduction of the planned computer space, stating that there are limited opportunities for effective change that creates more walkable or bikeable areas in the town.

Concluding discussion, Chairwoman Plowgian called the question.

Motion: Miller

Second: Noble

Roll call vote: 5-1

Nay: Chakrapani

Deputy Director O'Brien explained that the project requires recommendations from both the Planning Commission and the BAR to Town Council on the landscape plan. Town code language indicates that 25% of the front yard must be landscaped. The modification for front yard has reduced the setback requirement, further reducing the amount of landscaping required. Recommended replacements suggested by the Town's Arborist include Ginkgo 'Goldspire' or Black Tulip Magnolia', and Phlox stolonifera 'Pink Ridge' but staff is open to any suggestions or recommendations.

Commissioners further discussed plans for the intersection. Staff will verify that the proposed plan includes the most updated information. With respect to Right of Way plantings, Commissioner Aimone expressed concern that appropriate plantings be selected that will not grow into overhead powerlines.

Concluding discussions, Chairwoman Plowgian called for a motion.

Commissioner Noble motioned that a recommendation be made to Vienna Town Council on the proposed landscape plan subject to changes made in the species substitution, in collaboration with the Town's Arborist, for the proposed development of the library and parking garage, located at 101 Maple Avenue East.

Motion: Noble

Second: Aimone

Roll call vote: 6-0

Staff announced that the item is also scheduled for BAR review on October 17th and Vienna Town Council on October 28th.

Work Session Discussion

Accessory Living Units (ALUs) Work Session

Department of Planning & Zoning Director, David Levy stated that ALU's, under housing diversity, are in line with Town Council's list of top priorities for 2024. ALU's are small, self-contained living units that include kitchens while Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) are apartments within walls of an existing or newly constructed single-family dwelling, which are subordinate to its primary housing. Presenting surrounding jurisdiction allowance and town public survey results, Director Levy advised that survey results supported internal or attached options. The least amount of support received was for detached options. Commissioners reviewed and discussed steps required for updating ALU regulations compared with surrounding jurisdictions. Staff advised that the item was forwarded by Town Council at their Monday, October 7, 2024, meeting. They are

looking to define what would be acceptable for the town ahead of any adopted state code language. The Planning Commission will hold another work session in advance of the November 13, 2024, public hearing review.

New Business: None

Director's Report

Director Levy reported on the following:

- Update on Town Council discussion of Zoning Ordinance updates.
- A rezoning application for 128 Nutley St NE has been received.
- A community input meeting is scheduled for October 22nd on the Annex property.
- Clanton and Associates has been selected from the RFP process for town lighting standards.

Deputy Director O'Brien reported on meeting with Vienna Elementary SGA students to discuss Roberts Rules of Order and a possible future field trip to Town Hall

Minutes:

The following meeting minutes were accepted into the record:

- July 10, 2024, Work Session Action Minutes
- August 28, 2024, Work Session Action Minutes

The meeting adjourned at 9:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Murphy
Clerk to the Commission