



Town of Vienna

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Meeting Minutes Planning Commission Work Session

Wednesday, September 23, 2020

7:30 PM

127 Center St. South

Joint Town Council Work Session - Continuity of Government - Electronic Participation

The Planning Commission met for a joint work session with the Town Council on Wednesday, September 23, 2020, at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Vienna Town Hall, 127 Center Street South, Vienna, Virginia. Adoption of the Continuity of Government allowed the following Planning Commission members to participate electronically: Stephen Kenney, Chairman presiding, David Miller, Julie Hays, Andrew Meren, Sarah Couchman, David Patariu, Sharon Baum, Michael Gelb, and Jessica Plowgian. Town Council members present included the following: Council Member Chuck Anderson (via ZOOM); Council Member Ray Brill Jr. (at Town Hall), Council Member Nisha Patel (via ZOOM); Council Member Steve Potter (via ZOOM), Council Member Ed Somers (via ZOOM); Council Member Howard J. Springsteen and Mayor Linda Colbert were present at Town Hall.

Participating staff included: Mercury Peyton, Town Manager; Cindy Petkac, Director, Planning and Zoning; Michael D'Orazio, Deputy Director, Planning & Zoning, Kelly O'Brien, Principal Planner, Frank Simeck, Zoning Administrator, and Clerk to the Commission Jennifer Murphy, all present at Town Hall. Steve Briglia, Town Attorney, participating via Zoom.

Resolution for Continuity of Government

Mayor Linda Colbert read the Resolution for Continuity of Government aloud for the record

Joint Work Session with Town Council on Zoning Update

*Mayor Linda Colbert read the Resolution for Continuity of Government aloud for the record and opened the work/conference session. Mayor Coblert recognized Cindy Petkac, Director of Planning and Zoning to provide a brief review of the work session purpose, presentation of the summary draft of the Zoning Update Diagnostic Report by Calfee Zoning, the first step in updating the Town's subdivision and zoning ordinance, Chapters 17 and 18 of the Town Code. She recognized Sean Suder, Esq. *, Lead Principal/Founder, Calfee Zoning, who introduced the project team as follows: Jocelyn Gibson, MCP and Donnie Warner, Esq., Calfee Zoning; Joe Nickol and Kevin Wright, Principals with YARD & Company, (public engagement and urban design), Christopher Forinash, Principal with Nelson Nygaard Consulting (transportation), and Kedrick Whitmore, Esq., Evan Pritchard, Esq. Partners at Venable LLP (land use).*

Mr. Suder emphasized that the results presented are based on the team's best professional judgment and experience with zoning codes and best practices in

Virginia and in similarly situated communities throughout the country. Utilizing the development vision set forth in Vienna's Comprehensive Plan Update and Strategic Plan the team began by identifying five land use goals to serve as a benchmark:

- *Vienna as a complete community*
- *Encourage housing for residents of all age groups*
- *Maintain and strengthen the Central Business District within existing boundaries*
- *Create a more walkable Vienna*
- *Ensure that Vienna retains its unique single-family residential character and quality of life.*

Measuring each section/subsection against these goals led to the following conclusions:

- *Current zoning does a good job of maintaining single-family residential character of the Town, but fails to account for suitable locations for small scale, missing-middle housing*
- *The commercial uses in the Code are out-of-date and do not reflect current desired uses in the market*
- *Street standards are outmoded*
- *Lacking much-needed infill guidelines/regulations*
- *One-size-fits-all commercial zoning is not advancing the Town's vision*

From these conclusions, six summary recommendations were set forth:

- *Single-family residential is largely built out. Consolidate single-family zones and focus on creating standards for infill, additions, and new construction*
- *Update the uses for the Town's commercial areas*
- *Update subdivision and street standards to allow for more walkable places*
- *Allow for "missing-middle" housing to attract young professionals and empty nesters*
- *Allow for senior and assisted living as a land use so that residents can age in Vienna*
- *Reconsider Maple Avenue as a series of unique places and nodes and custom craft multiple districts to reflect the desired development/redevelopment outcomes in each –focus on how Maple Avenue relates to the residential areas that feed into it rather than Maple Avenue as a long corridor.*

Following the presentation Commissioners and Council Members submitted comments/ questions, which can be summarized as follows:

Was the Pedestrian Master Plan incorporated into the project; consolidating zones may have unintended consequences such as larger homes; land use goals require greater discussion; is there an overall vision and/or set of goals; when the Comprehensive Plan is reviewed, if changes are necessary, will these be passed onto the team; are there other jurisdictions that can serve as a baseline; are we finally ready to reconsider building height restrictions; concern that all community feedback be provided to consultants; should Town set parking requirements or allow the market to dictate the need; how to best take advantage of the CM Zone; correctly incorporating the interaction of public and private realm; elevating streets to correct level of importance (streets represent 75% of public space in Town).

With no further comments, Mayor Colbert moved to the draft engagement plan presentation, introducing Joe Nickol and Kevin Wright, Principals at Yard and Company.

The plan proposes immersive and active public engagement through a variety of ongoing interactive projects that utilizes a project website, targeted media outreach; technical + stakeholder meetings tours + walking; trend spotting, research and mapping Experience Survey; feedback about the Vienna experience (Survey of general feelings about Vienna).

The team proposed working in a constant feedback loop with the goal of reaching a wide group of demographic sets. A variety of ideas were presented to achieve that goal, including:

- Two-Cent Coffee;*
- Short and fun in-person surveys (Interactive Placemats);*
- Continued engagement in Vienna's third places (Walk & Tell);*
- Hands on engagement with the project (Chalk Art Kit);*
- Fun feedback and collaborative art (Slow Ride Scavenger Hunt);*
- Porch-to-Porch engagement;*
- De-Jargon Guide with Concise explanations of zoning terms (Maple Avenue Pop Up);*
- Replacing public meetings with slidecast and community cinema (drive-up);*
- Public Meeting at conclusion of each module (In-Person and Online).*

Among comments and questions from Commissioners and Council Members were the following:

Concern that all Boards and Commissions be included throughout the process; encourage written comments and questions resulting from the various meetings and presentations; concern that public response remains limited to Vienna residents; encourage observation of neighboring jurisdictions in order to fully understand Town challenges.

Work Session Adjournment

The work session concluded with the presentation of a draft project name; VIENNA CO(DE) CREATE - setting our new town standard together. Several other possibilities were also presented for consideration.

Mayor Colbert concluded that another joint work session will be scheduled to further discuss and consider proposed goals.

The work session concluded at 9:30 PM.

*Jinger Eberspacher
Recording Secretary*

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