

**PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF MARTINSBURG
232 N. QUEEN STREET
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 3, 2015
J. Oakley Seibert Council Chambers**

With a quorum present, President Jim Rodgers called the regular meeting of the Martinsburg Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. The following Commissioners were present: Mark Palmer, Chris Ross, Scott Hamilton, Yvonne Jenkins, Jeffrey Molenda, Greg Wachtel, Jim Rodgers and Reenie Raines. Not present were: Matt Coffey and George Reichard. Also in attendance were Legal Counsel Kin Sayre, City Engineer/Planning Director Michael Covell, City Planner Tracy Smith and Planning Secretary Holly Hartman.

ROLL CALL (and microphone check)

APPROVAL OF May 6, 2015 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Molenda made the motion to approve the March minutes as submitted. Commissioner Raines seconded the motion followed by a unanimous vote of “aye”. Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **CASE #SP 15-032. 100 Block of W. Burke Street – City Public Parking Lot.** Site Plan application requesting review of parking lot reconfiguration. City of Martinsburg, Applicant.

City Engineer/Planning Director, Mike Covell explained the concept of the project.

Commissioner Molenda asked if the trees that were currently in the lot would be removed. Mr. Covell replied that the trees would be removed, that they are impossible to keep due to storm damage. Commissioner Ross asked if they were being replaced with just three trees. Mr. Covell responded that the landscaping was still under City Council review. Commissioner Molenda asked how many trees could be put in the new lot. Mr. Covell replied that the streetscape will be made appealing, not just a basic parking lot, which will include trees but we do not have the exact number.

Commissioner Molenda asked if the change in the lot would affect parking for The Hub. Mr. Covell answered that it would create no issues. Commissioner Ross asked about the parking meters on half of the lot. Mr. Covell stated that the meter and permit situation was still being looked at. City Attorney, Kin Sayre stated that the actual configuration of meters versus permits in the whole parking area was still under review. Commissioner Wachtel asked about pay per day parking in the lot. Mr. Sayre stated that the cost was too high for that type of parking.

Commissioner Ross asked about the area behind The Hub and Les's, would this area be blocked so vehicles cannot pass through. Mr. Covell replied that they were considering either a raised curb or bollards similar to what is at the square.

President Rodgers asked if the board was to give an approval or a recommendation. Mr. Covell stated that this is an approval. Council has been working on it for months and has it refined down to the current point, and are hoping the boards can provide input as needed.

Commissioner Wachtel asked about the private parking spaces by the grill. Mr. Covell responded that some of those would become city parking spaces. He further mentioned that the flow of the parking lot would be much better. People will be able to enter and exit the lot with much easier access to the back of the buildings. Commissioner Wachtel asked about the electric car charging spot. Mr. Covell stated it would still be there.

Commissioner Palmer asked if the remaining details would be worked out with staff. Mr. Covell replied that the unfinished details would all be discussed with staff.

Commissioner Raines made the motion to approve the site plan. Commissioner Jenkins seconded the motion followed by a unanimous vote of "aye". Motion carried.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

- Continuation of review for guiding criteria to regulate shipping containers used for storage

President Rodgers asked if the language to be added to section 601.32, that states "donation drop off boxes on property of 21,780 square feet", pertains to the property or the box itself. Mr. Covell answered that it was meaning a property over a half of an acre, and that no donation boxes would be allowed on a property smaller than half of an acre. President Rodgers suggested specifying where the drop boxes are specifically not permitted.

Commissioner Molenda asked for the purpose of this addition. Mr. Covell stated that the boxes are proliferating and going in places they do not belong such as residential areas that have business offices. He also mentioned that we are following the footsteps of how Winchester, VA has stopped the boxes from getting carried away. Commissioner Molenda asked if problem areas could be specified before we add this language. He feels that this issue could be addressed by city code rather than our design regulations. Commissioner Molenda further stated that he feels we are making it too difficult to develop in the city. Therefore, we lose businesses to the county because it is easier in the county with fewer rules. He thinks we should not micromanage and instead focus on making it easier to comply with our regulations. Mr. Covell stated that we do not have anything specific about the boxes in our regulations and we need to be able to curb it towards being a function instead of a dysfunction.

Commissioner Wachtel stated that he feels our area is more progressive towards growth and that the idea is to keep the area looking better and not strung out with numerous drop off boxes. Commissioner Raines asked what was currently in the regulations to enforce this issue. Mr. Covell stated that the area is very grey and not clear enough to enforce. Commissioner

Molenda asked where the specific problem areas were. Mr. Covell responded that the most recent issue was on South Raleigh Street, where they had the box literally on the sidewalk. Commissioner Jenkins asked who placed the boxes. Mr. Covell stated that we do not know who places them. Commissioner Hamilton suggested being aware of the condition of the drop boxes as well as the quantity. Mr. Covell agreed and suggested that contact information be located on the box or the business owner could be cited. Commissioner Molenda feels that these boxes are not a large enough problem at this point to be enforced in our regulations and that we should look for a better alternative for addressing the problem.

President Rodgers mentioned that in regards to the storage container regulations, in section 602.24, "of" should be changed to "or" in the middle of the paragraph. Ms. Smith asked if President Rodgers was satisfied with the restructuring of section 601.22. President Rodgers agreed that he was. Commissioner Palmer suggested that we leave this item on the agenda as a discussion item. He feels there needs to be more discussion of the issues. Commissioner Palmer stated that in his opinion, we are not over-regulating, but trying to keep our town looking nice. President Rodgers stated that we would leave the item on the agenda to further discuss.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- Next regular meeting scheduled for July 1, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Molenda, seconded by Commissioner Raines, at 6:44 p.m. and approved by unanimous consent. Motion carried.

Jim Rodgers, President

Holly Hartman, Planning Secretary