

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT PLANNING BOARD

**April 3, 2018
Whitsett Town Hall**

The meeting of the Whitsett Planning Board was held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 3, 2018 at the Whitsett Town Hall. Those in attendance were Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia, Board Vice Chairman Tyler Harris, Board members Ella Efird, Joe Wheeler, and Craig York, Board alternate Ken Jacobs and Council Member liaison Jerry Rice. Council Member Cindy Wheeler was also in attendance.

Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia called the meeting to order at 6:00, noted that a quorum was present, and asked Council Member liaison Jerry Rice to offer the invocation.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Adoption of Minutes

Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia asked for any changes to the minutes from the Planning Board meeting on Tuesday, March 6, 2018. With none made, Chairman Maccia asked for a motion to adopt the minutes. Board member Ella Efird made a motion to accept the minutes as written; Board member Craig York seconded the motion. Adoption of the March minutes carried by unanimous vote.

2. Permitted Uses for Light-Industrial (LI) Zoning

At several meetings, the Planning Board has been discussing a suggested list of permitted uses for LI zoning provided by Guilford County planner Paul Lowe. The Board, having no exposure and no need to be familiar with LI zoning qualities until the new district was approved by Council in June 2017 as part of the land-use plan, consulted the county for recommendations.

The designated LI zoning on the plan consists of a small tract of land bordering the interstate; and, to date, has no pending requests or actions proposed for it. Even though the LI addition to the permitted-use schedule may not be immediate or urgent, it is deserving of Board attention for a public hearing and Council adoption in preparation for any future proposals of accepted industry that may come to the Town.

Council Member liaison Jerry Rice commented that he felt the suggestions posed by the county were reasonable and a good start; and added that the ordinance could always be changed later to narrow or expand on categories most appropriate and desirable for the Town. Board members were receptive and generally in agreement.

A motion to accept the county's suggested list of permitted uses was made by Board member Joe Wheeler. Motion seconded by Board Vice Chairman Tyler Harris, and the motion carried by unanimous vote. The proposed uses would be recommended to Council for adoption following a public hearing.

Text amendments on descriptions, conditions, and definitions will follow.

3. Any Other Old Business

Board Chairman Maccia asked for any other old business; and there was none.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion on Airbnb

Town Administrator Jacobs gave an overview of Airbnb, which is an online service to facilitate short-term rental of properties by their owner, and stated that an Airbnb property exists at the Book residence directly across from the Town Hall. Concern was sparked by hearsay, followed by news articles, on misfortunes in Lindley Park; and although Jacobs later learned from Gibsonville's Town Manager that the cases actually involved a property owner and full-time rental with no relation to Airbnb, the system's existence should be discussed.

Jacobs added that a special-use permit granted by the Town was also part of the requirement at a cost of \$750 to be paid by the applicant, which he felt to be a steep fee. Council Member liaison Rice stated that the \$750, however, may serve as a deterrent for residents to even entertain the idea of renting property, and did not favor considering a change in fee.

For comparison, Board member Craig York offered an account of the Airbnb system and the VRBO (Vacation Rental by Owner) system that he and his wife use. VRBO far exceeds in the screening process, where Airbnb has little to none, which may explain some of the irresponsible, negative episodes reported in other municipalities.

Since no immediate threat existed, discussion would be tabled and the subject readdressed as the need arises. Meanwhile, Jacobs would further research and query municipalities for their experiences with Airbnb.

2. Discussion on Engineering Meeting and Sewer Usage Fees

Town Administrator Jacobs informed the Board of a meeting held with engineer Randy McNeill to finalize cost projections and scope descriptions relative to the proposed residential development at the east edge of Town. This data would be submitted to USDA for conducting the environmental assessment required prior to the grant and/or loan process.

In addition, the two discussed sewer usage fees applicable to only the proposed 66-unit development at the east edge of Town. With the developer responsible for funding infrastructure for the proposed community, McNeill would recommend \$500 per sewer tap fee payable to the Town. A corresponding \$500 per water tap fee would also be his recommendation; and this figure would include Town provision of radio-read water meters for each unit. Radio-read meters would be one of a number of conditional uses required of the developer. Revenue received from the water taps would be used to convert existing water meters for the current 35 water customers to also radio-read meters.

Jacobs reiterated that the \$500 for each tap fee would apply only to the new development currently on the table. Tap fees for any future development along US Hwy 70 would be determined later on a case-by-case cost basis.

Chairman Maccia asked for any further discussion, and hearing none, asked for a motion. Board member Craig York made a motion to recommend to Council the \$500 amount for each tap with the water taps including the cost of the meter. Board member Joe Wheeler seconded the motion, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

3. Proposed Public Information Request Policy

Town Administrator Jacobs distributed copies of a proposed policy on public records requests and availability—a policy, which to date, had been nonexistent for the Town. In brief, if a request is made for public information during or at the end of a public meeting, the document(s) would not be made available until after 12 noon the following business day. No records will be provided the day or evening of the meeting. [The document will become part of the official file for this meeting.]

Chairman Maccia asked for any further discussion, and with none, asked for a motion to recommend the proposed policy to Council for consideration. Motion was made by Board member Ella Efird to accept and recommend the policy as written; motion seconded by Board member Craig York. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

If the new public information request policy is approval by Council, it will take effect immediately.

4. Any Other New Business

Board Chairman Maccia asked for any other new business; and there was none.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Bob Maccia invited a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion made by Board member Joe Wheeler to adjourn; motion seconded by Board Vice Chairman Tyler Harris. By unanimous vote, the April 3 meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:52 p.m.

The next meeting of the Whitsett Planning Board will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 1, 2018 at the Town Hall. [The May 1 meeting was later cancelled, as well as the June and July meetings, making the next Planning Board meeting to be scheduled for August 7.]

/s/

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

Bob Maccia, Planning Board Chairman

APPROVED: August 7, 2018