

**CITY OF COLONIAL HEIGHTS, VIRGINIA
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
of the Planning Commission
Wednesday, December 5, 2012**

I. Call to Order

Chairman Townes called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum

Mr. Schanzenbacher, Director of Planning and Community Development, called the roll.

Present: Mr. Townes
Mr. Kollman
Mr. O'Connell
Mrs. Hamilton
Mr. Hartson
Mrs. Schiff
Mr. Freeland

Mr. Schanzenbacher stated there was a quorum.

Also Present: City Attorney Hugh P. Fisher, III, Planning Director George W. Schanzenbacher, Jamie Sherry, Neighborhood Revitalization Planner and Assistant Director of Public Works Brian Copple.

III. Approval of Minutes of October 2012

The minutes were approved on a roll call vote with no changes.

IV. Approval of Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

V. Hearing of Citizens Generally

There were no citizens in the audience that wanted to be heard.

VI. Public Hearings

There were no public hearings.

VII. Site Plan /Subdivisions

SP-12-3 United States Postal Service-1205 Boulevard

Mr. Townes stated the post office had requested to withdraw their site plan. The Commission approved the request to accept the withdraw of SP-12-3 on a roll call vote.

SP -12-6 Southpark Square Shopping Center-1891 Southpark Boulevard

Mr. Schanzenbacher stated the proposed plan is for the conversion of a 10,747 square foot enclosed former garden center to additional retail space, additional parking and the addition of a proposed 3,000 sq. ft. restaurant as an out parcel. In addition, a right in right

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out connection from Temple Ave is proposed. Mr. Copple stated that the Temple Avenue improvements were approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board today.

Mr. Gregory Reed from McCormick Realty LP stated that they had been working on this project for some time. He stated that the shopping center is bound by a complicated real estate agreement so any modification require both property owners and all parties over 20,000 square feet to be in agreement. He stated that the entire center is in need of redevelopment, particularly the parking area where they are proposing landscaping and buffer plan along Temple Avenue. They are also proposing storefronts facing Temple Avenue along with parking. He stated the plan includes removing the tall sign and replacing it with a ground mounted sign with landscaping. The plan also includes a pad site; however, he does not have a tenant committed. If approved, they plan to begin construction in the spring with tenants open in the summer.

Mr. Mattis stated that this plan had been in the works for quite a while and is a good example of a partnership between the city and a developer. The landscaping and other improvements goes beyond minimum standards. Additionally, there may be other opportunities for other pad sites by other owners.

Mr. Schanzenbacher stated that a couple of years ago the City did a study to identify possible new parcel sites in the mall area. This was one of the areas identified. He expected that there may be additional opportunities to develop other one acre parcel sites.

Commission member comments were overall very positive. SP -12-6 passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

VIII. Old Business

There was no old business.

IX. New Business

Chesterfield Highlands Tax Credit District

Ms. Sherry made a presentation on the proposed Chesterfield Highlands Tax Credit District. She stated that the process began several years earlier when the community, with the help of City staff, worked to create two historic districts: the Chesterfield Highlands District and the Violet Bank District. She stated that the City received a small grant from the State Department of Historic Resources this spring that allowed the City to hire an intern and a consultant to update the survey work and to complete a nomination for the Chesterfield Highlands District to the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. The survey work was completed this summer and the district nomination was submitted this fall. A state sponsored public hearing was held in which over 30 attendees expressed their support of the district. This nomination is scheduled to be considered by the Department of Historic Resources at its December 13, 2012 Joint Board Meeting. At this meeting, the board may recommend approval of this district.

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She continued by stated that listing in the national and state registers is honorary. National and state register listings do not place any restrictions on private property owners unless property owners choose to apply for tax credits. Ms. Sherry continued by stating that these tax credits would offer property owners an option to save money on improvements to a structure while preserving its importance in history with no cost to the city.

Mrs. Hamilton stated her concerned about the name being a “tax credit” District. She stated that it took away from the real intention of the district. Mr. Mattis was concerned that the name “historic” district implies restrictions and controls. It was suggested that staff have a discussion with DHR to get their suggestions as to what the district should be called.

Comprehensive Plan Update

Ms. Sherry presented the draft Goals and Objectives for the Comprehensive Plan Update that was prepared by the Citizen Planning Committee. She stated that she was hoping to present them to the City Council in early 2013 before posting them for public comment. The comments from the commission were positive.

Future Use of Electronic Materials for Planning Commission Meetings

Mr. Schanzenbacher stated that the City has substantially updated its ability to prepare and transmit materials electronically and then to present them at the City Council Chambers. He stated that now might be an opportune time to discuss, how and if, the Planning Commission might also take advantage of this upgraded and enhanced technology. He stated Ipads were currently not in the budget; however, the packet could be emailed and the Commission members could view the packet on their personal computers. There was some discussion about viewing plans electronically. Mr. Schanzenbacher stated that he could still provide hardcopies of the plans for those who still wanted them that way. Mr. Mattis stated that there would be some cost savings by sending the packets electronically. The Commission agreed to try to get the meeting packet electronically beginning in January.

2013 Meeting Schedule

Mr. Schanzenbacher stated that he provided the Commission members with a draft meeting schedule for 2013. Mr. Fisher suggested that the January meeting be moved to 6:00 because, by charter, City Council must have their organizational meeting that evening at 7:30. The schedule was approved on roll call vote as amended.

X. Committee Reports to the Commission

Mr. Mattis did not have a report.

Mr. Schanzenbacher did not have a report.

Mr. Copple gave a very brief update on the engineering projects on the Boulevard.

Mr. Fisher did not have a report.

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Mr. Townes wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a wonderful holiday season.

XI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully,

George W. Schanzenbacher
Director, Department of Planning and Community Development

APPROVAL:

Charles E. Townes
Chairman