

Richmond Planning Commission
REGULAR Meeting
APPROVED MINUTES FOR May 6, 2020 MEETING

Members Present: Chris Cole, Virginia Clarke, Chris Granda, Mark Fausel, Scott Nickerson, Alison Anand (joined 7:21), Lauck Parke (joined 7:21)
Members Absent: Joy Reap, Brian Tellstone
Others Present: Ravi Venkataraman (Town Planner/Staff)

Chris Cole opened the meeting at 7:06 pm.

2. Adjustments to the Agenda - None

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Virginia Clarke, second by Scott Nickerson to approve the minutes of September 12, 2019 Planning Commission meeting. Voting: unanimous. Motion carried.

Motion by Clarke, second by Chris Granda to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2019 Planning Commission meeting. Voting: 4-0 (Mark Fausel abstained). Motion carried.

Motion by Nickerson, second by Clarke to approve the minutes of the October 30, 2019 Planning Commission meeting. Comment: Granda would like to make known that the October 30, 2019 meeting minutes were mislabeled as October 16, 2019 meeting minutes. Voting: unanimous. Motion carried.

Motion by Nickerson, second by Fausel to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2020 Planning Commission meeting. Voting: 4-0 (Granda abstained). Motion carried.

4. Public Comment for non-agenda items - None

5. Reappointment of Suzanne Mantegna as Zoning Administrator

Motion by Nickerson, second by Fausel, to appoint Suzanne Mantegna to a three-year term as the Zoning Administrator for the Town of Richmond. Voting: unianimous. Motion carried.

6. Review Planning Commission candidates

Clarke overviewed the three nominees of the Planning Commission, and explained the letter she has drafted. Cole asked about practice. Fausel says that it is standard practice to provide recommendations. Fausel said that the Planning Commission should join in on Selectboard meeting to support nominees.

42 Motion by Granda, seconded by Nickerson to recommend the reapproval of the appointments
43 of Mark Fausel and Joy Reap as well as approval of Jake Kornfeld to the Planning
44 Commission.

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46 **7. Review Selectboard Public Hearing on Jolina Court Zoning District regulations and**
47 **Affordable Housing draft regulations**

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49 Cole asked about the capacity of staff to support the affordable housing regulations.
50 Venkataraman said staff could manage 10 units, maybe 15 units. Cole said the Selectboard will
51 need to be aware of staffing impacts if there are more than 10 affordable housing units. Alison
52 Anand asked if any developer is interested in developing affordable housing. Granda said no one
53 presently is actively interested in developing affordable housing. Anand asked what locations
54 would be affected by these regulations. Cole said the Jolina Court Zoning District for now.
55 Venkataraman overviewed the draft regulations. Nickerson asked if staff would provide a form
56 for property owners when they would need to recertify the affordable housing units.
57 Venkataraman said yes. Clarke had concerns about recertifying the tenants per year. Anand
58 asked if the draft regulations provided are a standard set of draft regulations. Venkataraman said
59 he borrowed language from South Burlington's draft regulations. Anand asked how well the
60 regulations are working in South Burlington. Venkataraman said the regulations there are
61 relatively new and have yet to see the effects. Anand said affordable housing regulations should
62 be started at a small scale. Anand shared concerns about recertifying the tenants per year. Clarke
63 suggested recertification every five years. Venkataraman said even if the recertification
64 requirement were set at five years, he expects staff would need to recertify the units every year
65 or two years because rental housing has a high turnover rate. Venkataraman recommends linking
66 recertification with lease cycles. Granda said that in principle the affordable housing units should
67 be made available to those who need housing and meets in the income requirements, instead of
68 people who were first in line. Fausel said he is concerned about the staffing abilities, and that
69 developers should be required to have an agreement with a third party. Venkataraman said he
70 doubted the program would be effective if every developer had to make an agreement with a
71 third party. Cole asked about the town entering into an agreement with a third party to monitor
72 and evaluate the affordable housing units. Venkataraman clarified that the town would not serve
73 as a landlord over the units and the town would have a covenant they would have to maintain to
74 ensure the affordability of the units. Nickerson asked about how simple the recertification process
75 would be. Venkataraman said that ideally the process would be pro forma, with the landowner
76 filling out a one-to-two page form, and staff stamping and filing the form. Fausel asked how
77 Venkataraman came up with the estimate of staff's capacity. Venkataraman said this is based on
78 Suzanne's limited hours per week and existing requirements. Clarke said the recertification
79 process should be limited. Cole concurred with Granda that regular recertification is a necessity
80 to make sure affordable housing is available to those who need it. Venkataraman said that
81 maintaining these types of agreements on a yearly basis is much easier, compared to a longer
82 term. Granda said that the recertification process could potentially police itself. Lauck Parke
83 voiced reservations about administering affordable housing regulations and support for parking-
84 related density bonuses. Fausel voiced concerns about the burden of these regulations on staff,
85 especially with a small-scale effect. Parke was concerned about legal implications. Anand said
86 she was concerned about the cost the town would take on in light of the current economic crisis.
87 Granda said many of the comments made were based on speculation and due to the economic
88 crisis currently, the town should take on such a task. Venkataraman suggested making the draft
89 regulations interim, in order to test out the waters and allow the Planning Commission to

reevaluate the regulations based on its effectiveness after two years. Nickerson asked about the fee schedule. Venkataraman said the fee schedule will need to be reevaluated as a whole. Cole said that Venkataraman's suggestion did not make sense, especially if in two years, the town decides not to have affordable housing regulations. Cole asked how much is "affordable". Venkataraman presented a document by VHFA outlining costs per AMI bracket. Clarke asked if the document as is is ready for the Selectboard to review. Venkataraman said he is confident with the document as presented but appreciates any comments and considerations from the Planning Commission. Cole asked about the timeline. Venkataraman said the Planning Commission has time to review and revise the document, and the Selectboard does not expect to see the document next week. Cole suggested that the Planning Commission should prepare comments and questions the commission should review during their next meeting

Clarke overviewed changes the Selectboard made to the Jolina Court Zoning District Regulations prior to approval.

8. Discussion of Village Downtown Zoning District draft regulations

Clarke recommended adding "Pub" to the list of allowable uses, and modifying language regarding density, height, and lot frontage.

Motion by Clarke, seconded by Granda to warn a public hearing on June 3, 2020 on the amendments to the Village Downtown Zoning District as presented and with the changes recommended during the May 6, 2020 Planning Commission meeting. Voting: unanimous. Motion carried.

9. Discussion of draft language for "Veterinary Clinics" – 20:52

Fausel recommended including a definition for "pub" as "see "Tavern"".

Motion by Granda, Seconded by Nickerson to warn a public hearing on June 3, 2020 on the addition of Veterinary Clinic and Pub uses to the Zoning Regulations as presented and with the changes recommended during the May 6, 2020 Planning Commission meeting. Voting: unanimous. Motion carried.

10. Other Business: 20:57

Venkataraman requested adding a presentation by Ashley Hanlon on the DASH Grant to the next meeting's agenda. Fausel commended Parke on his service. Cole thanked Parke for his years of service. Venkataraman announced that the Transportation Committee has a position open for Planning Commission members. Virginia called for attention to the survey.

11 Adjournment

Motion by Fausel, seconded by Nickerson to adjourn the meeting. Voting: unanimous. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ravi Venkataraman, Town Planner

