

**RICHMOND SELECTBOARD  
RICHMOND PLANNING COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
July 23, 2012 MINUTES**

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Members Present: Chris Granda, Chair; June Heston, Vice Chair; Neil Boyden, Amy Lord; Ashley Lucht  
Absent: None  
Planning Commission: Gary Bressor; Dan Renaud; Mark Fausel; Christy Witters  
Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Administrator; Cathleen Gent, Town Planner; and Ruth Miller was present to videotape the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

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Chair Granda called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Selectboard held a special meeting with the Planning Commission to review the proposed draft Zoning and Subdivision Regulations. This was not the formal presentation of the proposal to the Selectboard, but a meeting to discuss the changes made to the draft in advance of the Planning Commission's final public hearing scheduled for August 2nd. The Planning Commission planned on presenting the proposal formally at the Selectboard's August 6th meeting.

Gary Bressor began by saying that most of the current regulations and zones were developed around 2008 just as the real estate market crashed and more and more developers were looking at larger projects. The town at that time was not prepared for a larger developer, and relied on the Regional Plan to keep that in check during a brief period where their zoning was inactive. One of the goals with this revision were to create more zoning districts to better define the varied uses that sometimes exist within small geographic areas. He added that Richmond was a great town with a vibrant center and there were many positive attributes to the town. The question was how do we retain those characteristics while growing with development?

There was some general discussion on the Cheese Factory site (aka Casing Development on Jolina Court). The property is zoned mixed, however, the owners wanted to change the regulations in two ways: to allow the full development density of the entire parcel even though there were some restrictions, lowering the developable area and also to withdraw the maximum building height to be able to take advantage of that density. The discussion also addressed a commercial/residential mix and the possibility of the Senior Center being housed there.

Gary Bressor pointed out that the new Village Business I zone exempted businesses from the normal parking requirements.

The proposal was to move from four zoning districts to twelve. They were:

- a) Village Business-1 District (VB-1)
- b) Village Business-2 District (VB-2)
- c) Village Mixed District (VM)
- d) Village Residential North District (VRN)
- e) Village Residential South District (VRS)
- f) Jonesville Mixed District (JM)
- g) Jonesville Residential District (JR)
- h) Gateway District (G)
- i) General Business District (GB)
- j) Rural 3 District (R-3)
- k) Rural 10 District (R-10)

1 l) Mobile Home Park District (MHP)

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3 Mr. Bressor did not go over all of the changes, but opened the discussion up to questions from the  
4 Selectboard.

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6 Chair Granda said that he had hoped to have a discussion with the Richmond Area Business  
7 Association regarding their concerns about zoning enforcement and the ability to make site changes  
8 without having to have a full board application. Unfortunately, due to timing and availability this did  
9 not work out. Mark Fausel said that the proposal did include some changes to allow the Zoning  
10 Administrative Officer more ability to make these changes.

11  
12 Gary Bressor explained also that in the previous version the administrative subdivision had been  
13 removed, but it was now back in. Also, the Development Review Board would have to approve the  
14 plat, per state law. Chair Granda was concerned that this would encourage more subdivisions without  
15 proper review.

16  
17 The largest discussion centered on the change in zoning from one acre in the agricultural residential  
18 areas to R-3 (three acre minimum) and R-10 (ten acre minimum). This was a significant change and  
19 affected many people in town who might subdivide their property.

20  
21 Chair Granda asked if energy efficiency standards were included or could be added. Gary Bressor  
22 suggested that a self-certification would be best since Richmond did not have the capability to inspect  
23 and certify that all work had been done. Also, any retrofit requirement might be burdensome. The  
24 new Town Plan will have a new element on energy efficiency which should guide future development  
25 regulations. Mr. Bressor said that this document was expected to be updated regularly and the  
26 inclusion of a future section on energy efficiency could be expected.

27  
28 Ms. Lucht suggested that the EPA "Water Sense" model could be used for water usage and fixtures, as  
29 part of any efficiency section.

30  
31 Chair Granda asked if the new zoning would bring new transit opportunities to town. Mark Fausel  
32 said that multi-modal transportation options were allowed and encouraged.

33  
34 Ms. Lucht mentioned that in section 2.7 there was no provision or mention about water and  
35 wastewater in Jonesville. In a community where you encouraged development, she said that water and  
36 wastewater plans were important. There was some discussion on community systems, and how the  
37 existing buildings functioned now. Ms. Lucht pointed out that if larger growth was going to occur in  
38 Jonesville, a water system would need to support it.

39  
40 There was a short discussion on zoning and water supply to the Gateway district. The sentiment was  
41 still that the town did not want the area of Route 2 heading east into the village to be heavily  
42 commercialized with strip development, but to keep it mixed use with set-back parking. Extending  
43 water and sewer here would allow for greater development.

44  
45 Ms. Lucht also asked if there was any provision for an affordable housing zone or district, besides the  
46 Mobile Home Park. Dan Renaud said that there were density bonuses in certain zones for affordable  
47 housing, but nothing specific for just affordable housing projects.

48  
49 There was a discussion on the next meetings. On August 2nd the Planning Commission would hold its  
50 final public hearing, on August 6th the Planning Commission would present the document to the  
51 Selectboard and the Selectboard had until September 17th to finalize the question for the absentee

1 ballots for the November election. The Selectboard was required to hold at least one public hearing  
2 between August 6th and September 17th.

3

4 **Adjourn**

5 Motion by Ms. Lucht to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Boyden. So voted.