

7.5.23 meeting minutes

### **Richmond Planning Commission Meeting of 7/5/23**

This meeting was fully remote.

**Members present:** Chris Granda, Mark Fausel, Adam Wood, Virginia Clarke

**Members absent:** Alison Anand, Dan Mullen, (one vacancy)

**Others present:** Keith Osborne (Director of Planning and Zoning), MMCTV, Michelle and Zachary Beal

#### **1. Welcome**

Clarke opened the meeting at 7:10 after a quorum was reached. She welcomed members and guests.

#### **2. and 3. Agenda**

Clarke reviewed the agenda and hearing no comments from members or guests about any non-agenda items, continued with the posted agenda.

#### **4. Minutes of 6/21/23 meeting**

There were no corrections or additions to the minutes, so they were accepted into the record as written.

#### **5. Update on S. 100 and Village Residential Neighborhoods**

Clarke asked if there was any new guidance on S. 100. Osborne reminded the PC that he had posted a helpful summary that hit the high points, provided by the Legislative Council, under meeting materials on the town website. He added that he felt it would be hard to get a good public turnout during the summer if we tried to schedule an information session on this legislation. Clarke asked about the July 1, 2023 deadline for the mandated changes, and Osborne replied that the Zoning Administrator would have to abide by the new legal mandates even if they had not yet been incorporated into our regulations. Osborne offered to mark up a draft of the law and send it out for PC comments.

Clarke responded that she thought that we, the commission, should have an understanding of this law before we attempt to inform the public about it, and that perhaps we should go through the legislative council summary point by point to see what questions the PC might have about the items before specifically getting the neighborhoods involved. Osborne added that he could put together a power point presentation for the commission. Granda and Fausel agreed that we should schedule this for one of our next summer meetings.

#### **6. Strategies for adding residential uses in the Exit 11 area**

Clarke mentioned that the memo she prepared with 3 possible options for allowing residential uses in the I/C district was only sent out this afternoon, so she reviewed it. The first option would be to remove the existing residential lots from the I/C and put them into a different district that allowed housing, such as the A/R or the HDR. The second option would be to add dwelling, single-family, and perhaps other dwelling uses to the use list of the current I/C district. And the third would be to create a new district and call it an R/C district, which would allow both commercial and residential uses. In this scenario, you could add development standards to protect the businesses or the residences, change the uses currently allowed in the I/C or make other changes. This option would clearly take a lot more time and thought. Clarke said she conferred with Vice-Chair Wood, and they agreed that the simplest and quickest option would be to take the residential lots out now, and at some point in the future talk more about the complex issues of the I/C and C districts.

Fausel asked about the lot with the tanks on it, which he thought likely would not be allowed in the A/R or the HDR. There was some confusion about whether this lot belonged to Patterson Fuel or Blue Flame Gas. Clarke replied that that lot, RG0092, could be left in the I/C district. Osborne screen shared the map of the northern portion of the I/C district, which showed that 4 of the 7-8 lots there were residential already, and those would be the only ones moved to the A/R or HDR. Osborne pointed on the map to lots RG0090, RG0140, RG0226 and RG0300, which would be the 4 residential lots taken out of the I/C. He indicated RG0080, which are the Town owned swamp and recycling lots; RG0092, which is the lot with the tanks on it; and RG0088, which is J. Hutchins.

Fausel then asked whether the 3 A residential parcel that is contained within the J. Hutchins lot should also be taken out of the I/C. Clarke replied that that lot seemed different from the other residential lots, because the mobile home on it could easily be removed and the lot could be added to the commercial potential of the J. Hutchins lot. She mentioned that another difference is that this small lot is in the C district, not the I/C district, and that the access to the lot is from the Mobile Home Park, so that if we were going to change its district, we might want to add it to the MHP district instead. Osborne added that he would leave that lot alone.

Clarke looked for confirmation from Osborne that, if this 4-lot district-change strategy were selected, the only change that would have to be made is to the zoning map; that these 4 lots would be shown in a different district. Osborne concurred and added that there would need to be an update entry on the first page of the RZR as well. She then turned to the question of which district these lots would then be placed in, the main candidates being the A/R and the HDR, both of which allow residential uses. The other uses in both are quite similar, except for the A/R allowing kennels, and the HDR allowing multifamily dwellings. There are also some slight differences in dimensional requirements, with all the 4 lots being larger than the minimum lot size which is 1 A in both districts. She asked Osborne if he had an opinion as to which receiving district he thought would be more suitable. Osborne suggested that in reviewing the purpose statement for each district, the HDR's language seemed more compatible with this new small neighborhood in its walkability and compatibility with some commercial uses, so he would lean towards the HDR. He and Clarke agreed that the A/R seemed to be more about nearby agricultural land and preserving open space, and HDR seems more about creating a neighborhood.

Clarke then polled the commissioners on the idea of taking the lots out of the I/C. Granda said that he would support the idea, as even though not geographically elegant it did remove his concerns about upsetting the balance of residential and commercial in the I/C. Fausel and Wood both said they supported this idea, and that it seemed reasonable. Clarke said it postponed the discussion of the issues with the I/C and C, but that that could be taken up at a date in the near future.

Osborne then offered that he was not entirely happy with the fact that the lot RG0092 with the Blue Flame tanks on it, was bifurcating this proposed residential enclave. He suggested that, if the owner of RG0092 was agreeable to it, we could bifurcate that lot into two portions, with the northern portion being in the HDR or A/R and the southern portion, where the tanks are located, remaining in the I/C. He pointed to the Kenyon Rd portion of the I/C district, part of which is located on the Eden lot (KR0854) and part is on the Conant Farm lot, thus both lots have 2 different districts on them. Fausel wondered how the access to the Beals' proposed lot on RG0090 (the Donovan lot) would be impacted by bifurcating RG0092. Michelle Beal clarified that the proposed access would begin at Rogers Lane, cross RG0140, then RG0092 somewhere near where the stream crosses, before entering onto the Donovans' lot, RG0090. She stated that they had easements for these driveway crossings, signed in 2018. Osborne added that the DRB would be involved in the subdivision and for looking at the slopes. Clarke said she

saw the appeal of making the northern half of RG0092 part of the “new” residential area as it does join the residential portions together. The owner of RG0092 would have to agree to give up some commercial uses if this part of the lot joined the HDR, but would gain the potential for residential uses. . Clarke then polled the commissioners if they would be in favor of bifurcating lot RG0092 if the owners of the parcel found this acceptable. Fausel said he would agree to that if the owners were willing. Granda, Wood and Clarke concurred. Clarke said that the owner would be contacted with this idea.

Clarke then reintroduced the question of whether the residential lots should be attached to the HDR or the A/R district. Wood said he didn't have a strong opinion about what advantages or disadvantages there would be for either choice. Fausel said he was leaning towards the HDR, and so did Granda. Clarke also agreed that the purpose statements of the two districts seemed to point towards the HDR, so she agreed with that. She summarized that the current consensus seems to be to take 4 or 4 ½ lots out of the I/C and put them in the HDR. The Beals stated that they thought this was a fair compromise, and that they were happy that we were making progress in our discussion. Clarke said we would be contacting all of the affected parcels to see if they had any issues with this strategy. Osborne said he would get some draft mapping done and get a packet ready for the next discussion. When this work is completed and we have the contacts established, a public hearing can be set up. Osborne also said he would be preparing the required Bylaw Amendment Report. As there were no other comments on this agenda item, the commission moved on.

## **7. Other**

Clarke reminded everyone that the R/C districts and the corrected map were now up on the website. Osborne reported that the ZA, Tyler Machia, was aware of the changes, and he suggested that the DRB might become interested in the changes when an application for development in these districts comes in.

Clarke polled the commissioners about attendance at the next meeting: Granda, Wood, Fausel and Clarke said they all could come as of now. Clarke said she would contact Anand to remind her of the meeting. Osborne said he would be taking a vacation in August, and would inform us of the dates when scheduled.

After a motion by Granda and a second by Fausel, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 with no opposition. Clarke thanked everyone for coming.

Submitted by Virginia Clarake