

MINUTES
PURCELLVILLE TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, JUNE 30, 2020 7:00 PM
TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The special meeting work session of the Purcellville Town Council and the GoTo meeting convened at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers with the following in attendance:

PRESENT:

Kwasi Fraser, Mayor
Tip Stinnette, Vice Mayor
Nedim Ogelman, Council member
Ted Greenly, Council member
Joel Grewe, Council member
Chris Bledsoe, Council member
Ryan Cool, Council member

STAFF PRESENT:

David Mekarski, Town Manager
Sally Hankins, Town Attorney
Diana Hays, Town Clerk/Executive Assistant
Andy Conlon, Senior Planner

STAFF PRESENT VIA REMOTE PARTICIPATION:

Sharon Rauch, Director of Human Resources
Dale Lehnig, Director of Engineering, Planning & Development
Patrick Sullivan, Director of Community Development
Kimberly Bandy, Deputy Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fraser called the special meeting work session and the GoTo (virtual) meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

AMENDMENT

Mayor Fraser stated that it was requested to add an additional item to the agenda which would be a violation to our Town code. This item would need to be adopted with the new Council members.

There was a brief discussion in regards to the item of the Town Manager's increase and why it had been suggested to be placed on this agenda. Sally Hankins, Town Attorney, stated that there is a real personnel policy to follow on this second part of the same evaluation in which the same

parties be involved in the decision to increase salary. Sharon Rauch, Director of Human Resources, commented that she had requested the item be placed on the agenda because of the new implementation of the MUNIS Payroll System for Town Staff this year. In the system, currently David Mekarski, Town Manager, would need to approve his own increase and Ms. Rauch wanted to avoid any future auditing confusion with an action from this Council. As a solution, it was determined with a suggestion from David Mekarski and guidance from Sally Hankins, that the request to add an agenda item to a special meeting could not require any type of action, and through a new administrative policy with the MUNIS signature approval that Mr. Mekarski's increase would be approved by another administrative staff member such as the Town Attorney or Town Clerk. Therefore, there was no need of action from Council.

CITIZEN/BUSINESS COMMENTS

None

DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Review of Comprehensive Plan Final Draft

Mayor Fraser commented that there was not much to discuss other than the changes or edits that were presented. Sally Hankins confirmed that any changes before 5:00PM that were shared are part of the errata sheet which was part of the Resolution 20-06-03 presented, and a simple motion could be stated to adopt this Resolution.

ACTION ITEMS

a. Comprehensive Plan Final

Vice Mayor Stinnette made a motion that Town Council to adopt Resolution 20-06-03 as presented with attached errata sheets titled "To Adopt the Town of Purcellville Comprehensive Plan, *Plan Purcellville 2030*." The motion was second by Council member Greenly.

Mayor Fraser requested comments from Council.

Vice Mayor Stinnette stated: "It occurs to me that I have previously spoken about the Comprehensive Plan that is currently before us in terms of being a compromise document. That is not precisely accurate, better put, it represents a crowd sourced effort that represents the interests of the whole community rather than pieces and parts. Without doubt the document contains elements of compromise and where that came up short, it reflects a best alternative to a negotiated agreement otherwise known as "batna". One such area where we exercised the tenants of batna is the treatment of the East End. Batna refers to the most advantageous alternative course of action when agreement cannot be reached. On the East End the effected

property owners advocated for a Commercial Medium Scale land use. To a degree that advocacy was non-negotiable for some of those property owners which drove us to propose a best alternative to a negotiated agreement. The land use of Agriculture Tourism Commercial is in fact a batna for our community and the effected property owners on the East End. There are some who may also question the financial feasibility of the plan in light of its' purposeful constraint on increasing density and expansion, to those I would say the plan provides the necessary flexibility within those constraints to develop a companion economic development plan to address the financial concerns of our town. After five years of working on this plan as a Planning Commissioner, the Chair of Planning Commission, and a Council member, I am pleased with the document that is before us. I believe it represents the best of us, provides a road map for a way forward that is consistent with the desires of our community, and reflects the inputs of the many over the few. Perhaps unsurprisingly to many, I fully support this plan and intend to vote for its' adoption."

Council member Greenly thanked Vice Mayor Stinnette for his comments and that they went right to the heart of what he mentioned last week. Council member Greenly agreed with the Vice Mayor on the East End piece, but still has hesitation when looking back at what the land owner had sent in and understood her point of view, as well as understood the decision of the Planning Commission view.

Council member Grewe commented that he has already shared his view last week and it should not be a surprise to anyone and that he has thought long and hard on this plan. There are many, many aspects of this plan that he truly loved. The working goals of our community design section are beautiful and aspirational. He found himself 95-97% in agreement with this document and the work that has been done to preserve our small town. However, he felt if he voted for this plan that he would be morally obligated to vote for subsequent increases in water, sewer, and tax rates that he believed will be followed if we walk through the implications of the plan. He understood that things are not set in stone and cannot predict the future, but he has to vote on what he can see rather than what might happen. He believed if he voted for this plan he would be borrowing on something that we cannot predict, and he hoped we don't have that issue, I would end being required to do so. For that reason being said, and not a wholistic rejection of the plan at all, but with that implication, he will have to vote against the plan and he fully expected it to pass.

Council member Ogelman appreciated the work that Planning Commission, Town Council, and Staff has done and this has been a lot of hard work and most importantly to him, the work that the citizens have done on this. He stated he certainly will support it and believed that it reflects the will of the people, most significantly it reflects the will of the people to preserve the small town character of Purcellville and to try to capitalize exactly on that. He does not think, for those people that think changing the form of our town, in the name of growth development, and giving individuals all the power to reap the economic benefits from that land at the expense of the town, he did not think that would improve the position of the town. He believed that would just make us look a lot like Ashburn, but just a little bit farther out than that, a commuter town

that doesn't have any charm or character or nothing to capitalize on. He has tried hard and act to put his money where his mouth is with respect to thinking about economic development. For someone that is not going to vote on this, the real question to him is what have you done to think about economic development, what effort have you put in to try and work through that, what proposals have you come up with to enhance economic development in this town and that is not a comprehensive plan kind of deal. That's every day for the last two years and come in, bring your lunch box, and go to work kind of deal. He thinks if people aren't willing to roll up their sleeves and go to work on that kind of an issue within the confines and constraints on what our citizens want, then he doesn't know what it is we are really up here doing unless we are trying to represent some very marginal interests that have a lot of money to make off something like this. This is where he stands on this and thinks our citizens should look and make sure that they hold us accountable for how we vote on a document like this, remember how each of us voted and hold us to account for running for election.

Council member Bledsoe commented he wanted to express his own appreciation to the work of the Planning Commission, and it started when he was on the Planning Commission in 2015, Vice Mayor Stinnettes' work, Staffs' work, this Council, and citizens for their input. He stated that in its' entirety is a good plan, represents a lot of what we see the value of this town being, and intends to support it. He had reservations about the East End and Hirst Road concerns, but where it ended up with Agriculture Tourism Commercial proposed uses in that matrix which represents the value that we put into that classification and so he is pleased that it gives the property owners some flexibility in the use of their property by not calling it farmland. The other areas were areas that those property owners really did not come forward in any meaningful way, and as he considered where the plan was currently it represents the input from the citizens and the community as well as the due diligence, so he fully intended to support the plan.

Council member Cool would be voting yes and the plan did not restrict the new people coming in, in any way at all, and does not put them under any undue pressure to make any actions. He would be voting yes and there was a lot of effort going on in this and a no on this makes zero sense.

Mayor Fraser commented that he has two statements to make and had promised Ms. Kipfer to state why he would go forward with his vote.

The Mayor's first statement is to Ms. Kipfer:

"It has been a long journey to get us to this point of adoption of the Purcellville Comprehensive Plan. I believe the plan as it stands is the best representation of the community's vision from the majority of the citizens who elected me on a platform for slow growth, low taxes, innovative solutions, and infrastructure improvement. Relative to your parcel of property on the eastern border of our Town, my support for the land use category of Agriculture Tourism Commercial was to prevent additional traffic congestion and uncharacteristic growth at the gateway of our Town and at the same time allow for economic growth.

As you know, the entire gateway corridor has been the nexus of significant development over the years that resulted in traffic congestion and cannibalization of several of our further in-town businesses. The time to have more high-density commercial development at the gateway has passed. It would not be prudent in the interest of the health, safety, and welfare of our citizens to invite more traffic congestion there. You are correct that a Town Council before my time did recommend a Mixed Commercial use for your property. However, per our Town records two Town Councils ago, I acknowledged the Town Council's desire before my time to pursue an Mixed Commercial use, but made it clear that I did not support it because it would be irresponsible to add more traffic at the gateway. In addition, to address the need for economic growth that will not invite more traffic congestion to our small Town, we recommended a land-use category that will support agricultural tourism-based commercial uses. I embrace that land use designation because it is closely aligned with our current Agricultural Conservancy Commercial District, which consists of twenty five more small scale commercial uses than your property's current zoning of Transition X, as shown in a table that I would attach in an email to you.

With this decision, we have satisfied the need for reduced traffic congestion and economic development opportunities. Thank you for your engagement and patience throughout the process, Ms. Kipfer.”

The Mayor’s second statement is to Town Council and citizens of Purcellville:

“I thank our citizens and Planning Commission for developing a plan which challenges us to work with what we have to guide residential and commercial expansion and economic development. This Plan’s success hinges upon the collective creativity, innovation, and focus of the residential and business community, Town Council, and Town Management. One of our Town Council members voiced concerns about the Plan lacking an economic development framework strategy, on contrary, the Plan has an economic development strategy that is based on “Making Economic Development Happen in Small Towns” a chapter taken from the book titled The Small Town Planning Handbook. This Plan does not equate economic development to the failed pro-growth strategies of the past which resulted in debt burden of over \$60 million, building homes where we should have had roads, inviting residential growth to build a tax base without any mechanism or plan to pay for future infrastructure, public safety, and the service cause of that growth. With this Plan we seize the opportunity to systematically meet our next needs incurred from decades of rapid growth while carefully establishing the enduring principle foundation for responsible creative innovative planning that will deliver a sustainable world class community using the assets and resources that we have been blessed with. This Plan invites economic development opportunities with the following advantages over big cities and in suburbs: we have cleaner air, we have green open space, we have less traffic congestion, we have low crime, we have outdoor recreational opportunities, we have over \$125 million in assets owned by the town, we have Triple A credit rating, we have a skilled work force, we have a vision for ubiquitous broadband infrastructure, we have an underutilized waste water treatment facility, and we have residents’ exuberant vibrancy, self-assurance, and a conviction that their town is special along with a feeling that an individual can make a difference. These advantages are attractive to many businesses. LL Bean and Lands’ End located their headquarters successfully in towns with less than 10,000 residents. Gary Comar, one of the founders and chairman of Lands’ End, moved the business to Dodgeville, Wisconsin because he fell in love with the picturesque setting of gentle rolling hills, woods, and cornfields in addition to the remarkable people that care for their community like what we have in Purcellville. So, the

Purcellville Comprehensive Plan has an economic development vision that with the commitment and focus of the community and other stakeholders will ensure continued prosperity for Purcellville. When private citizens, businesses, and interest groups all work for the common good of Purcellville and guided by this plan the town, as a whole, has a greater chance to prosper.”

Mayor Fraser requested a vote and thanked Vice Mayor Stinnette, Planning Commission, Staff, Management, and Citizens for all their hard work.

A motion was made before the discussion.

Motion: Vice Mayor Stinnette
Second: Council member Greenly
Carried: 6-1

Cool: Aye
Greenly: Aye
Grewe: No
Stinnette: Aye
Bledsoe: Aye
Ogelman: Aye
Mayor: Aye

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Council member Ogelman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 PM. The motion was seconded by Council member Grewe and carried 7-0.

Kwasi Fraser, Mayor

Kimberly Bandy, Deputy Town Clerk