

The Altavista Planning Commission held a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, December 4th, 2023, at 5pm, in the Council Chambers of Town Hall, located at 510 7th Street, Altavista, VA.

Members present: John Jordan, Chairman
 Marie Mitchell, Vice Chair
 Meghan Bolling, Commissioner
 Ashby Robinson, Jr., Commissioner
 Rayna Steele, Senior Student Commissioner
 Conner Mattox, Junior Student Commissioner

Member absent: Vice Mayor Reggie Bennett, Town Council Liaison

Staff present: Gary Shanaberger, Town Manager
 Matt Perkins, Assistant Town Manager
 John Eller, Town Attorney
 Crystal Hailey, Assistant Town Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman John Jordan called the Altavista Planning Commission Meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & INVOCATION

Chairman Jordan delivered an Invocation for the meeting and afterwards, the Planning Commission and Staff recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The December 4, 2023, meeting agenda was unanimously approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Jordan asked the Commission if they saw any corrections that were needed to the previous meeting minutes: of which there were none.

With a motion by Vice Chair Marie Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Meghan Bolling, the Altavista Planning Commission approved the minutes of the November 2023 meeting as presented

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

There were no citizen comments at this meeting.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins presented the two public hearing items, and stated that they had both been advertised for two consecutive weeks in the local newspaper as required..

- (Zoning) Ordinance Amendment OA-2023-07, with three proposed actions:
 - Section 86-32, Use Types: *remove* “helicopter” from use definition
 - Section 86-132(2), Permitted Uses: *allow* new use – Aviation Facility, Private; with a Special Use Permit (SUP)
 - Section 86-463, Aviation Facility, Private: *add* design and use standards
- Chairman Jordan opened this public hearing at 5:03pm.

Vice Chair Mitchell asked if the neighbors adjacent to the property this matter was concerning had been notified.

Mr. Perkins stated that the aforementioned proposed amendments pertained to the entire town, not individual property. He said, if the amendments were approved, and a Special Use Permit was applied for under the new amendments, then a public hearing would be held for the individual SUP, and accordingly, adjacent property owners would be notified.

Mr. Perkins stated that the Town tries to address any foreseeable issues through “use design and standards”; however, the Town could also apply special conditions to a SUP to mitigate any concerns from the Town or adjacent neighbors of the applying property.

There were no further questions, and Chairman Jordan closed this hearing at 5:10pm

With a motion by Vice Chair Marie Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner AJ Robinson, the Planning Commission voted 6-0 in favor of approving the aforementioned text amendments; and sending the matter to Town Council for their consideration of approval.

- (Zoning) Ordinance Amendment OA-2023-08: to Sections 86-52(3)-Permitted Uses, and 86-382(3)-Permitted Uses: to omit “Correction Facility” as a permitted use

Background: In a continuing effort to align the Code of Altavista with desired outcomes for the Altavista community, Staff continuously reviews the Permitted Uses in all zoning districts. Through a recent review, Staff recognized that “Correction Facility - Special Use Permit required” was listed in both the C-2 (General Commercial) and M (Industrial) Districts as a civic permitted use (Code Sections 86-352(3) and 86-382(3)). This finding was brought to the Planning Commission at its October 2023 meeting. After review, Commissioners were in consensus that this use should be removed from the Town’s Zoning Ordinance; and approved Staff to take the necessary actions to bring this matter to a Public Hearing.

Chairman Jordan opened this public hearing at 5:12pm and asked the Commissioners if they had any questions for Mr. Perkins regarding this matter.

Commissioner Robinson referenced “halfway housing”, and asked if that use would also be omitted from the Zoning Ordinance, since individuals were generally sent to such houses when released from correctional facilities.

Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins stated that the matter had not been discussed, therefore, only correctional facilities were being considered for removal.

With no additional questions from the Commission. Vice Chair Mitchell made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, to recommend to the Town Council that Section 86-352(3) Permitted Uses and Section 86-382(3) Permitted Uses of the Town’s Zoning Ordinance be amended to delete Correction Facility - Special Use Permit required from each section.

The motion passed unanimously to do so.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There were no unfinished business items to discuss on this date.

NEW BUSINESS

No new items were presented to the Commission.

MATTERS FROM THE COMMISSION

Vice Chair Mitchell referenced the front display windows of the Vista Theatre and old Leggett Building that had been decorated for the holidays by the Town Hall Office Staff. She thanked the Town for allowing the windows to be decorated and encouraged her fellow Commissioners to go see the displays.

MATTERS FROM STAFF

- Community Development - Activity Summary Report
As requested by Vice Chair Mitchell at the November Planning Commission Meeting, Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins shared a summarized report of the Community Development Department's activities over the past quarter (June to December).

- CY2024 Planning Commission Priorities
Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins shared a list of topics with the Commission that they had previously mentioned, in some capacity, they would like to discuss further and address.
 - Residential Solar
 - Short-term Rental
 - Review of Altavista's FLUM designations – specifically, considering the addition of a Transitional District
 - Review of Zoning District boundary/designation for 3rd, 4th, and 5th Street
 - Review and update of both the Subdivisions (Ch. 66)
 - Review and Update Zoning Ordinances (Ch.86)

Mr. Perkins stated that Staff was seeking direction for how the Planning Commission would like to prioritize these topics in a plan for the next calendar year.

There was a consensus of the Planning Commission to keep solar and short-term rentals at the top of the list; and to move "Reviewing and Updating Subdivision" to the third priority.

Chairman Jordan asked Staff to present a summary of solar – what has been discussed and what needs to be discussed and addressed. He asked the same for the Short-term Rentals topic.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Chairman Jordan adjourned the meeting at 5:30pm.

John Jordan
Planning Commission Chairman

Matthew Perkins
Assistant Town Manager