

The Altavista Planning Commission held a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, October 2nd, 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
Ashby Robinson, Jr.
Rayna Steele, Senior Student Commissioner

Absent: Reggie Bennett, Vice Mayor

Staff present: Matt Perkins, Assistant Town Manager
J. Johnson Eller Jr., Town Attorney
Crystal Hailey, Assistant Town Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman John Jordan called the Altavista Planning Commission Meeting to order at 5:01 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

Chairman Jordan shared two amendments needed to this agenda:

- 1) under “approval of minutes”, change June 5th to September 5th
- 2) addition to section #7 Unfinished Business: Update on Junior Student Commissioner

With a motion made by Vice Chair Marie Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Ashby Robinson, the Planning Commission voted 5-0 to approve the October 2nd meeting agenda as amended.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Jordan stated that he reviewed the September 2023 meeting minutes and did not find any corrections needed. He asked the Commission if they found any needed corrections, of which there were none.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Mitchell, and seconded by Commissioner Ashby Robinson, to approve the minutes for the Altavista Planning Commission’s September 2023 meeting as presented. The motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION - There were no citizen comments on this date.

PUBLIC HEARING

Special Use Permit (SUP) Request: *SUP-23-01* Request to operate a detached accessory apartment

The Commission held a Public Hearing to consider a Special Use Application submitted by John Kinman, 216 West Road, Altavista. Chairman Jordan opened the Public Hearing at 5:04pm.

Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins presented this item to the Planning Commission.

He said that Mr. Kinman's SUP request was to establish an accessory apartment, in a 12 x 40 building already permitted and located on his property. Mr. Perkins informed the Commission that the request was a "permitted use" in Altavista's Town Code, under restrictions and guidelines. He stated that public advertisements for this Public Hearing were published in the Altavista Journal for two consecutive weeks, September 13th and September 20th; and letters were sent to adjacent property owners on September 15th, 2023, via first-class mail; and as of the writing of this report, Staff had not received any phone calls or emails in support of, or in opposition to the request.

Mr. Perkins stated, after reviewing Mr. Kinman's property and the Town Code, and with there being no opposition to date, Staff recommended that the Planning Commission make a recommendation to Town Council to approve the Special Use Permit (SUP-23-01). He informed the Commission that Mr. Kinman was joining the meeting through the conference phone, and that he and Mr. Kinman would be happy to answer any questions they may have regarding this request.

Chairman Jordan closed the public hearing at 5:07pm, and asked the Commission if they had any questions regarding this SUP request, to which there were none.

With a motion by Vice Chair Marie Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Ashby Robinson, the Planning Commission voted 5-0 in favor of approving John Kinman's SUP application, and to recommend to the Town Council to also approve SUP-23-01.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Junior Student Commissioner Update:

Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins informed the Commission, through information acquired by Vice Chair Marie Mitchell and Senior Student Commissioner Rayna Steele, that Conner Mattox had been nominated by the Altavista Combined School as a candidate for Junior Student Commissioner with the Altavista Planning Commission.

Commissioner Steele shared that Conner was a good student, with ambitions of becoming a lawyer and from there, pursuing politics. She said that Conner conveyed to her that he was interested in serving his community as a Student Commissioner.

With a motion by Vice Chair Marie Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Ashby Robinson, the Commission voted unanimously in favor of Conner Mattox being the next Junior Student Commissioner for the Altavista Planning Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no new business items scheduled for this meeting.

MATTERS FROM STAFF

Assistant Town Manager Matt Perkins gave the Commission a brief update on the most recent activities of the Community Development Department.

- Reviewed/approved (10) site plans
- Issued: (21) Zoning Permits
 (4) Sign Permits
 (2) Mobile Restaurant Permits
- Sent (27) "reminder letters" for tall grass violations, of which, (25) had been cleared

Mr. Perkins stated that he and the Town Manager, Gary Shanaberger, were currently reviewing permitted uses in the Town, as stated in Altavista's Zoning Ordinance. He referenced "correction centers", found in both the C-2 District and the M-Industrial District, and stated Staff was not in favor of the use being permitted in any of the Town's districts. Mr. Perkins said the matter would be introduced to the Commission as an agenda item at a future meeting.

MATTERS FROM THE COMMISSION

- Commissioner Robinson referenced an ad that he recently saw for a public meeting being held at the Spark Innovation Center pertaining to solar energy, and asked, with the Town's recent code amendment against solar facilities in Altavista, was the meeting pertaining to the same idea.

Mr. Perkins stated that the meeting Commissioner Robinson spoke of was not being sponsored by the Spark Center or the Town. He said the Spark Center was rented by a company that offered small commercial and residential solar panels, which the Town Code currently allowed, and he invited the public to the meeting to learn about their product.

Vice Chair Marie Mitchell asked Mr. Perkins to look into what the Town Code specifically stated regarding residential solar panels, and where the panels were allowed to be placed.

Town Attorney John Eller informed the Commission that the State Code had a provision regarding roof-top solar panels. He stated he would look at that specific code and bring back the information to the Commission.

- Vice Mayor Mitchell referenced a portion of 3rd Street, Altavista, that was recently rezoned to accommodate two Habitat Houses. She reminded the Commission that Altavista's Future Land Use Map was updated with the recent (2045) Comprehensive Plan update, which suggested 3rd Street and 5th Street be rezoned to accommodate residential, but stated, to date the action had not been done.

Mr. Perkins stated that he would bring this matter to the Commission for discussion at an upcoming meeting.

Chairman Jordan asked that Staff inform the Commission in advance of upcoming public hearings, or matters requiring a vote, so they had time to adequately review the matter.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Chairman Jordan adjourned the meeting at 5:28pm.

John Jordan
Planning Commission Chairman

Matthew Perkins
Assistant Town Manager