

**Hamilton Planning Commission ZORC meeting
(Zoning Ordinance Review Committee)
August 18, 2010
Hamilton Town Office**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Robert McCann.
The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by Roll Call.

Present: Chairman Robert McCann, Vice Chairman Les Carlson, Mr. William Gallant, Mr. Russell Beal,
Mr. Tom Rollins, Ms. Larissa Borst, Mr. Brent Campbell.

Also Present: Mr. David Beniamino, Zoning Administrator

Report of Officers

Mr. Gallant distributed information about the NBIA (Virginia Business Incubation Association) which is a regional roundtable on entrepreneurship and small business development. Mr. Denino provided the NBIA information to Mr. Gallant and Mr. Campbell asked if Mr. Denino has any recommendations on how Hamilton could promote business in Town. Mr. Gallant advised that he had not offered any ideas and Mr. Beniamino stated that Mr. Denino is not really an economic development person but rather an organizer for the Towns for information sharing that will generate ideas for growth. Mr. Campbell asked what the County has done to help Hamilton with economic development and Ms. Borst asked what the Town has specifically asked for in terms of assistance from the County. Mr. Beniamino advised that the residents of Hamilton pay County taxes and the County has many resources for economic development but the smaller towns like Hamilton are not a priority. The County has a planning department and should be able to assist with zoning ordinance changes, Staff to offer advice, etc but the County states they do not presently have the Staff or resources for this need. Mr. Campbell advised that he would like to contact Mr. Denino to see how help can be obtained and Mr. Beniamino advised he will talk more with Mr. Campbell after the meeting tonight. Mr. Beniamino offered to set a date and time with Ms. Borst to help her understand the information about annexation, the Comprehensive Plan, the Zoning ordinances, water quality, usage and management, etc.

Old Business

Mr. McCann advised that at the last Council meeting the request was made for the Planning Commission to have a draft of the revised Zoning Ordinance changes ready to present to them at their March 2011 meeting. Mr. Beniamino advised that he was the person who promised this and that the Council did not push for this. Mr. Beniamino stated that the Zoning Ordinance is a simpler document to write than the Comprehensive Plan but the concepts are more difficult. Mr. Beniamino offered several options to the Commission in order to meet the March 2011 deadline:

- 1- the Commission could meet 2-3 times a month
- 2- A dedicated sub-committee could be established to meet frequently and bring the recommendations back to the Commission for review and consideration.
- 3- 2-3 sub-committees could be established to meet and review different sections of the ordinance and then present the recommendations to the Commission for review and consideration.

Mr. Beniamino advised that there are thousands of ordinances in Virginia to draw from which will make the process a bit easier to construct and that can be tailored to the needs of Hamilton. Mr. Campbell has voiced concern whether this can be accomplished by March 2011 but Mr. Beniamino does believe that the goal can be met.

Mr. Beniamino believes strongly that community outreach is necessary but it should not occur until the Council has had the opportunity to review and discuss the draft document. Mr. Beniamino believes that by changing the non-conforming section in the first round of the first zoning ordinance draft increased flexibility in regulations will be gained and property owners will have the ability to make changes that they are currently unable to make. Mr Beniamino believes that every minute that flexibilities are not made available is a minute lost for potential economic development to current and potential businesses, including lost revenue from future water tap fees.

Mr. Beniamino asked the Commission to consider whether they can feel they can meet the March 2011 deadline and if the deadline cannot be met then Mr. Beniamino needs to be advised now so he can make the communication to the Town Council. All Council members provided input for the preferred way to accomplish the March 2011 deadline and an agreement was made that meetings would occur bi-weekly. Mr. McCann advised that he needs a commitment for attendance and a commitment to the goal. Mr. Beniamino advised that homework will be necessary and meetings will run longer and asked the Commissioners to be prepared for the task ahead, but recognize that the reward will be accomplishing the goal. Mr. Beniamino will send out a schedule for the bi-weekly ZORC meetings on Tuesday nights at 7:00 PM, with the first meeting scheduled to take place August 31, 2010.

Mr. Beniamino pointed out that one example of a major fundamental flaw in the ordinance is the parking issue in Town; what parking exists currently versus what parking is needed versus what the present ordinance allows, all 3 ideas are conflict.

Commissioner Beal requested that if funds are available can he please be considered to attend Planning Commission/Zoning training, as it was mentioned that this may be available for Commissioner Borst. Mr. Rollins also expressed interest in this and Mr. Beniamino advised that he has materials available that might help. Mr. Campbell suggested that a recommendation be made to Council to hire a Land Use Attorney for a crash course in Land Use understanding for the members of the Planning Commission and Town Council. Mr. Beniamino agreed that this is a good idea and he knows that the Council is also interested in this option. Mr. Beniamino advised that he might be able to bring in some of the trainers who teach the Planning Commission training session, through the University of Virginia and the Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association, to teach a class locally and suggested that some of the neighboring Towns be invited to attend the training and share in the associated costs. Mr. Rollins recommended that the session not be opened to other localities until the cost is determined, pointing out that this would allow for increased focus on Hamilton. Mr. Beniamino explained that there is a difference between a good Land Use Attorney and a good communicator and a good communicator is what the Town needs in this instance. Mr. Beniamino urged the Commission to focus on this for their training needs and select someone who can educate on Land Use Rules and Legislation that is passed down yearly. Mr. Beniamino thanked the Planning Commissioners for the dedication, commitment and willingness to take on the challenge before them.

New Business

Joint Meeting August 24, 2010 at 7:00 PM is for the Council to discuss and ask questions about the Planning Commissions proposals for the Comprehensive Plan. The new Town Mayor and Town Council members will need to voice and discuss any new ideas they might have.

Zoning Ordinance Review Articles 1, 2, 3 and 5 were reviewed again. Mr. Beniamino captured the suggested changes as agreed.

Meeting Schedule

Joint meeting with Town Council, August 24, 2010 @ 7:00 PM

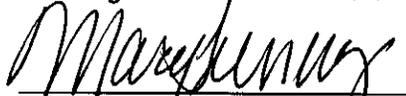
Next Planning Commission meeting, September 15, 2010 @ 7:00 PM

Next ZORC meeting, October 20, 2010 @ 7:00 PM

Mr. Campbell motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 PM.



Planning Commissioner Robert McCann



Ms. Mary Tussing, Recorder