



City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

Planning Commission Meeting

November 8, 2017

7:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting
409 South Main Street

- 1) **Call to order, roll call, determination of quorum, and review/approval of minutes from the October 11, 2017 regular meeting.**
- 2) **New Business**
None
- 3) **Unfinished Business**
- 4) **Public Input**
- 5) **Report of secretary and committees**
Proactive Code Enforcement – On Hold
Board of Zoning Appeals Report
Receive City Planning Commission's 2018 Meeting Schedule
Rockingham County Planning Commission Liaison Report and Review of 2018 Meeting Schedule
City Council Report
- 6) **Other Matters**
Presentation and Discussion on Residential Unit Densities and Types of Dwellings Allowed in Zoning Districts
Discussion of the Comprehensive Plan Update
Discussion of the Planning Commission By-Laws
- 7) **Adjournment**

Staff will be available Tuesday, December 12, 2017 at 4:30 p.m. for those interested in going on a field trip to view the sites for the December 13, 2017 agenda.

Procedure For Hearing Cases

Cases shall be heard in the order in which they appear on the agenda, except a case may be advanced for hearing by order of the Planning Commission upon good cause shown.

At the hearing, the order shall be as follows:

1. Presentation of case and explanation and/or report by City staff.
2. Open public hearing (if necessary)
 - a. Statement of applicant or appellant
 - b. Statements of other persons in favor
 - c. Statement by those opposed
 - d. Applicant's rebuttal
3. Close public hearing (if necessary)

The Chairman may prescribe a reasonable time limit for each side to present its case. To maintain orderly procedure, each side shall proceed without interruption by the other. Cross-examination will not be permitted, but questions may be directed to the Chair who may allow limited questioning. The name and address of each person speaking shall be recorded in the minutes.

Public Input

This section of the agenda is where anyone wishing to speak may speak on any matter not outlined previously on the agenda. The Chair will open the floor for any person or organization that would like to speak to the Planning Commission on any subject at the discretion of the Commission. The Chair may prescribe a reasonable time limit for anyone wishing to speak at this time.

Staff will be available Tuesday, December 12, 2017 at 4:30 p.m. for those interested in going on a field trip to view the sites for the December 13, 2017 agenda.

MINUTES OF HARRISONBURG PLANNING COMMISSION
October 11, 2017

The Harrisonburg Planning Commission held its regular meeting on Wednesday, October 11, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 409 South Main Street.

Members present: Richard Baugh, Gil Colman; Mark Finks; Brent Finnegan; Deb Fitzgerald; Henry Way, Chair; and Kathy Whitten.

Members absent: None

Also present: Adam Fletcher, Director of Planning and Community Development; Wesley Russ, Assistant City Attorney; Thanh Dang, City Planner; Alison Banks, Senior Planner; Yajaira Cruz, Administrative Assistant/Secretary.

Chair Way called the meeting to order and said there was a quorum with all members in attendance. He then asked if there were any corrections, comments, or a motion regarding the September 2017 Planning Commission minutes.

Mr. Finnegan moved to approve the minutes as presented.

Mr. Colman seconded the motion.

All members voted in favor of approving the September 2017 minutes as presented (7-0).

Special Use Permit – 900 North Liberty Street (To allow a Professional Office in M-1)

Chair Way read the request and asked staff for a review.

Mrs. Banks said the Comprehensive Plan designates this area as Commercial. This designation states that these areas include uses for retail, office, wholesale, or service functions. These areas are generally found along the City's major travel corridors.

The following land uses are located on and adjacent to the property:

Site: Vacant 1,500+/- square feet structure, zoned M-1

North: Vacant office building, zoned M-1

East: Automotive businesses, zoned M-1

South: Across Monroe Street, cab company, zoned M-1

West: Across North Liberty Street, non-conforming mobile home park and a petroleum business, zoned M-1

The applicant is requesting a special use permit (SUP) per Section 10-3-97 (3) of the Zoning Ordinance to allow a business or professional office use within the M-1, General Industrial District. The property is located on the northeastern corner of the intersection of North Liberty Street and Monroe Street (this portion of Monroe Street is undeveloped.) This section of North Liberty Street contains a mix of uses that includes industrial, commercial, and non-conforming

residential. If approved, the applicant desires to utilize a portion of the building as a professional office.

Previously, the 1,500+/- square feet structure located on the site had been used for warehousing and storage. The applicant has stated that they would continue to use a majority of the building as a warehouse/storage facility for a plumbing contractor, a use permitted by-right within the M-1 zoning district, and renovate a 500+/- square feet portion to be used as an accounting office.

The applicant has been informed by staff that if they receive approval of the request, they would need to apply for a building permit for a use change and for the creation of a second tenant space within the building. Both matters can be performed under one building permit application.

If the request is approved, parking for the accounting office would be calculated as a minimum of three parking spaces or one parking space for every 300 square feet of gross floor area or fraction thereof, whichever is greater; while, parking for the warehouse use would be calculated at one parking space for every two persons working on the premises on a maximum shift and one parking space for every truck/vehicle used in connection with the use. The applicant should work closely with staff to ensure that all required parking spaces are appropriately delineated on site.

The Comprehensive Plan recognizes this side of North Liberty Street in this area as Commercial and thus an office use would be compatible with the Land Use Guide. Staff does not have any concerns with an office use at this location.

Staff recommends to approve the special use permit as requested by the applicant.

Chair Way asked if there were any questions for staff. Hearing none, he opened the public hearing and asked if the applicant would like to speak.

Tony Miller, 408 Lee Avenue, said if you have any questions I would be glad to answer them. This process in the City is new for me, but I have been working with the Community Development office, with Ms. Dang and Mrs. Banks on how to get everything done with permits and everything that is needed. It has been fun working with them and they have been very helpful with everything.

Mrs. Whitten said it is always good to hear that staff is working well with our customers.

Chair Way asked if anyone else would like to speak in favor or against this request.

Kelsey Cler with Anicira property owner at 910 North Liberty Street, said we are absolutely in support of this request.

Poti Gianakouros, Harrisonburg, said I have a question about how staff mentioned there had been some issues before on the property. I was just curious about what those were.

Mrs. Banks said it was inoperable vehicles that had to be removed.

Mr. Gianakouros said thank you.

Mr. Baugh said it was actually the adjoining property's vehicles.

Mrs. Banks said yes it was the adjoining property owner was using this property to put their inoperable vehicles on.

Mr. Colman said the property has been vacant for a while, there is no business operating there, is that the case?

Mrs. Banks said yes, the subject property is vacant.

Chair Way asked if anyone else would like to speak on this request. Hearing none, he closed the public hearing and asked Planning Commission for a motion on the request for the purpose of discussion.

Mr. Colman said it is good to see the property moving forward to be used as two businesses here, an accounting office and a plumbing business. It is good to see that it is not just being left there to fall apart.

Mr. Finnegan said I would second that. There has clearly been some renovations to the front of the property; it looks like a new sidewalk. I think, there may be some inoperable vehicles still on the adjacent property, but I think it is good that you are improving the property and it looks much better now.

Mrs. Whitten moved to approve the special use permit at 900 North Liberty Street to allow a Professional Office in M-1 as presented by staff.

Mr. Finks seconded the motion.

Chair Way said we have a motion and a second for approval. He called for a voice vote on the motion.

All voted in favor (7-0) to approve the special use permit at 900 North Liberty Street to allow a Professional Office in M-1 as presented by staff.

Chair Way said this will go forward to City Council on November 14, 2017.

Unfinished Business

None.

Public Input

Poti Gianakouros, Harrisonburg, said I have had the pleasure of enjoying several of these meetings; I find them more captivating than City Council sometimes. Unfortunately, at the last meeting I attended sometimes the minutes are not as complete as they could be. I find that the minutes tend to lag this meeting further than some other meetings are lagged; for example, City Council. That leaves us as residents not having the ability to benefit from some of that deliberation that you make prior to City Council meetings. My question to you or maybe a request is when Mr. Jones has his sessions here at noon he turns on the recording equipment. How difficult would it be to turn on the video and record Planning Commission meetings and make it available just as City Council meetings are made available.

Also related, I want to comment on what I observed last meeting that I think could maybe benefit from additional public input and awareness of public input. I saw a proposal approved without as much as the deliberation that I have grown to admire. For example, when Professor Fitzgerald weighed in on neighbor waivers on back yard chickens, I think that was one of the high points in deliberation in this body.

At the last meeting, Planning Commission considered what I perceived as a plastics manufacturing company about to be located adjacent to the Purcell Park neighborhood, about

which we had previously heard quite a bit at City Council. I for one wondered what kind of emissions potentially come out of that. All I really picked up in the discussion was that the applicant said it was clean, but to me I hear polyvinyl chloride and I hear chloride groups, and I hear dioxane. We have a plastic manufacturer elsewhere in the city and I hear that workers get vomit breaks, maybe it is not true. I have smelled the smell in that area where I see very attractive houses, but I have decided that those neighborhoods were not as attractive. Just a little reminder that maybe we should keep in mind the taste that is in our mouths and legislate for that, and not let the other taste that some people have obscure our deliberative efforts.

Chair Way said thank you, I appreciate you talking to those things. Couple of quick points I would make are— I hope you will feel free when we are discussing items to come and speak at the public hearing part of the process and if you have questions we will take the moment to answer at that point. This is another reason why we encourage people to come to the meetings and not just watch remotely if they could. What should we talk about with the video recordings aspect of it, has that ever been discussed?

Mr. Fletcher said we have talked about it for many years, to make it more accessible for people that could not make it here. It can be discussed again with the Information Technology (IT) Department. There are some technical things that need to be done. First and foremost, we have to have somebody to actually operate the video equipment, which has a cost associated with it. It could be discussed if we want to go that direction. Staff has discussed the idea ourselves, years ago, when the capabilities became available, but it never came to fruition.

Chair Way said nothing has changed with the new building, it is all the same in terms of recording infrastructure?

Mr. Fletcher replied that it is the same recording infrastructure. When we were in the old building we talked about the same thing.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said it might be worth noting that the School Board is talking about televising both monthly meetings rather than just one. Especially once we launch into this period of getting down to the details of dealing with overcrowding. If you cannot come, you get to see it televised.

Mr. Finnegan said I would generally be in favor of making Planning Commission meetings available to watch. Is there an estimated cost for having them televised?

Mr. Fletcher said we can find out. We do not use the Granicus' Legistar system, which City Council does, so that is another component that we have to look into. They are all possibilities, they just need to be evaluated.

Mr. Baugh said I know it has come up that some of the joint meetings City Council had with the School Board were not televised. If I recall correctly the answer was really as simple as we have a contract with the company who does the filming and there is some cost component. My guess is that it is not monstrous, I think it is worth at least asking.

Mr. Fletcher said I think it is an appropriate time to start talking about it. It is October and we are going to be starting budget season here soon.

Mr. Baugh said then there is the other issue of the company doing it, because I think there may have been some issues about two nights a month and everything. There is no reason not to consider it.

Mrs. Whitten said I will also say the minutes from these meetings can be very lengthy and very technical. I know it is very labor intensive to get those minutes put on paper. It is not that simple at all.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said they have to be approved before they go to City Council.

Mr. Fletcher said our minutes are very different from City Council. I cannot say the minutes are verbatim, but we make every intention to almost capture everything that is said and the whole reason for that is so that City Council feels as they were here to capture who said what and the things that are going back and forth.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said because they are not televised.

Ms. Dang said extracts of the Planning Commission minutes are included in the City Council agenda packets. They get the minutes the week before the City Council meetings.

Mr. Fletcher said the extract of the Planning Commission meetings are in the City Council packets and our minutes from previous months are posted online at the same time that Planning Commission's agenda are posted the Friday before the meeting.

Mrs. Whitten said so they would not be available immediately following our meeting and there is a very good reason for that and I wanted to make that clear.

Mr. Russ said do we already record the audio, we have that file, so if someone wanted it we can turn it over under a FOIA request. We can always put the MP3 up when we put the minutes up if someone is interested in listening.

Mr. Fletcher said yes, the digital files are always available and are saved.

Mr. Colman said I also think that there are times where I want to look over and see what City Council's discussions were like and watching the video is different, it is more engaging than just listening to it. I think there is a benefit to it if we can do it.

Mr. Finks said I definitely get a better sense. I have looked at minutes for City Council and how things were voted on and you read it and say "oh, this seems all pretty cut and dry," then I go back and watch the video and it is entirely different.

Chair Way said it sounds like staff can look into the cost of video recording.

Mr. Finnegan said is that contracted with the video company on an annual basis?

Mr. Fletcher said I do not know the answer to that.

Mr. Baugh said I think so but we can find that out.

Report of Secretary and Committees

Chair Way said Proactive Code Enforcement is still on hold. He then asked about the BZA report.

Mr. Colman said we had one variance request case at 630 Ott Street for an addition of a screened porch in an older house. Most of those houses have a five-foot setback historically before the City acquired that area.

Mrs. Banks said they had a five-foot setback requirement when zoning was adopted.

Mr. Colman said some houses are close to the five feet and in some cases less. The BZA decided that there was not enough of a hardship to where that structure could be located somewhere else or it can be reduced in size and it would fit. The request was denied.

Mr. Finks said I was at the last Rockingham County Planning Commission meeting. They had four rezonings on the table. A majority of which got tabled. There was a rezoning for a 46-acre A-2 Agriculture parcel to I-1 Industrial, right next to Sysco on Route 11, that was tabled because they need to look more into some things with VDOT. A rezoning of five acres from A-2 Agriculture to B-1 General Business in Mcgaheysville at the intersection of Rockingham Pike and Spotswood Trail; someone is looking to turn the property into mini storage and there seems to be some issues with the screening for the property for the adjacent residential area, so that was tabled as well. There was also a rezoning for B-1C to B-1 near Massanutten where that little Art Café use to be at the end of the road. Someone wants to turn that into a laundry facility and it appears all their proffers that they were looking to do with that property were not sent in time, so it was tabled for another time. Also, a rezoning of A-2 Agriculture to R-3 residential up at Massanutten Resort Drive to allow an existing home to be turned into a business office and that was approved. Staff reported that the County Reservoir Street project was at 75% completion and the Stone Spring Road connector just broke ground.

Mr. Baugh said we met last night for City Council and there was one item from the last Planning Commission meeting. City Council unanimously approved the special use permit for 1594 South Main Street to allow manufacturing, processing, and assembly operations in B-2C.

Other Matters

Ms. Dang said I offered you all a memo that was included in your packet. I will highlight some things out of it. Thank you for review of all the Comprehensive Plan chapters. I will be sending you the last review packet this weekend, so you all can start reviewing it. As of this point all of the chapters that you have reviewed, everything except the Land Use and Transportation, are posted online on the website.

Word is getting out through social media if you have seen it on Facebook and other places. I sent out the electronic newsletter to the subscribers, there are over 200 people subscribed to that, and I am making my way to forward messages to the Chamber of Commerce and the list of people we had on the Google excel spreadsheet earlier this year to ask them if they can include it in their membership newsletter to help get the word out as well. Our Public Information Officer is working on the press release that will go out on Monday, that will announce the first workshop next week. All the dates are confirmed for the fall workshops and that is what is being pushed out and advertised.

Please invite your friends, colleagues, and family to attend. I think word of mouth really goes a long way to encourage people to come out and have them understand. Also, if they are not able to attend they can still send in their comments in writing to us.

Mr. Finks asked if we planning to do any sort of paper advertising; hand bills or posters?

Ms. Dang said I did not think to do that, thank you.

Mr. Finks said if anything just an 8x11 poster that we can put up at a couple community locations around town.

Ms. Dang asked whether he was looking at paper hand bills or something like that.

Mr. Finks said it does not need to be hand bills, but something at least we can put up around town. Hand bills would be great, but just a standard sheet of paper that can be put up on community bulletin boards.

Ms. Dang said I think I can use the graphic that our webmaster had designed and put on Facebook. I will ask her to help me size it so it prints appropriately on a half or full sheet of paper. I will get some printed out and let you all know if you are available to pick some up or I can drop them off for you.

I wanted to plant some seeds of where we are going to go from here after the workshops. As you know I will be taking some leave come February and I just wanted to think about what we are going to do over the next couple of months. We have the workshops, three in October and one in November. The public comment period ends November 28th. Your next Planning Commission meetings are on November 8th and December 13th, so you have two before the end of the year. The December 13th Planning Commission meeting being the one following the close of the public comment period, we can compile the comments and get those to you.

In talking with Mr. Fletcher and Mrs. Banks, we will have a better sense of what the December agenda looks like at our next November meeting and we have talked about doing a work session to discuss all the information. We can do it on the evening of that December Planning Commission meeting or we can pick a different date during the first two weeks of December to meet. And, rather than sitting like this maybe we just pull around a table. Then we can assess where we are.

I think a lot of the bulk of the work has been done. I am interested in seeing what the public thinks about what we have compiled and put together and if we find excessive changes are needed and we need to meet with the advisory committees we can. You might decide that after we receive the public comments that we do not need to meet with the advisory committees again; but we do not have to decide that now, that is something we can talk about in December and then plan out our next steps. As you recall that big schedule spreadsheet that I gave to you all, there were more concrete steps early in the process and now we are getting to that fuzzy area and I think December would be a good time to re-assess and determine the next months or however long it will take to get the Comprehensive Plan adopted. Any question or suggestions about the Comprehensive Plan?

Mrs. Fitzgerald said you are talking about timing for the Planning Commission work session?

Ms. Dang said yes.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said in November we could talk about the possibility of a work session in December.

Ms. Dang said yes. That is all I have for the Comprehensive Plan and I look forward to seeing you all at the workshops. We will also continue to work with JMU ICAD. Mr. Fletcher, Mrs. Banks and I are meeting with Dr. Britt tomorrow to finalize the plans of how the first evening for the Educational, Arts, Culture and Historic Resources workshop will go.

Chair Way said what does the next meeting look like.

Mrs. Banks said we have one agenda item. It is a preliminary plat for review.

Mr. Fletcher said I will also add that we are in on track for CIP review in December.

Mr. Finks asked who has the Rockingham County Planning Commission meeting in November.

Mrs. Banks said it is the same day as our Planning Commission meeting.

Chair Way asked Mr. Finks to discuss the Planning Commission by-laws.

Mr. Finks said I was envisioning that we would look at that in November. I want everyone to have at least a month to look at it since there are a lot of by-laws from around the state. Mrs. Fitzgerald suggested to me to possibly look at forming a subcommittee to take a look at the by-laws and then come up with a conclusion next year. I do want everyone's thoughts on that; we might want to go through everything first before we make that decision. I have put a note of some suggested tweaks to our current by-laws and added some right-out additions, some of these might be more tweaks than additions. I tried to give some examples of some of the suggested by-law changes. Any questions or comments?

Mrs. Fitzgerald said the variety of by-laws from other communities' Planning Commissions is amazing, from two sides of a page to a great amount of detail. Sometimes it is easier to react to a change that someone has already gone through once.

Chair Way said it sounds like at the next meeting we will talk more about the by-laws. Let us turn our attention to the statement from the Public Utilities Department regarding the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. Any questions or thoughts regarding this matter?

Mrs. Whitten said I have a couple of thoughts. My first thought, I thought this was not a very complete report that we received. I was a little bit disappointed in that; and to be specific about that because DEQ has made a judgement about the safety of water. We have no assurance of water safety based on what DEQ has ruled.

After further investigation of my own, I think the source from what would be Switzer Dam really does not come into play because that watershed is different. It is removed from where the Atlantic Coast Pipeline will cross. However, the South River stands to be very much affected if there is a problem. The South River feeds the Shenandoah River and the Shenandoah River is definitely a source of ours and that was not mentioned at all in this report.

I feel like we are still in the same place and I appreciate Mr. Collins efforts, but I am not completely satisfied, nor am I pleased.

Mr. Finnegan said I would also add that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has a reputation for rubber stamping these pipelines. So, I question the use of FERC as the only or primary source of regulation. A judge did rule recently in August that FERC was not accurately and comprehensively recording the environmental impacts of a pipeline, this was not the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, and a judge ruled that FERC did not adequately disclose the environmental impacts. This remains to be seen how they will manage the space above the pipeline. If they are using herbicide that is something that could wash into the Shenandoah River. I do not know how they are going to manage that. A lot of times herbicides are used to keep the right-of-way clear. I did talk to Dr. Daniel Downey at JMU, he is a Biologist, regarding that study that was sent. He did not have concerns but his studies have to do more with biology and also to do with the Dry River. I did follow up with that.

Mrs. Whitten said I think I may have told you biology, but he is chemistry and biochemistry. Those are his areas of expertise not geology for sure. The other point that I would make that I think was very much left out of Mr. Collins' report which you know I could understand why he would but also a great concern. The economic interest of our tourism and the branding meeting that just happened really focused very much on the outdoors and nature; having all these resources very close. That is a number that I do not know right off the top of my head what the value of the tourism dollars would be, but it is very great and meaningful to the City of Harrisonburg. I think that hiking, fishing, and mountain biking is something that is important for that land that we value so much to remain pristine.

Mr. Finnegan said I recently went to the rebranding debut for the new logos and branding for Harrisonburg features very heavily the outdoors element of Harrisonburg.

Mrs. Whitten said another thing I uncovered in doing some research. I talked to people from Friends of Shenandoah Mountain and they have been trying very diligently to get some wilderness area designated in that area long before the pipeline became an issue. They would like to designate the Skidmore Fork area as a wilderness area. Skidmore Fork is the water that flows into Switzer Reservoir that is literally our water source and they were told by the City of Harrisonburg that we did not have any interest in a wilderness area because we did not own that property. Which was quite distressing to me as well, because I think it will only behoove us to be in favor of a wilderness area where that would protect our water.

Chair Way said any thoughts about the next steps on this and ways to take this forward. Is this something that City Council reflects on or has any thoughts?

Mr. Baugh said that at the moment I am not aware of any.

Chair Way said shall we just let the record show the thoughts the Commission has put forth tonight?

Mrs. Whitten said perhaps that would be the best. I would say for now West Virginia and North Carolina seem to be taking a step into the right direction. I do appreciate their due diligence and really recognizing that the damage could be great to the waters particularly.

Adjournment

The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Chair Henry Way

Secretary, Yajaira Cruz



2018

CITY OF HARRISONBURG'S PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATES AND APPLICATION DEADLINES

APPLICATION DEADLINE*	PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATE^	CITY COUNCIL MEETING DATE
DECEMBER 8, 2017	JANUARY 10, 2018	ITEMS ARE PRESENTED TO CITY COUNCIL THE MONTH FOLLOWING PLANNING COMMISSION. EXAMPLE: IF THE ITEM IS PRESENTED TO PLANNING COMMISSION IN JANUARY, IT WILL BE PRESENTED TO CITY COUNCIL IN FEBRUARY. CITY COUNCIL MEETS ON THE 2 ND AND 4 TH TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH. VISIT HARRISONBURGVA.GOV/COUNCIL FOR SCHEDULE AND DETAILS.
JANUARY 5	FEBRUARY 14	
FEBRUARY 9	MARCH 14	
MARCH 9	APRIL 11	
APRIL 6	MAY 9	
MAY 4	JUNE 13	
JUNE 8	JULY 11	
JULY 6	AUGUST 8	
AUGUST 3	SEPTEMBER 12	
SEPTEMBER 7	OCTOBER 10	
OCTOBER 5	NOVEMBER 14	
NOVEMBER 9	DECEMBER 12	
DECEMBER 7, 2018	JANUARY 9, 2019	

*All materials for review by the Planning Commission must be submitted on or before the above application deadlines to the Department of Planning & Community Development, located at 409 South Main Street, 2nd Floor.

^The Harrisonburg Planning Commission and City Council meet in City Council Chambers, 409 South Main Street, at 7pm on the dates listed above and posted online.

If there are any questions or comments, please contact the Planning & Community Development Department at telephone number (540) 432-7700.

2018 Rockingham County Planning Commission Meetings

First Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm

January 2, 2018

February 6

March 6

April 3

May 1

June 5

July 3

August 7

September 4

October 2

November 7 (Wednesday)

December 4

If a meeting needs to be postponed due to inclement weather or for any reason as determined by the Chairman, or the Vice-Chairman if the Chairman is not available, the meeting will be held the following Tuesday at the same time, unless otherwise determined by the Planning Commission. The postponement will be announced on the County's website and on local radio.



City of Harrisonburg

Department of Planning and Community Development

409 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801
540-432-7700

www.harrisonburgva.gov/community-development

Memorandum

To: Planning Commission
From: Thanh Dang, City Planner
RE: Discussion of the Comprehensive Plan Update
Date: November 8, 2017 (Regular Meeting)

At the upcoming November 8, 2017 Planning Commission meeting, time will be reserved to discuss the Comprehensive Plan Update. Please review the information below.

- 1) **All Chapters Are Available Online.** The remaining chapters were posted online on October 27 and are available at <https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/yourplan-draft-chapters>. *If you would like a hardcopy of the Comprehensive Plan, please let Thanh know by end of day Tuesday, November 7 and she will bring copies to the Planning Commission meeting.*
- 2) **Public Comment Period.** The public comment period runs through Tuesday, November 28. Comments may be submitted:
 - at the workshops,
 - on Be Heard Harrisonburg, <http://beheardharrisonburg.org/>,
 - by emailing Thanh.Dang@harrisonburgva.gov, and
 - by writing to the Department of Planning & Community Development, c/o Thanh Dang, City Planner, 409 South Main Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.
- 3) **Public Outreach.** Public outreach efforts began in late-September and will continue through November. Outreach included:
 - Press releases have resulted in stories in the Daily News-Record and on WHSV. Additional press releases will go out around November 8/9 before our last workshop and again around November 22/23 before the public comment period closes.
 - Radio PSAs were created and aired on WSVA.
 - Information was posted on the local government-access television channel (channel 3).

- 8.5” x 11” flyers and quarter sheet handbills were created and distributed at workshops and to anyone who was available to help distribute.
 - Workshops were promoted on social media (Facebook, Instagram, and others).
 - Three Comprehensive Plan electronic newsletters have been sent to about 220 subscribers.
 - Local agencies and community organizations have also assisted with outreach by sending information to subscribers of their electronic newsletters.
- 4) **Fall Workshops.** The final workshop for the chapters on Land Use and Development Quality, Neighborhoods and Housing, and Transportation will be on Monday, November 13 at 6pm at Thomas Harrison Middle School.
- Comments collected from the first three workshops have been posted online at <https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/yourplan-fall-workshops>.
- 5) **December Work Session.** The Planning Commission agenda for December is full. Therefore, we will schedule a separate date to have the Planning Commission work session to discuss the Comprehensive Plan. *Thank sent an email to Planning Commissioners on November 1 requesting your availability. Please respond by end of day November 7.* We will announce the work session date, time, and location at the November 8 Planning Commission meeting.