

**Minutes**  
City of Petersburg  
Planning Commission  
June 3, 2020

The City of Petersburg Planning Commission held on Wednesday, June 3, 2020 virtually and at 101 E Washington Street, Petersburg, VA 23803, was called to order by the Chair, Mrs. Tammy Alexander at 6:00 p.m. A roll call of members was completed by Mrs. Deborah Porter.

**Members Present:**

Ms. Tammy Alexander, Chair  
Mr. Marie Vargo  
Mr. William Irvin  
Ms. Patricia Miller  
Mr. Ronald Moore  
Mr. Michael Edwards  
Dr. James Norman  
Mr. Fenton Bland

**Members Absent:**

Mr. Thomas S. Hairston  
Dr. Conrad Gilliam

A quorum was established by the Chair.

Others Present: Mrs. Deborah Porter, Mr. Reginald Tabor, Ms. Sandra Robinson

**Agenda:**

Mr. Edwards moved approval of the Agenda.

Mr. Irvin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Minutes:**

Ms. Vargo moved approval of the Minutes from the March 4, 2020 meeting.

Mr. Irvin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Information Period:**

None.

**Public Hearings:**

- 1. 20-REZ-01: Request of Nick Walker of Roslyn Farm Corporation to rezone T.P. 070-050002, currently zoned A (Agricultural) and a portion (16.67 acres) of 2100 Defense Road, T.P. 070-050001, currently zoned R-1 (Single Family Residential) to M-2 (Heavy Industrial) to attract an industrial user.**

Ms. Robinson and Mr. Tabor provided an overview.

Mr. Nick Walker, the applicant, addressed the Commission and stated that his firm has owned the property since the 1950s, and that the property is accessed from Squirrel Level Road, off I-85, that utilities are on Squirrel Level Road and Halifax Road, and that there would be minimum impact on City roads. He restated that the proposed M-2 use would allow for development of the vacant property and that currently he is working with a prospective purchaser that would invest \$7.5 million and provide 18 jobs. He stated that he could not name the prospective purchaser because he has executed a non-disclosure agreement with the prospect.

He offered proffers including

- no explosives and explosive storage,
- no mineral quarrying and extracting and
- no nitrates of an explosive nature,
- that any outdoor storage will be properly screened from public road and approved by the city of Petersburg at Site Plan review
- that except for lighting inside building(s), any lighting installed on the property shall be directed downward and inward to the site to avoid casting light on adjacent properties or into the night sky.
- That building restrictions will be followed as identified in City of Petersburg Zoning ordinances.

Speaker(s) in favor:

Mr. Carthan Currin, the City of Petersburg Director of Economic Development spoke in favor of the application and stated that a new business and new investment would enhance the City's tax base.

Speaker(s) in opposition:

Mr. James Beck of 1977 Vesonder Rd spoke in opposition of the application. Mr. Beck stated that he is a 48 year resident of a neighborhood East of the property, and that there has been increased development within the 6 miles of his property that includes a box factory, galvanizers and industrial bleach production. He stated that more noise and increased truck traffic are his concerns. He also referenced a letter from Mr. Gary Skinner, Sr.

There were no other Speakers and the Public Hearing was closed.

Commission Discussion:

Mr. Moore stated that the property is suited for industrial development. He also stated that the tree lines along Defense Road and Halifax Road should be maintained.

Mr. Walker responded that the tree line along Defense Road is not part of the parcel, and that it is protected as part of a historic easement, and therefore those trees will be preserved.

Dr. Norman expressed concern that the prospective purchaser is not disclosed.

Mr. Edwards stated that he shares the concerns about the trees.

Mr. Moore moved approval of the rezoning request and recommendation to the City Council for approval, with the condition of preserving the existing trees on Defense Road and Halifax Road.

Ms. Miller seconded the motion.

Mr. Edwards offered a substitute motion to approve the Staff recommendation and include tree preservation along Defense Road and Halifax Road.

Mr. Bland seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 7-1.

**2. 20-SUP-01: Request of Roger Hughett of Skyway Towers, LLC for as Special Use Permit to construct telecommunications facility within a 50' x 50' fenced compound with a 195' monopole type tower with a 4' lightning rod, within the property that is currently zoned M-1.**

Ms. Robinson and Mr. Tabor provided an overview.

Mr. William Shewmake, the applicant addressed the Commission. Mr. Shewmake stated that T-Mobile and three other vendors would be co-located on the tower and the tower will allow for 5-G service, increased coverage, increased speed and coverage in the City of Petersburg, enhanced emergency services, and enhanced service to residents and businesses.

Speaker(s) in favor: None

Speaker(s) in opposition: None

Commission Discussion:

Mr. Moore asked who pays for removal if tower use is discontinued.

Mr. Shewmake stated that Skyway would own the tower and that T-Mobile and other providers would lease space on the tower. The tower would allow carriers to offer 5-G service and therefore it benefits any carrier who locates on the tower. He would not foresee discontinued use, but ultimately, the Skyway would be responsible for removal. He also stated that there would be a 50' x 50' area in which the tower would be located and that there would be landscaping surrounding the 50' x 50' area.

Mr. Irvin asked if the applicant accepted the staff recommendations.

Mr. Shewmake stated that all of the recommendations are acceptable, however he believes that the Code of Virginia was amended and removal bonds are no longer allowed.

Mr. Edwards asked about lighting on the tower.

Mr. Shewmake stated that there will be lighting for the tower to address air safety concerns.

Mr. Irvin moved approval of the item with staff recommendations, that should not include a performance bond requirement if it is not legally allowed.

Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **New Business**

### **1. Elections**

Chair Alexander stepped down from the Chair and turned it over to Mr. Tabor.

Mr. Tabor opened the floor for nominations for the office of Chair.

Mr. Bland nominated Ms. Alexander.

Mr. Moore asked if the item could be postponed until all can meet face to face.

Mr. Bland re-stated his motion to nominate Ms. Alexander as Chair.

Mr. Irvin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Alexander stepped back into the chair.

Ms. Alexander opened the floor for nominations for the office of Vice Chair.

Mr. Edwards nominated Mr. Bland.

There being no other nominations, the Chair declared the appointment by acclamation.

Ms. Alexander opened the floor for the Office of Secretary.

There being no nominations, the Chair stated that City Staff would continue to serve as Commission Secretary.

## **2. Proposal to develop City-owned properties in Ward 5**

Mr. Edwards asked if a Committee of non-Commissioners can be established to review the proposal.

Mr. Tabor stated that the City Attorney would have to be consulted, and that staff will endeavour to provide a response during the next meeting.

Mr. Edwards moved to table the item until the July meeting.

Mr. Irvin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Old Business:**

#### **1. Comprehensive Plan Update Process**

Mr. Tabor recommended developing a Calendar during the next meeting with completion by June 2021.

Ms. Alexander recommended tabling consideration of a Calendar for the Comprehensive Plan update during the next meeting.

Mr. Edwards moved to table the item until the July meeting.

Mr. Bland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Announcements:**

There were no announcements

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chair.