

Radford Planning Commission
Wednesday, January 23, 2019
Municipal Building

Members Present: Mr. Gillespie, Mr. Gilmore, Dr. Pearce, Mr. Watson, Mr. Collier, and Mr. Howard
Absent – Mr. Gropman
Others Present: Melissa Skelton, City Staff

Mr. Howard called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm. A quorum was present. The agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes:
December 18, 2018

Minutes were recommended for approval by Mr. Gilmore, seconded by Mr. Gillespie, as presented.

Voting Yes: Mr. Gillespie, Mr. Gilmore, Dr. Pearce, Mr. Watson, and Mr. Howard

Voting No: None

Abstain: Mr. Collier

Public Address: Mr. Price attended the meeting to inform the commission about comprehensive planning as well as an issue presently occurring at First Avenue and Grove, in the former location of Mike's Pizza. It is close to campus and holds significant potential. The question is what can be done there to make best use of existing lots. The property is zoned B-3, which requires a business use. Mr. Price got a permit to convert the house into a two bedroom rental unit and completed about 75% of the project before being informed that he could not legally rent it due to zoning restrictions. Ultimately, he'd like to try to ensure that his plans align with the comprehensive plan so that he can proceed with larger redevelopment efforts in this area. Mr. Price is concerned about having significant investment in the property but not being able to rent it. He could put an office in, but not rent the units. The commission responded that it cannot "spot zone" within an existing area to accommodate a specific use.

This area may make sense for a Mixed Use designation allowing more flexibility of development. Special use permits can be obtained for additional uses beyond by-right uses. Grove Avenue is a difficult area that needs special consideration for appropriate uses that can be sustained. Not every kind of business is likely to be successful there. The commission has previously discussed opportunities to convert areas throughout the city to Mixed Use. We will discuss this as part of our working meeting with City Council.

OLD BUSINESS:

None to discuss

NEW BUSINESS:

SUMMARY: Special Use Permit Request – **SP-19-001** – (1501 West Main Street) T Preston Lloyd Jr (Attorney at Williams Mullen) on behalf of Radford Trading, LLC has submitted an application seeking approval of a Special Use Permit (SUP) for Tax Map #'s 17-(1)-1 and 17-(1)-1A, 1501 West Main Street. The SUP application proposes the use of an existing building as a facility for recycling, resource recovery and reclamation. The site was purchased in 2015 and has been proceeding with necessary state-related approvals. The metals market at the time was weak, so no action was taken at that time to start a new enterprise there.

The owners currently operate the largest metal recycling facility in West Virginia. Given changes in international markets, new requirements of importing countries such as China, and environmental factors, the market now favors more domestic uses for materials. There is the opportunity for investment in new

processes to try to convert the recycling stream into desirable products. The streams this facility will process include insulated copper wire, appliances, and other metals. There will be a \$2.5-4 million investment in new equipment to do this. The company decided that Radford would be a good location for this investment as an anchor tenant for the overall foundry site. There is presently no certified electronics recycler west of Richmond, in this part of the state. The company hopes to expand its scope to fill this gap. Challenges at this point include significant remaining cleanup requirements, negotiation of power rates that will fit the business plan, and others.

This location would serve as a collection center and also a processing facility for insulated wire and electronics. The volume for these operations would be less than for metals recycling. Most of this would be handled at their Princeton, WV facility. All operations currently planned would occur inside the old foundry building. The remainder of the site would be available for development congruent with the comprehensive plan.

The commission scheduled a site visit for February 8 at 1 pm.

ACTION: A motion was made by Dr. Pearce, seconded by Mr. Gilmore, to schedule a public hearing for their February 20, 2019 meeting. The commission also recommended that Ms. Skelton request City Council to have a second public hearing during their meeting on February 25.

Voting Yes: Mr. Gillespie, Mr. Gilmore, Dr. Pearce, Mr. Watson, Mr. Collier, and Mr. Howard

Voting No: None

Abstain: None

Staff Report:

Ms. Skelton reminded the commission of a work session with council starting at 6 pm on Monday. Also, Regional commission training is upcoming. Commissioners should also

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Collier – While this use is not what was originally envisioned for the foundry site, it is a very interesting proposal with significant potential.

Mr. Gillespie – no comment

Mr. Gilmore – no comment

Mr. Gropman– Absent

Dr. Pearce – Housing study data collection is this coming weekend.

Mr. Watson – Given the additional remediation requirements for other uses of the foundry site, this proposed use is quite exciting.

Mr. Howard – no comment.

A motion was made by Mr. Watson to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 pm, seconded by Mr. Gilmore.

Voting Yes: Mr. Gillespie, Mr. Gilmore, Dr. Pearce, Mr. Watson and Mr. Howard *Voting No:* None

Abstain: None

Submitted by: A. Pearce, Secretary

Date: 23 January 2019