

City of Lewisburg
Planning Commission Regular Session and Public Hearing
Meeting Minutes — May 5, 2022, 7 p.m.
942 Washington Street West, Lewisburg, WV
Paul L. Cooley Council Chambers

PRESENT: Chairperson John Little; Commissioners Tia Bouman, Margaret Gossard, Helen Harless, Davis Lewis and Valerie Pritt; Planning and Zoning Officer Marsha Cunningham; Recording Officer Tina Alvey

ABSENT: Commissioner Dan Stevenson, City Manager Misty Hill

VISITORS: Aaron Huffman

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson John Little at 7 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioners corrected a date in the April 7, 2022, minutes referring to May 3, 2022, minutes having been unavailable for consideration; that latter date should have been March 3, 2022. Minutes from the April 7, 2022, meeting and the March 3, 2022, meeting were approved without further correction on a 6-0 vote, with Commissioner Dan Stevenson and City Manager Misty Hill absent.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

Public Hearing: Aaron Huffman, representing the Historic General Lewis Inn Inc., regarding property at 603 South Lafayette Street, Lewisburg, West Virginia. - Conditional use permit for converting a single family dwelling into a multi-family unit of two.

Huffman advised the commission that the house in question is currently a single-family residence but was once divided into three separate apartments. He said the permit up for approval would be for the home to be divided into two separate 2-bedroom units. He asserted the property would not be used as an airbnb and that there is ample parking on the property to accommodate the two units' residents. He also said there are already apartment buildings on Lafayette Street. The city has a housing shortage, he said.

Commissioner Davis Lewis asked if Huffman had made inquiries into neighbors' opinions of the property's conversion from single-family into a duplex. Huffman noted that the house had been vacant for two years. The one neighbor he spoke with about the conversion said he was happy to see work being done on the house, according to Huffman.

Little called the public hearing on the application open at 7:08 p.m. With no comments heard from the public, the hearing was closed at 7:08 p.m.

The application was approved upon motion of Commissioner Tia Bouman, seconded by Commissioner Valerie Pritt, and voted upon 6-0, with Commissioner Stevenson and City Manager Misty Hill absent.

The application, along with the Planning Commission's recommendation for approval of the conditional use permit, will now progress to City Council for action.

Following the public hearing, Huffman asked if the permit is only for the current owner or if it stays with the property in perpetuity. Little advised him that the permit will remain with the property.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR: Commissioner Little was reelected chair of the commission, upon motion by Pritt, seconded by Bouman, and approved on a 5-0 vote, with Little abstaining and Stevenson and Hill absent. Commissioner Lewis was reelected vice chair of the commission, upon motion by Little, seconded by Margaret Gossard, and approved on a 5-0 vote, with Lewis abstaining and Stevenson and Hill absent.

COMMENTS FROM THE ZONING OFFICER: Planning and Zoning Officer Marsha Cunningham said she will ask WVU consultant Christy DeMuth if it is possible to add language to the section of the zoning ordinance dealing with conditional use permits in order to include minimum square footage standards for each unit in a duplex and/or in order to require a property owner seeking such a permit to notify neighbors of the application via certified letter.

Cunningham reported that a party has expressed interest in purchasing a motel along U.S. Route 219 North and converting it into efficiency apartment housing for an expected influx of additional students at WVSOM. The property would have to be rezoned in order for the project to come to fruition.

Cunningham said the Planning Commission will have a regular meeting in June.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m., upon motion by Commissioner Helen Harless, seconded by Gossard, and voted upon 6-0, with Stevenson and Hill absent.

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Alvey
Recording Officer