

**City of Lewisburg
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes ~ January 29, 2020
Paul R. Cooley Council Chambers
942 Washington Street, West, Lewisburg, WV**

PRESENT: Commission Chair Mark Etten; Commission members Tia Bouman, Jacy Faulkner, Ghee Gossard, Dan Stevenson, Roger Vannoy; Zoning Officer Gary Ford, Planning & Zoning Clerk Marsha Cunningham, Recording Officer Peggy Mackenzie

ABSENT: Commission members Helen Harless, John Little, Jeff Vickers

VISITORS: Christy deMuth, Mayor Beverly White

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 5:34 p.m. by Commission Chair Mark Etten. New member Dan Stevenson was introduced.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of *November 7, 2019* were approved as presented in a motion by Commission member Roger Vannoy and seconded by Commission member Jacy Faulkner. With five (5) in favor, no opposition and four (4) absent, the motion carried.

Election of President (Chair) and Vice-President (Vice-Chair)

As per WVU Law consultant Christy deMuth, correct proceedings require an annual election of Planning Commission officials. Commission member Vannoy nominated current Chair Etten as president, with a second from Commission member Ghee Gossard. A second motion from Commission member Stevenson to nominate City Manager Jacy Faulkner for the office of vice-president was followed with a second from Commission member Vannoy. With no other names submitted for either position, the five (5) members present voted in favor, with no opposition and four (4) absent, the motion carried.

Review revised Planned Unit Development (PUD) regulations

DeMuth distributed the revised copies of the PUD for review, noting highlighted areas under revision in Section 30X.07 Design Standards, which included (b), (c), (d) and (l). Specific dimensions (widths, heights, setbacks and percentages) elsewhere in the section were also highlighted to indicate places where the commission could make adjustments. A discussion of potential locations in the north entrance corridor area of town brought questions of whether or not to leave criteria open-ended or not. Vannoy commented that PUDs “are not easy to control.” Floating Zones were also discussed as an option in which increased density allowed for more open space. The “rock pile,” one of two available development sites, was brought up to envision how a developer might utilize it possibly as “an intentional self-sustaining community,” in Commissioner Tia Bouman’s words, or as Stevenson offered, a retirement community complete with dining and recreation facilities. Those options would increase both residential and commercial growth if the two available sites were to be developed. Etten addressed a related issue in stating, “The goal is to control traffic congestion as a guide to controlling development.” But, he added, “How to do it while still maintaining the charm of Lewisburg,” with no four-lane highways, and no more traffic lights. He [lamented] as deMuth described what zoning procedures might be involved, that more “gray areas” will necessitate “more meetings.” DeMuth opted to close the discussion, stating she had enough information on the commissions concerns and will bring examples to review for the next meeting.

Review Scenic Corridor Overlay examples

Visitors from beyond 50 miles away will most likely see, as their first impression of Lewisburg, the disorderly commercial development which comprises the Lewisburg Rte 219 North Entrance Corridor. Faulkner commented that the best option for the area would have been to have had rules for development in place prior to that development. The only way forward as it is now is to view it as a long-term goal and by inserting stricter language in the city's zoning rules. As development slowly evolves, changes will occur one by one, the evolution of the area might be created. Toward that purpose, the commission had a memorandum to review from deMuth, dated November 30, 2018, which included guidelines for the Corridor commissioned by The Lewisburg Foundation. Etten proposed to "lead by example" beginning with the on-going sidewalk project to WalMart, which he suggested could be complemented with tree plantings parallel to the roadway. Etten also noted that getting businesses to develop limited access points to the highway would be a problem. Zoning Officer Gary Ford proposed that the area north of Hwy. 64 is beginning to develop in the same way as the entry corridor under discussion. He urged to be proactive in creating an overlay to control how it grows in terms of frontage and access entries. Faulkner said it would be good to consider the entire area from the city limits to the historic district as a whole.

Review and discuss Sign Regulations

The entire commission revolted -- "Too much work!" The hang-up seemed centered on temporary signage. There were just too many criteria, zones and situations to consider. Even Etten admitted he had some responsibility for the lack of progress over the past two years. "It will be two more years before we will be through with the sign regulations." Faulkner said the commission has more pressing and critical items to work on regarding the comprehensive plan, which is being held up while deliberating over the sign regulations issues. DeMuth will confer with her co-consultant on this issue.

NEXT MEETING with LUSD CLINIC: March 25, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. is the next meeting in which deMuth could attend. A second option was set for March 23, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m. in a motion by Commission member Vannoy and seconded by Commission member Stevenson.

Respectfully submitted,
Peggy Mackenzie
Recording Officer