

City of Lewisburg
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes ~ February 4, 2021
942 Washington Street West, Lewisburg, WV
Via Teleconference

PRESENT: Commission Chair Mark Etten; Commission members Tia Bouman, Ghee Gossard, Misty Hill, John Little, Valerie Pritt, Dan Stevenson; Planning & Zoning Officer Marsha Cunningham, Recording Officer Peggy Mackenzie

ABSENT: Commission members Helen Harless, Davis Lewis

VISITORS: Christy deMuth, Cathy Jones

CALL TO ORDER: The Working Session meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Commission Chair Mark Etten. No comments were offered from the public.

APPROVAL of MINUTES: The minutes of January 21, 2021 were approved as presented in a motion by Commission member Dan Stevenson and seconded by Commission member Tia Bouman. With six (6) in favor and three (3) absent, the motion carried.

Discussion on Sign Regulations with Christy deMuth

The Commission, having previously decided upon the types of permanent and temporary signs to allow within R1/R2 residential dwelling districts, Christy deMuth directed them to decide the size, number and height limits of the permitted sign types to allow. She warned that typically more signs are allowed than one would think because, for example, even address numerals are considered a sign, albeit a minor one. Signs under two square feet, she said, are minor signs and do not require a permit, and may include security notices, small welcome signs and for sale signs.

With lengthy deliberation the Commission agreed to allow Four (4) total Permanent signs per residence with a square foot (sf) limit of six (6) at a max height of four (4) feet. Temporary signs to be limited to four (4) total at 16 sf max at 4 feet height limit for a total of 30 days. The recent 2020 political season informed the members that political temporary signage may be a growing controversial issue. A total of four (4) Flags for residences and non-dwelling residences (ie, churches & schools) were agreed upon at max of 24 sf/ 20-foot height. Permanent and temporary signs for non-dwelling residences were postponed for the next meeting.

deMuth and Etten agreed to schedule the next Working Session for March 4, 2021 at 5:30 prior to the scheduled regular Planning Commission on the same day at 7 p.m. deMuth advised that the discussion will move on to Open Space/Conservation Districts which include parks and farmlands.

Etten addressed an issue concerning language used in deMuth's draft of the sign ordinance which copied language in the City's original ordinance. He suggested the assistance of City attorney Tom White may help clarify. deMuth said she would reach out to White.

ADJOURNMENT: The Working Session was adjourned at 6:55 p.m. in a motion by Commission member Ghee Gossard and seconded by Commission member Valerie Pritt.

CALL TO ORDER: The Regular meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Commission Chair Etten, and no public comments were offered.

Public Hearing: Cathy Jones, 124 Dorsey Street ~ Request for a minor subdivision

Planning & Zoning Officer Marsha Cunningham stated the property owner wishes to divide the Dorsey Street lot into two parcels so that she could sell the existing house on one lot and then build another house on the other vacant lot. Owner Cathy Jones has met all requirements, including a survey and a plat. All adjacent property owners have returned receipts without complaint and Mayor Beverly White has written a letter of approval for the subdivision. The matter of a driveway easement between the two lots turned out to be un-necessary since Jones will create a separate driveway near the old one. A Public Hearing was called at 7:05 p.m, and hearing no response, Etten closed the Public hearing at 7:06 p.m. A motion to approve the minor subdivision request as presented was made by Commission member Stevenson and seconded by Commission member John Little. With seven (7) in favor and two (2) absent, the motion carried.

COMMENTS from the COMMISSION: Etten asked the Commission to review the language in three Restaurant/Bar categories contained in the recently approved first reading of the PUD. He questioned whether all three made sense to the members and if any or all were useful in the PUD. Gossard objected to the use of negatives and suggested employing positive language instead to better clarify which services were desired. In other words, none of the three listed options (#19, 20 and 21) were considered. Instead, the Commission agreed to clarify by restating the preference for only allowing takeout, limited deliveries and patio dining within the PUD district, leaving the drive-through option off limits.

ADJOURNMENT: The Regular meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m. in a motion by Commission member Stevenson and was seconded by Commission member Gossard.

Respectfully submitted,
Peggy Mackenzie
Recording Officer