



**Prince Edward County Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2016
7:30 pm**

Members Present: John Townsend, Chairman Chris Mason, Vice Chairman
 Preston L. Hunt Mark Jenkins
 Jack Leatherwood Robert “Bobby” Jones,
 John “Jack” W. Peery, Jr., John Pregarman
 Cannon Watson

Absent: Donald Gilliam

Staff Present: Rob Fowler, Director of Planning & Community Development

Chairman Townsend called the December 13, 2016 meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

In Re: Public Hearing – Amendments to Prince Edward County Zoning Ordinance

Chairman Simpson announced that this was the date and time scheduled for a public hearing on amendments to the Prince Edward County Zoning Ordinance. Notice of this hearing was advertised according to law in the Wednesday, November 30, 2016 and Wednesday, December 7, 2016 editions of THE FARMVILLE HERALD, a newspaper published in the County of Prince Edward.

Planning Commission Chairman John Townsend, III, called to order the Prince Edward County Planning Commission.

Mr. Rob Fowler, Planning and Community Development Director, stated Prince Edward County staff was contacted recently regarding the process to establish a Transitional Living Facility in the A1, Agricultural Conservation zoning district. After reviewing the current Zoning Ordinance, there is not a use classification that would allow this type of activity. He said staff suggests that the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission add a classification of “Transitional Living Facilities” as a use allowed by Special Use Permit in the A1, Agricultural Conservation (Article II, Section 2-100.3(B)2, and A2, Agricultural Residential (Article II, Section 2-200.3(B)2 zoning districts. Mr. Fowler stated applicants would have to meet the current development standards outlined in the

Ordinance and comply with any additional building codes or other state agency requirements. Staff also suggests that the following definition of Transitional Living Facility be added to Article VI, Section 6-200.3(C):

***Transitional Housing Facility** – A facility providing housing/shelter primarily to homeless or transient persons and which may provide ancillary services such as counseling and/or vocational training. Number of occupants to be determined by special use permit, Fire and Building Codes.*

Supervisor Gray questioned if the definition is adopted, does that mean the facility is approved; Mr. Fowler stated each issue is separate.

Supervisor Timmons asked if these could be located anywhere in the county; Mr. Fowler stated it is proposed for only A1 and A2 districts. Mr. Fowler said they would need to follow the building and fire codes and there are limits on occupancy. He added anyone wishing to operate a facility would have to follow the Special Use Permit process; there is no regulation by the State or licensing for this type of facility. During the Special Use Permit process, the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will be able to specify the number of people that may stay at the facility at a time, the number of volunteers and staff, the hours of operation, and other factors, and it is up to the Board to set the limitations for each request. Discussion followed.

Supervisor Timmons made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Wilck, to take no action tonight and send the issues back to the Planning Commission for more information prior to a recommendation of their findings.

Supervisor Jones stated both the Board and the Commission are in attendance for the public hearing, as well as citizens for the purpose of the hearing; he suggested hearing the public opinion and then decide whether to send it back to the Planning Commission or move forward.

Supervisor Timmons withdrew his motion.

Supervisor Jones joined the Planning Commission; he presented the petition regarding possible rezoning.

Mr. Fowler stated there has been contact from surrounding property owners, two in opposition, one in support of the project. There has been no direct contact regarding the amendment, only the potential facility.

Mr. Bartlett reminded all that the issue presently before the Board and Planning Commission is to determine the outcome of the amendment to the Zoning Ordinance only. The next public hearing would be on the Special Use Request.

Chairman Simpson opened the public hearing.

Monroe Preston, owner of the property and Chairman of the local Salvation Army, stated he has been working with the homeless for six to eight years. He said there is a need in this community. Mr. Preston said an agreement has been drawn up to use the house as a temporary overnight, emergency shelter, with no intention on anyone staying for an extended period of time. He added the house and the organization are both insured.

Debora Warner, Rescue Mission Secretary and Treasurer, stated over the past six years, people have been given shelter in local churches. She explained the intake process, then stated the people are given dinner, they have access to bathing facilities, and may sleep safely. In the morning, the people are given breakfast and a bag lunch, and are taken back to town. She presented several examples of typical people helped.

Supervisor Timmons questioned the process used to verify the information given on the intake forms. Ms. Warner stated they search belongings and research through the Virginia State registry online; they also have a working relationship with the Sheriff's office and an account with BeenVerified.

Supervisor Timmons stated there is a petition of surrounding property owners opposed to the facility. Ms. Warner stated they were not aware of it, no one approached them.

Supervisor Gray asked if anyone has come to them to voice their concerns. She said there has been no contact or comments made to them. She added there have been no issues from anyone that has stayed with them; they did receive a donation of toys and clothes.

Discussion followed regarding the potential safety issues and concerns from surrounding property owners.

Planning Commissioner Peery questioned the largest number of people assisted at one time in the history of the organization. Ms. Warner stated the most was three years ago, six people were assisted. Normally it is one or two people.

Supervisor Townsend asked if there has ever been any incidents of violence. Ms. Warner stated there has been no violence. Discussion followed on the type of people normally served. Mr. Preston stated they refer people to STEPS, Crossroads and other churches for more assistance, depending on their circumstances. Ms. Warner added the intake is done at the Beulah AME Church.

Johnna Shular, President of the Farmville Area Rescue Mission (FARM), stated the program was started in 2010 and there have been no issues. More than ten organizations work in conjunction to assist people. The organization is faith-based, and the proposed location would only house four people, genders would be separate. There are statistics to show the need; a couple hundred people have been assisted since 2012, and STEPS has a Rapid

Rehouse Grant that can assist people further. From July 1 to November 1 [2016], 28 families have been assisted through a Homeless Solutions grant, and 17 were diverted to FARM. Discussion followed.

Deana Bennett, Hampden District, presented concerns regarding the facility and the lack of or miscommunication regarding the shelter for the homeless overnight. She stated the proper channels were not followed and is concerned that proper procedure won't be followed in the future. She said the safety of the neighbors must be considered, as there are elderly and children in the area. While the project is admirable, the residents need assurance that there will be background checks and the property values will not decline. Ms. Bennett stated it had been reported in the newspaper that long-term housing may be in the future plans for the shelter. She requested the Commission and the Board find out more about the proposed facility prior to making a decision.

Stephanie Aprzese spoke in favor of the homeless shelter, as she went through homelessness herself. She said the Rescue Mission took her in and now she has her own apartment, works two jobs and will attend Longwood University in the fall. She said she supports the facility, adding there is a need in this community.

Supervisor Cooper-Jones stated there is truly a need, although it may not be a good location. She stated STEPS and the FARM provide assistance to many, while most of us do not see the need. She then commended and thanked the organizations and Mr. Bartlett for his assistance in finding help for someone recently.

There being no one further wishing to speak, Chairman Simpson closed the public hearing.

Planning Commissioner Chairman Townsend questioned the Commission members on any discussion.

In his role on the Planning Commission, Supervisor/Commissioner Jones said the need is there and the issue needs to be looked at, but there isn't enough information currently to make that decision. He said the neighbors need to be considered also.

Commissioner Jones made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Leatherwood, to revisit this issue at the January 2017 Planning Commission meeting, to allow time for more information to be gathered from other localities, in regard to stipulations and other determining factors. The motion carried unanimously:

Aye:	Preston C. Hunt	Nay:	(None)
	Mark Jenkins		
	Robert M. Jones		
	Clifford Jack Leatherwood		
	Chris Mason		
	John "Jack" W. Peery, Jr.		
	John Pregelman		
	John Townsend, III		
	Cannon Watson		
Absent:	Donald Gilliam		

Commission Chairman Townsend presented the Planning Commission's recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to delay action and revisit the issue at the January 2017 Planning Commission meeting, and to present a further recommendation after that time.

Supervisor Timmons made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Townsend, to accept the Planning Commission's recommendation table action and send the issue back to the Planning Commission for further information; the motion carried:

Aye:	Pattie Cooper-Jones	Nay: None
	Calvin L. Gray	
	Robert M. Jones	
	Odessa H. Pride	
	Howard F. Simpson	
	C. Robert Timmons, Jr.	
	Jerry R. Townsend	
	Jim R. Wilck	

Planning Commission Chairman Townsend adjourned the Planning Commission at 8:41 p.m.

Next Meeting: January 17, 2017