

*Minutes of the Town of Bedford*

**PLANNING  
COMMISSION**

The Planning Commission held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, June 1, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Municipal Building Council Hall.

Planning Commission members present: Lonne R. Bailey, Vice Chair; Frances Coles, Secretary; Darren Shoen, Town Council Representative; Brock Malcolm; Cynthia Gunnoe; and Curtis Marshall

Planning Commission members absent: Jason Horne, Chair

Town Staff present: Mary Zirkle, Director of Planning and Community Development and Cathy Johnson, Clerk of the Commission

Town Staff absent: None

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Ms. Bailey, the Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:**

There was a quorum to conduct business with six members present.

**REMARKS BY CHAIRMAN & MEMBERS:**

None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Upon a motion by Mr. Malcolm and seconded by Ms. Coles, with six members voting aye, the May 4, 2023, minutes were approved as presented.

**STAFF & COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Ms. Zirkle asked the Vice Chair if they could discuss the Town boundary adjustment land area at the end of the agenda.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

The Vice Chair opened the public hearing to consider a request for a conditional use permit for indoor “Mini-Storage Units” located at 101 North Bridge Street, Bedford, VA (Tax Parcels 194-A-45 T & 194-A-46 T) consisting of 0.16 acres. The property is zoned B-1, and is owned by First National Exchange Bank/Dominion Bank National Association. The request is being made by Scott Elliott, Custom Structures, Inc., contract purchaser. The storage units will be located in the basement of the building.

The Vice Chair opened the floor for any citizens present to speak for or against.

Mr. William “Bill” Mosley at 618 Westview Avenue was present to speak against the conditional use. He was concerned that the use will set precedent for other store owners to want indoor “mini-storage units” in Centertown.

Since there were no further citizens present to speak, the Vice Chair closed the public hearing.

Next, the Vice Chair opened the public hearing to consider a request for a conditional use permit for a “Crisis Center” located at Ole Turnpike Drive, Bedford, VA (currently Tax Parcel 191-A-1T) consisting of 3.125 acres (a new parcel will be created). The property is zoned B-2, General Business, and is owned by the County of Bedford. The request is being made by Albert Brandt.

The Vice Chair opened the floor for any citizens present to speak for or against. Since there were no citizens present to speak, the Vice Chair closed the public hearing.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

The Vice Chair opened discussion to recommend or not recommend consideration of a conditional use permit for indoor “Mini-Storage Units” located at 101 North Bridge Street, Bedford, VA (Tax Parcels 194-A-45 T & 194-A-46 T) consisting of 0.16 acres. The property is zoned B-1, and is owned by First National Exchange Bank/Dominion Bank National Association. The request is being made by Scott Elliott, Custom Structures, Inc. The storage units will be located in the basement of the building.

The Vice Chair asked for a motion.

Ms. Gunnoe made a motion to deny the conditional use permit request for indoor “Mini-Storage Units” in the basement at 101 North Bridge Street (Tax Parcels 194-A-45 T & 194-A-46 T) consisting of 0.16 acres. Ms. Coles seconded.

The Vice Chair opened the floor for a discussion.

Ms. Gunnoe stated that she has a problem with setting a precedent in allowing storage units in downtown, and she was concerned about security. Ms. Coles stated that she was concerned about allowing mini-storage units in Centertown. Ms. Coles asked what will the other floors be used for? Mr. Marshall asked if the storage boxes for units will be a removeable prefab modular design? Mr. Bryan Schley with Custom Structures was present to answer their questions.

Mr. Bryan Schley of 412 Bedford Avenue was present to represent Custom Structures outside of the public hearing. Mr. Schley stated that the other floors would be used for Custom Structures offices, restaurant/café, leasing office spaces, and a roof-top bar. Mr. Schley stated that the developer wanted to maximize the space and to make the rest of the building investable. He stated that the storage unit area is a modular design and the plan to store files. Mr. Schley stated that the parking lot behind 101 North Bridge Street once used by the bank will be leased, but the building will be owned by Custom Structures.

The Planning Commission discussed the after-hours traffic and impact on other local businesses, if mold and mildew is in the basement, that the storage unit use is interior and no one can see it, hours of operation, how will the rollup door be accessed and used by clients, and signage. The Planning Commissioners discussed specific conditions to consider if it chooses to recommend approval to Town Council. They discussed not allowing single façade signage on the building that calls attention to the storage units, but one can be included as part of the tenant sign. They were concerned about the 24-hours of operation and security risk. Mr. Schley stated that the hired Site Manager work hours would be from 8 am to 5 pm. The Planning Commissioners agreed to have the hours of operation from 6am to 11pm for the access to the storage units.

Mr. Schley stated that the proposed rollup door was included in the plans to remove the existing chiller and to install future equipment in the building. He stated that the rollup door will be architecturally designed.

Mr. Marshall and Mr. Shoen think that the indoor "Mini-Storage Units" use is a good use of the building since it is not visible, and Mr. Shoen favors the idea, but with conditions. Commissioners discussed tabling action to the next meeting to allow Commissioners time to think about conditions and have them finalized by staff. Mr. Schley commented it would be better to take his chances with Council since work had already begun. It was noted that their next meeting is July 6 and there may be some members absent. There was concern about waiting to act after that time that would put them at the end of their 60 days required for a recommendation to Council so they continued developing conditions.

Three conditions were developed to mitigate security concerns for after-hours access, no signage on Market Square and a requirement that the rollup door would be architectural in appearance. Staff read the conditions back to confirm the recommendation as follows:

1. The new rollup door would not be metal or stainless steel but would be aesthetically-pleasing as reviewed by staff.
2. There would not be any signage for the units on Market Square but it may be part of other tenant signage on the front at Bridge Street.
3. Access by rental unit clients would only be between 6:00am and 11:00pm.

Since there was a motion on the floor to deny, Ms. Gunnoe withdrew her motion to deny and Ms. Coles withdrew her second. The motion to not recommend approval was removed from the floor, and the Vice Chair asked for a new motion.

Mr. Shoen made a motion to recommend approval with conditions, and Mr. Marshall seconded.

The Vice Chair asked the Clerk for a roll call and the votes are as follows:

Ms. Coles	Nay
Mr. Shoen	Aye
Ms. Gunnoe	Nay
Mr. Malcolm	Aye
Mr. Marshall	Aye
Ms. Bailey	Nay
Mr. Horne	Absent

With six members present, the Planning Commission voted 3-3 to recommend approval. The vote tied and the motion failed. The conditional use permit will go to Town Council without a recommendation, with conditions.

For the next item of new business, the Vice Chair opened discussion to recommend or not recommend a conditional use permit for a “Crisis Center” located at Ole Turnpike Drive, Bedford, VA (currently Tax Parcel 191-A-1T) consisting of 3.125 acres (a new parcel will be created). The property is zoned B-2, General Business, and is owned by the County of Bedford. The request is being made by Albert Brandt.

The Vice Chair asked for a motion.

Mr. Shoen made a motion to recommend a conditional use permit for a “Crisis Center” located at Ole Turnpike Drive (Tax Parcel 191-A-1T) consisting of 3.125 acres, and Mr. Malcolm seconded.

Ms. Coles was concerned about the level of security and if other agencies or jurisdictions would use the facility.

Mr. Albert Brandt of the Bedford Domestic Violence Coalition and Mr. William Yeager of Peace of Mind Property Services, Inc. were present and spoke outside of the public hearing.

Mr. Albert Brandt stated that there will be onsite personnel and volunteer staff, but after-hours employees are as needed. There will be no armed security at the facility. Mr. Brandt stated that this would serve as transitional housing for temporary residents that will be from the Town and County of Bedford, but at times they will not be a Town or County of Bedford resident. The facility will accept and be set up for families, men, women and children and the elderly. He stated that the children at the center will have adult supervision. Mr. Brandt stated that the transition period depends on housing because the main goal is to provide housing for the individuals or families. Mr. Brandt stated the time limit should be about 3 to 6 months stay at the facility.

The Planning Commission asked why is the transitional housing center considered a “Crisis Center”? Ms. Zirkle stated that the use is most closely defined as a “Crisis Center” in the Town Ordinance definitions.

The Vice Chair reiterated the motion on the floor to recommend approval. The Planning Commission voted 6-0 to recommend approval for a conditional use permit for a “Crisis Center” located on Ole Turnpike Drive, Bedford, VA (currently Tax Parcel 191-A-1T) consisting of 3.125 acres (a new parcel will be created) to Town Council without conditions.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

At past meetings, the Planning Commission discussed how to make the Town zoning district comparable with the existing County zoning districts as part of the boundary adjustment parcels. Ms. Zirkle gave a copy of the June 25, 2013, Planning Commission agenda to each member to have history of the County/Town comparable zoning districts for their records and to think about those for a future discussion ahead of a zoning change.

Ms. Zirkle stated that Mr. Todd Gordon of EPR, PC will be at the July 6 meeting to discuss the Special Provisions section.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Ms. Lisa Bailey at 4289 Dickerson Mill Road asked to comment about the "Crisis Center". She mentioned she is an employee of the County Department of Social Services. She expressed concerns about traffic and the proximity to the Domestic Center on Ole Turnpike Drive, and she stated that she wasn't sure of the distance but thought the use must be 100 feet away from the Domestic Violence Center clients. The Vice Chair stated that the public hearing was closed, but advised Ms. Bailey to speak at the Town Council public hearing meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:33 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Thursday, July 6, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cathy Johnson, Clerk of the Commission

Approved on July 6, 2023.



Frances B. Coles, Secretary