

Minutes of the Town of Bedford

**PLANNING
COMMISSION**

The Planning Commission held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, September 7, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Municipal Building Council Hall.

Planning Commission members present: Jason Horne, Chair; Lonnie R. Bailey, Vice Chair; Frances Coles, Secretary; Darren Shoen, Town Council Representative; and Brock Malcolm; with Cynthia Gunnoe (via Zoom)

Planning Commission members absent: Curtis Marshall

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:

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:

There was a quorum to conduct business with five members present and one via Zoom. Based on the Bylaws and State regulations, since Ms. Gunnoe was via Zoom she was present but not a voting member.

REMARKS BY CHAIRMAN & MEMBERS:

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon a motion by Ms. Coles and seconded by Ms. Bailey, with five members voting aye with one abstaining, the August 3, 2023, minutes were approved as presented.

STAFF & COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Ms. Zirkle asked the Chair to amend the agenda to add an item for discussion.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

The Chair opened the public hearing to consider a conditional use permit request for LocalStorage located at 1127 East Lynchburg Salem Tnpk (Tax Map 129-A-15T) zoned B-2, General Business, to expand the mini-storage facility by adding a proposed storage building. The applicant is Washington Street Bedford LLC, Hoboken, NJ.

Ms. Amy Igarta-Seipps, Majority Partner and Principal Engineer with Accupoint Surveying & Design, was present on behalf of the owner/developer. She stated that the new owners had received requests for climate-controlled self-storage units. The request is to expand the existing "Mini-storage Unit" use by adding one new 60 foot by 200 foot building. This will displace a row of existing containers, which will be relocated to the left rear side of the property in two groups of 12 units. The development includes a proposed stormwater management area near the rear of the property. The plans show to expand the gravel area with pavement. The plans show tree buffers as a shield along Phillips Park Drive per code.

There were no citizens present to speak for or against, and the Chair closed the public hearing.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Chair opened discussion to recommend or not recommend consideration of a conditional use permit request for LocalStorage located at 1127 East Lynchburg Salem Tnpk (Tax Map 129-A-15T) zoned B-2, General Business, to expand the mini-storage facility by adding a proposed storage building.

The Chair asked for a motion. Mr. Shoen moved to recommend approval of a conditional use permit for LocalStorage to expand the mini-storage facility by adding a proposed storage building with a condition recommended on the staff report for landscaping. Mr. Malcolm seconded.

The Chair asked for any discussion. The Commissioners discussed the landscape buffer along Phillips Park Drive. Staff stated that since the expansion adjoins an R-3 residential zoning district, a landscape buffer is required by Section 705.03.c. The Commissioners were concerned about the existing fence being in poor condition with over growth vegetation. Staff stated that the new evergreen vegetative screening is to meet the requirement and must be maintained. Staff stated that the Planning Commission can impose conditions. The Commissioners wanted the fence line along the eastern border (Phillips Park Drive) to be cleaned and the privacy slats be replaced.

Mr. Shoen asked to amend his motion to include a second condition regarding replacing the existing fence slats that are in poor condition and removing the patchy volunteer vegetation growth along the eastern side of the property. Mr. Malcolm seconded.

By acclamation, the Planning Commission voted 5-0, with one taking no action on Zoom per policy, to recommend approval to consider a conditional use permit for LocalStorage located at 1127 East Lynchburg Salem Tnpk (Tax Map 129-A-15T) to expand the mini-storage facility by adding a proposed storage building with two conditions to Town Council.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Mr. Todd Gordon, Senior Planner with EPR, PC was present via Zoom to discuss the continuation of zoning ordinance updates. Mr. Gordon reviewed and discussed the draft zoning map with staff and the Commissioners. The Planning Commissioners discussed the recommendations presented by EPR, PC. The following were questions and/or concerns:

- Currently, there are no properties zoned LP on the map in Town, but the zoning classification is in the Ordinance.
- Forest Road has residential, business, and agricultural uses. The area on Forest Road before the reversion was AR. Per Code, the area came in as R1 after the reversion.
- The agricultural uses are only allowed in R1 because the Town does not have an agricultural zoning district.
- The Commissioners discussed changing the zoning on six commercial properties identified by Staff on Forest Road between the old Town boundary and the Little Otter Business Park.
- Staff explained that existing legal businesses can continue their uses in R1 zoning district. Staff explained the 2-years non-conformity provision in the State Code.
- Staff stated that any zoning classification lesser than M1 will make the use a non-conformity.
- Shiloh Land Management was never legally permitted by the County.
- Staff asked the Commissioners what they would want to see in 5 years from now in the Forest Road area to help decide what to recommend for zoning districts.
- The Commissioners did not want to see vacant delapidated buildings or uses.
- The Commissioners agreed to zone Redco (north side of the road), Shiloh Land Management and the Little Otter Business Park Manufacturing M1.
- The Commissioners agreed to zone the other five commercial properties LP. The Commissioners considered the area from the Bedford Funeral Home on the north side before the large agricultural tract of Little Otter Flower Farm to be zoned LP. The reason was for scale of the commercial uses to be less intense, not full scale commercial that B-2 would allow.
- The Commissioners considered changing the zoning on Ruff Drive and Earnhart Drive including the current Elks Home M1 parcels to R1.
- Winoa remains M1 use.
- The Commissioners considered zoning residential properties on Macon Street on the left (west) side coming from Baldwin Street to R1 from B-2.
- The Commissioners discussed lots on the right side of 460 West from Baldwin Street to be zoned LP.
- Mr. Gordon will incorporate the approved rezoning on Fuqua Mill Road to R3 and on Burks Hill Road to B2 on the zoning map.

Mr. Gordon stated that he plans to assemble one draft ordinance for consideration.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Ms. Zirkle asked the Commission for its direction regarding a “paper street” connecting Lakeview Lane to Venable Drive. The Commissioners wanted staff to reserve the right-of-way. Ms. Zirkle stated that no action is required and the “paper street” will remain.

Ms. Zirkle stated an upcoming Bedford Regional Water Authority Local Government Roundtable will be held on October 5, 2023, at the Bedford Welcome Center. She asked if two members on the Planning Commission want to attend the meeting. Mr. Horne and Ms. Bailey volunteered to attend the Roundtable meeting.

Mr. Horne asked about directional signage to promote and attract people to downtown. The Commissioners and staff discussed the difference between gateway markers and wayfinding signs. Ms. Zirkle stated the question is which businesses could locate on the sign and who will pay. Ms. Zirkle

stated this is not a zoning matter, but is part of the Town wayfinding package. She stated that Town Council enacted the wayfinding and gateway signage in the past and she will continue to work for ways to address this.

Ms. Johnson left the meeting at 7:00 pm.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Thursday, October 5, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Johnson, Clerk of the Commission

Approved on October 5, 2023.



Frances B. Coles, Secretary