



CORPORATION OF HARPERS FERRY

Planning Commission

MINUTES

Special Meeting

Thursday, 6 April 2023

6:00 p.m.

Town Hall – 1000 Washington Street, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia 25425

The in-person meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Craig.

Member	Title	Status
Chris Craig	President	Present
Paul Mayhew	Secretary / Mayor's Designee	Present
Ken Dill	Member	Not Present
Roberta Meade-Curry, AICP	Member	Present
Zach Morse	Member	Present
Paul Thomas	Member	Not Present
Tim Wisecarver	Member	Present
Christy DeMuth	WVU Land Use Clinic Consultant	Present
Cameron Stoops	WVU Land Use Clinic Consultant	Present

President Craig commenced the meeting with some opening updates, which he began by indicating that the recommended change in ordinance (eliminating the Planning Commission's role as an advisor to the Board of Zoning Appeals) passed in the second reading at the previous Town Council Meeting. He also noted that Z. Morse and he would be attending the Jefferson County Council Meeting on Tuesday, April 11th, as the county is also in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan.

President Craig acknowledged the members of the public who were present. Public comment was provided and included comments regarding the need to keep the residential character of the town and its standing as a national historic district in mind as key priorities as the Planning Commission proceeds with the update to the town's Comprehensive Plan.

Approval of Agenda: The Agenda was discussed without a specific motion to approve. A request was made to update the word "clinic" in Item 2 of New Business to reflect the full name of the clinic, being the "WVU Land Use and Sustainable Development Law Clinic."

Unfinished Business:

1. Discuss and Review Vision Statement and Goals

Christy DeMuth from WVU indicated that the previous Comprehensive Plan to her awareness did not include a specific Vision Statement, and that such a statement could be beneficial with this update to ensure a single shared vision across the Planning Commission and all associated stakeholders. A related statement from a town "vision

process” from several years ago was subsequently located and reviewed, with Christy indicating that the current vision statement should be clear and concise and could possibly leverage aspects of this earlier vision process statement.

Multiple themes were suggested for potential incorporation into the new Vision Statement, including ideas associated with responsibly managed growth, stewardship, preservation, sustainability, resiliency and climate change, among others. Christy took the action of consolidating the suggestions into a draft Vision Statement for upcoming Planning Commission review and comment.

2. Discuss and Review Stakeholder Interviews

The WVU consultants provided an update on the ongoing stakeholder interviews that they have conducted using the Comprehensive Plan Update Stakeholder List that the Planning Commission had prepared and provided. Cameron read each of the current six responses to the survey, indicating that other responses are anticipated with additional follow up and that the Planning Commission would be provided with copies of all responses. It was noted that the survey would not be the only opportunity for the survey recipients or other stakeholders to provide input into the Comprehensive Plan Update. It was also noted that stakeholder outreach should address all local merchants.

Motion	Motion to document that WVU will provide the Planning Commission with all questions for review and approval prior to the issuance of an online survey to the Merchants Association and any other merchants by the next Regular Meeting scheduled for April 18, 2023.
Motion by	R. Meade-Curry
Seconded by	Z. Morse
YES	6
NO	1 (T. Wisecarver)
Abstain	N/A
Result	MOTION PASSES

Christy indicated that two options for engaging town merchants are a “Survey Monkey” online survey and/or an in-person Open House.

3. Discuss and Review Public Participation Options

Christy indicated that in her experience online surveys have resulted in substantially more stakeholder input than Open Houses, but that they could both be done to collect the greatest amount of input. It was suggested to conduct the online survey first and use it as an opportunity to advertise the subsequent Open House. There was discussion regarding various input eliciting activities that could be conducted in the Open House, including a “Visioning Station,” “bubble overheads,” “image boards,” “fake money,” “colored dot” priority boards, and others. It was suggested that sharing the 2013 Comprehensive Plan would help inform stakeholders about the process as well as about how the town has been able to advance the objectives within the 2013 plan.

Motion	Motion that once the Planning Commission has approved a list of survey questions, the Commission authorizes the WVU Land Use Clinic to issue an online survey to all interested parties for the Comprehensive Plan Update prior to the initial Open House/Public Meeting.
Motion by	R. Meade-Curry
Seconded by	Z. Morse
YES	7
NO	0
Abstain	N/A
Result	MOTION PASSES

President Craig requested that all Planning Commission members review the two sample surveys Christy provided in advance of the next Regular Meeting on April 18th.

It was determined that the best date for an initial Open House would be Monday, May 22nd. President Craig took the action of identifying an appropriate location.

Christy indicated that photographs are good to include in the Comprehensive Plan and that any suggested photos should be forwarded to her for potential inclusion.

4. **Discuss and Review Online Survey**

This agenda item was addressed in the previous discussion.

New Business:

1. **Discuss and Review Existing and Future Land Use Mapping**

Christy displayed a hard copy of the Corporation of Harpers Ferry Existing Land Use Map and indicated that she would provide a PDF of the map for Planning Commission reference. It was agreed to revisit the land use mapping agenda item in a future meeting.

2. **Next Meeting Date with Clinic**

It was determined that the Open House on May 22nd would comprise the next meeting with the WVU Land Use Clinic consultants.

Announcements and Reports:

1. **Next Regular Meeting** – President Craig indicated that the next Planning Commission Regular Meeting would be on Tuesday, April 18th, and that the Planning Commission members should all review the draft Stormwater Plan from the Thrasher Group in advance of the meeting.

2. **Easter Egg Hunt** – Z. Morse indicated that the annual town Easter Egg Hunt would be taking place on the weekend of April 8th.
3. **Towpath Cleanup** – President Craig indicated that a cleanup of the towpath was scheduled for Saturday, April 15th, from 9:00-12:00 and that those interested in participating should convene at the train station that morning.
4. **Earth Day** – Z. Morse indicated that Earth Day is on April 22nd and that a cleanup of the Children's Park would be conducted on that day.

Adjournment

President Craig adjourned the meeting at 8:07 PM following a motion to do so by Z. Morse that was seconded by R. Meade-Curry.

- End -