

MINUTES 2-27-12

TOWN OF BOWLING GREEN  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

MINUTES

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MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Martin Hauser, Vice-Chairman Matt Rowe, Counselor Jean Davis, Armando Flores, Johnson Coleman, Gene Self, and Chad Webb.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Tim Cox of the Caroline Progress, and Town Manager/Zoning Administrator Stephen Manster.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum: The Chairman called the roll and noted that all Planning Commission members were present and thereby a quorum was determined.

Approval of Minutes: **On MOTION by Mr. Flores, seconded by Ms. Davis, the minutes of the January 23, 2012 Planning Commission meeting were approved as presented by 6-0-1 vote, with Mr. Coleman abstaining because he was not able to attend the January Commission meeting.**

Discussion of Private Streets: Mr. Manster noted that he had not had time to develop a set of standards for permitting private streets. He noted that he hoped to have these standards ready for the Commission to review at the next meeting.

Creation of Playground – Conformance with Comprehensive Plan: Mr. Manster noted that in accordance with Section 15.2-2232 of the Code of Virginia, in order for a playground to be developed, as was the desire of Town Council, the Planning Commission would need to find that the general location, character and extent of the proposed playground was substantially in accord with the adopted Comprehensive Plan of Bowling Green. Mr. Manster read sections of the State Code to the Commission members. A copy of the legislation was included in the Commission's agenda package.

Mr. Manster distributed the Future Land Use Map from the adopted Comprehensive Plan and several pages of text from the Plan. He noted that the property that is being recommended is shown on the plan as an area for public uses. He noted that the text of the plan was non-specific and therefore, the proposed public playground would seem to be in accordance with the Plan. Commission members seemed to agree.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Clerk \_\_\_\_\_

In discussing the issue, several members of the Commission began to note that there were several issues relating to safety and security relating to the playground that should be noted for Town Council. The issues related to the fact that many children will have to access the playground over streets that have no sidewalks. This creates a dangerous situation, especially on streets such as Chase Street where there is little sidewalk area leading to the playground, and the volume of traffic is relatively high and traveling at higher than normal speeds in Town.

There was expressed concern about children crossing Chase Street and accessing the playground from point other than on Butler Street, where the main entrance should be located. Mr. Self asked if a stairway was being considered because of the steep bank along Chase Street. Mr. Manster responded that this was not being considered because people should not be entering the property from Chase but rather from Butler Street.

Mr. Webb noted that many of the older subdivisions in Town do not have sidewalks and many children will be using those streets to get to the playground. Travis Street was noted as an example. It was noted that Travis Street does not carry the same volume as Chase Street. Various fencing options along Chase Street were suggested in order to better help define the access point at Butler Street.

In order to respond to Mr. Manster's initial question and then to return to the discussion of safety issues, on **MOTION by Mr. Rowe, Seconded by Mr. Flores, the Bowling Green Planning Commission, by unanimous vote, stated that the proposed playground on Town property behind the Police Station was in accordance with the adopted Comprehensive Plan of the Town.**

The Commission continued its discussion of safety issues related to access to the playground. They reiterated that safe access was not from Chase Street. The Commission noted that Council should consider these safety concerns as they developed the playground facility. There was discussion about the possibility of extending the existing sidewalk on the south side of Chase Street to Meadow Lane. Mr. Manster noted that the property owner would be expected to develop such a facility. This would be fairly expensive due to the need to provide for stormwater drainage.

Discussion then centered around the option of constructing a walkway along a utility easement that extends from the end of the existing sidewalk on Chase Street over to Dickenson Drive. This seemed to be a reasonable solution to the situation. The Commission felt that these thought should be transmitted to the Town Council so that they could be given consideration and action could be taken.

Mr. Self then asked about the propose hours of operation for the new playground. Mr. Manster responded that the proposed hours of operation would be from dawn to dusk.

**On MOTION by Mr. Rowe, seconded by Mr. Flores, and adopted by unanimous vote, the Planning Commission recommends to Town Council that Council, in**

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**developing the playground, consider fencing and other measures to insure public safety in using and accessing the facility.**

Review of By-laws: The Commission determined that this matter should be placed on the agenda for the next Planning Commission meeting so that members could have additional time to review the material and determine whether adjustments were necessary.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, **on MOTION by Mr. Flores, seconded by Mr. Webb, and agreement of all present, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:05 PM.**

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Clerk \_\_\_\_\_