

Planning Board  
March 14, 2011  
6:30 PM  
Council Chambers

Minutes

Present at the meeting: Kerry Miller, Chair; Richard Newbill, ETJ; Lynn Montgomery; Eddie Oakley; Dot Perdue; T. G. Madison, ETJ; and Art Wise

Staff Present: Matthew Johnson and Martha Wolfe

Visitors: Carol Brooks of the Jamestown News

1. Call to order – Kerry Miller, Chair, called the meeting to order.
2. Approval of minutes from February 14, 2011 meeting - T. G. Madison made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Lynn Montgomery made a second to the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.
3. Discussion of training and projects for Planning Board Members' needs for year 2011 – Kerry Miller called for a discussion on what the Planning Board Members felt they needed to be an effective Planning Board for 2011. Miller stated last year was a frustrating year. He asked if the Board felt a joint session with the Town Council would be beneficial in understanding the role and functions of the Planning Board.

Miller would like to have a clear understanding of what the Planning Board does and how Council interacts with the Planning Board and their recommendations. Miller felt last year the Planning Board and the Council were not in synchronization on the vision for Jamestown. The Planning Board needs to have a clear understating of process and procedure. Art Wise stated as a new Board Member he would like to understand what our job is both as a Member and a Board.

Miller cited the Bojangles case from last year. The Planning Board asked the Council for time to come up with alternate sites for future businesses. The Planning Board wanted to research and give recommendations to the Council as to where it would be appropriate to allow future business growth. Per Miller, the Planning Board does not have that direction for the Council.

Lynn Montgomery felt the Planning Board needed to know what is going on in Jamestown, such as what properties are available and what can be rezoned or not rezoned. Oakley felt in recent years, the focus has been on the downtown area. He feels we should consider the whole business district from Town Hall to city limits at Penny Rd. Montgomery stated we have industrial zones to consider as well. (Industrial

District on Hillstone and Wade St.) Montgomery felt each individual Board Member has the responsibility to make themselves aware of the properties available for sale, rent and development within Jamestown. Oakley added that in addition to business and industrial districts the Planning Board needs to be aware of the potential residential districts. We could accomplish this by a group tour or on an individual basis. Oakley said that Matthew Johnson would be a key advisor in this process.

Dot Perdue stated she felt it is the individual Board Member's responsibility to visit the site of any zoning case that comes before the Board. If you have questions then seek Johnson's assistance. Oakley stated if the Planning Board toured the Town together and knew the properties available, each member would be knowledgeable to recruit a future business for the Town if and when they heard of a business seeking to locate. Perdue stated she had no objection to the Planning Board touring as a group. However, each member could do this on their own time. Individual scheduling would be a potential problem if organized as a group.

The Planning Director stated that business recruitment or development recruitment is not really a key function of the Planning Board. That is the job of an economic development position. Johnson said that the Mayor and Mayor Pro Temp are meeting with the staff and JBA members to discuss how JBA could take on a Chamber of Commerce type role. The purpose of this meeting is "marketing of Jamestown." Hopes are from this group someone with real estate experience and background will emerge to serve as a proponent for Jamestown and seek out businesses and local developers to come to Jamestown. This group will also have representatives from property owners, business owners, real estate people and developers. This group is just forming. We are optimistic that this group will be a grass roots effort from the community to proactively seek economic development for Jamestown.

Art Wise asked if the Planning Board has a role in the subject of parking at Southern Roots and the idea of a parking lot behind the Post Office. Traffic is heavy in this area. Parking is needed now and in the future with the proposed building of the Wrenn-Miller Park. Wise questioned if the PB Members should meet with the property owners in the area to try to work out a parking plan that fits the whole area. Johnson said parking is an issue that affects everybody. He would like to use the newly formed group with JBA and others as a tool to bring issues such as parking to the Planning Board and then onto the Council.

Miller said another issue for the Town is the "no growth" voice within the community. This should be discussed by the representatives of the economic development group. Miller said he met with this group. It is in its infancy. The group discussion will center on what Jamestown wants to be in the future. What is the vision of the community? What do we need to prepare for the next 5-10 years?

Per Miller, he hears a consensus that the Planning Board would like a joint session with the Town Council. At that session, have a dialogue concerning where the Council sees Jamestown going in the future. The Jamestown By-pass is coming and we need to be prepared for it to sustain the life of Jamestown.

Johnson asked for clarification of what PB would like to cover in a joint session with the Council. The Board discussed information that they felt important to include in the joint session. It was suggested the Institute of Government come and conduct a training session for the Planning Board and the Council to describe roles and responsibilities of each Board and its Members. This training session will lead to a dialogue with Council on Jamestown vision. Training gives education which helps a member do their job. The PB also discussed the idea of having a Council Member liaison sit in on Planning Board meetings.

Madison said that the PB must do what is best for the Town as a whole and not necessarily the public opinion of a few. He felt that training is important and knowing what my role is will determine how well I do my job.

Oakley made a motion that we recommend to and invite Council to a joint training session given by the Institute of Government to help Board Members and Council understand their roles & responsibilities. Art Wise made a second to the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. Johnson stated we will work on organizing this training if approved by the Town Council.

Oakley stated as a Planning Board Member we should know where the proposed Historic Districts are located. Perdue said the group that has been working on the Historic Commission will make a presentation at the Council meeting tomorrow night. At this time, the group is asking Council approval to proceed. There is a lot of work involved in setting up a Historic Commission and they want to know if the Council is interested in having a Historic Commission before they proceed. Perdue said that State approval is required for any Historic Commission and/or districts. Perdue said if the Council agrees for the group to precede, future plans are to meet with a representative from Salisbury that works for the Town of Salisbury. He has been active in the Historic Preservation of that Town. We feel he can be very beneficial to us to give advice in forming a Historic Commission. Perdue said we are far from having a historic commission.

4. Update Land Development Ordinance Books – The Town Clerk inserted update pages in each member LDO Book.
5. Public Comment Period – No one registered to speak.

6. Other Business – Johnson distributed a copy of an email the Town Manger received today. The email was from Mr. Tommy Walls. The email was sent to the Town Manager and to the Planning Board so Johnson shared this with the Planning Board Members.

Mr. Walls had some issues with the Bed & Breakfast language that was amended in the ordinance last month. Johnson said the Town Manager has offered many times to meet with Mr. Walls; he has declined that offer. He is sending out information through email to a number of persons that is inaccurate. Johnson has written a Bed & Breakfast FAQ. He went over this list. He stated a Bed & Breakfast use requires a conditional use permit granted only by the Council. This is the most stringent restriction of the Council.

Mr. Walls also referred to Restrictive Covenants of Subdivisions that prohibit businesses. Johnson stated that the Town does not enforce restrictive covenants & deed restrictions. That would be a civil matter and the person that feels they have been harmed would have to seek legal advice.

Johnson said while email can be a convenient way to communicate, sometimes the best way to communicate is by coming in and talking with the staff. Johnson just wanted the PB to be aware of this matter.

Johnson said if a PB Member has any questions; please give a list to Martha or to him. He will address them at each PB meeting. We can do this as a monthly agenda item if the PB likes.

Madison made a motion to adjourn. Lynn Montgomery made a second to the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. The meeting ended at 7:43 pm.