

TOWN OF UNIONVILLE MINUTES OF PLANNING BOARD

The January 5, 2009 regular Planning Board meeting was held at 7:00 p.m. in Town Hall, 1102 Unionville Church Road, Monroe, NC. Chairman Gene Price and Board members Andy Fowler, Jerry Hinson, Jaren Simpson and Ken Trull were present. Members Phillip Hinson and Jim Walker and Alternate Andrew Benton were absent. Alternate Larry Helms sat in for Phillip Hinson.

Chairman Price welcomed everyone and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag, after which Board member Ken Trull led the prayer of invocation.

Upon motion duly made by Jaren Simpson, seconded by Ken Trull, the Board unanimously approved minutes of the October 6, 2008 regular meeting.

The first item of business was to elect a chairman and vice-chairman. Upon motion duly made by Jerry Hinson, seconded by Ken Trull, the Board unanimously elected Gene Price as chairman for 2009, realizing that Mr. Price would need to be reappointed by Council, as his term ends in May, 2009. Upon motion duly made by Jerry Hinson, seconded by Jaren Simpson, the Board unanimously elected Ken Trull as vice-chairman for 2009.

Ms. Nadine Bennett stated that the Planning Board had not met in November and December, as it was not necessary, due to a lack of items to consider. She introduced Jana Finn, Centralina COG's newest employee, who will be working with Unionville and Fairview. She has had an opportunity to review the Land Use Ordinance and has noticed some issues she feels need to be addressed. The Planning Board members introduced themselves to Mrs. Finn and told how long they had served the Town.

Mrs. Finn stated that Commissioner Ken Brown had requested that the Planning Board consider adopting language regarding private gates, as the volunteer fire department recently had an issue with a gate when responding to a fire call. She has asked other North Carolina planners, but has not received much response, due to the holidays. In most communities, the fire marshal would handle this, and a separate ordinance from the Land Use Ordinance is adopted. Another issue Commissioner Brown asked Mrs. Finn to investigate is gated communities, and allowing access to emergency vehicles. Mrs. Finn stated that private streets are no longer allowed with the most recent text amendment, so this may take care of it. Chairman Gene Price asked if existing gates and communities would be grand-fathered. Mrs. Finn stated that it's difficult to change existing ordinances, and the landowners might not be aware of the change unless a mailing or newsletter was sent to them. There was some discussion as to the volunteer fire department handling this issue, but the request for the town to adopt an ordinance came from the volunteer fire department. Mrs. Finn distributed a copy of Town of Matthews' ordinance. The consensus of the Board is to table this issue until next month's meeting, and allow Commissioner Brown to review this document and give input to Mrs. Finn.

Another possible text change Mrs. Finn discussed deals with language she feels is not well-written regarding access to lots in subdivisions of less than five lots. She feels the current language could allow residents to maximize the land in a way that may not be the best interest of the Town. An example is an eight-lot subdivision with a common drain field, which did not require review of the Planning Board of Land Use Administrator. Mrs. Finn will continue to research this issue and bring a recommendation to Planning Board.

Mrs. Finn reported that she met with some gentlemen about possibly age-targeted or age-restricted housing. This would require a text amendment, as nothing like this is allowed in RA-40 zoning. She will bring more information on this later.

Board member Andy Fowler asked Mrs. Finn if we can put any kind of time limit for road development in major subdivisions. Mrs. Finn reported that these are handled with a bond or letter of credit, and if the roads are not completed in the designated timeframe, the Town can call the letter of credit. The Town has no jurisdiction if ownership changes and the layout stays the same. If lots or streets change, the developer must get approval from the Town. Mrs. Finn will check on time limits and how conditional use permits might also affect this.

Ms. Nadine Bennett stated that Mrs. Finn has more time to review the Town's Land Use Ordinance and asked what the pleasure of the Board is for her to do this. The consensus of the Board is for Mrs. Finn to review the Ordinance and bring issues to Planning Board that would require the Boards' attention.

Mrs. Finn reported that, beginning January 13, 2009, she would be in Town Hall from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon every other Tuesday for office hours. She will be reviewing the Ordinance and available for meetings or permit reviews at those times.

In other business, Board member Jaren Simpson reported that Pinnacle Homes has not planted the evergreen buffer along Baucom Road, as promised when they developed the five-lot subdivision off Fisher Ridge Road. Chairman Price stated that once the subdivision is approved, the Town has no recourse.

In other business, Chairman Price asked if the Board would consider having their monthly meetings at the same time as Town Council, 7:30 p.m. Upon motion duly made by Jaren Simpson, seconded by Jerry Hinson, the Board unanimously agreed to change the time of their meetings to 7:30 p.m. on the first Monday of each month, effective February 2, 2009.

There being no other business, Chairman Price declared the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonya W. Gaddy
Clerk