

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

September 12, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Wilson
Mr. Dodson
Mr. Searce
Mr. Garrison
Mrs. Evans

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Jones
Mr. Bolton

STAFF

Ken Gillie
Anna Levi
Clarke Whitfield
Tracie Lancaster

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Searce at 3:00 p.m.

I. ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

1. *Special Use Permit application PLSUP20160000236, filed by Abdulla Nesmith, requesting a Special Use Permit to operate a car wash in accordance with Article 3:K, Section C, Item 28 of the Code of the City of Danville, Virginia 1986, as amended at 234 N Union St and adjacent parking area, otherwise known as Grid 2709, Block 017, Parcels 000010 & 000011 of the City of Danville Virginia Zoning District Map. The applicant is proposing to operate a hand car wash and detailing service.*

Ms. Levi read the staff report. 12 notices were sent to surrounding property owners within 300 feet of the subject property. One response was not opposed. One response was opposed.

Mr. Searce opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Abdulla Nesmith, the applicant. Mr. Nesmith stated I am the owner of Denim Stax. I have been self-employed in Danville for 22 years I am here to answer any questions that you might have.

Mr. Wilson stated what is your response to the River District Design Commission basically saying no, it's not a good idea?

Mr. Nesmith stated I have looked at the situation. Pretty much it's cars parked in that parking lot all the time anyway. I think they were more less talking about people hanging out. I can only wash two cars at a time. So I would have a sitting area either outside or inside and they would only be two people at a time. I don't think that would be too much of an eye sore.

Mr. Garrison stated there are cars parked in that lot continuously, every time I go by there five or six cars are parked in that lot. Where do those cars come from? You want to wash cars in that lot but there are always cars in that lot.

Mr. Nesmith stated the cars are pretty much going to the barbershops. A lot of the employees from the Barbershop park there but that is our parking lot. So I would instruct them that they need to park in the City parking lot in the back.

Mrs. Evans stated would you follow the City's guidelines that they put on this. The wastewater containment for each carwash or detailing job, the hours of operation are you willing to follow the four conditions?

Mr. Nesmith stated yes.

Mr. Wilson stated one person mentioned a request to repave the lot. Was that part of your requirements or exhortation? It's not one of the requirements but is that something you was planning on doing?

Mr. Nesmith stated no because one part of the pavement is a little cracked but that is City property. I would probably put more gravel in the lot across from where I would be washing the cars at.

Mr. Searce closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Searce stated what about parking requirements for the business that is there now. Would this still keep them in compliance?

Mr. Gillie stated the Central Business doesn't require off street parking. So there is no requirement unless they are over a lot of square footage and the building is not even close to that minimum. So it won't affect that.

Mrs. Evans stated I have a question for staff. The car wash on Ridge Street the City was adamant that it be enclosed but yet you are recommended approval of this one that is going to be in the open? Could you explain that?

Mr. Gillie stated we recommended approval before we received the River District recommend of denial. So at this point, staff was going to leave this up to Planning Commission. When we looked at it he had offered to put a mat. We didn't like the other one because of trying to control the storm water and everything else due to the new state storm water guidelines. He has actually proposed a system that actually captures all the water that comes off the car. That can be then pumped into the city sanitary system. So no water should be coming off of his site that could get into the storm drains that could cause the potential for pollution. So when we looked at it at first that is one of the reasons we recommended approval. We were unaware that the River District was going to say no, that they didn't like the idea of an outdoor car wash. They are not opposed to an indoor car wash but they don't believe there should be an outdoor car wash at this location. So staff's recommendation is that you guys make the call.

Mr. Searce stated I think their denial was basically for the aesthetics of it.

Mr. Wilson stated I guess I certainly don't want to fault Mr. Nesmith for wanting to expand his business and things like that. But I do believe we were very involved in helping formulate the River District plan and helping come up with all the details of that. My recollection of all of that is the City set this up and Council voted, in a way that when it went to the Commission that Commission would be able to weigh in on these kinds of decisions. The

aesthetics of how we are going to do our downtown. I think we really have to think about that a lot.

Mr. Wilson made a motion to deny PLSUP2016000236. Mrs. Evans seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

2. *Rezoning application PLRZ2016000237, filed by The Board of Missions of the United Methodist Church requesting to rezone from OT-R, Old Town Residential to "Conditional" TO-C, Transitional Office Commercial, 212 Murphy Circle, otherwise known as Grid 0613, Block 004, Parcel 000051 of the City of Danville, Virginia Zoning District Map. The applicant is proposing to rezone the parcel so that the building may be used for community services operated by nonprofit organizations.*

Ms. Levi read the staff report. 49 notices were sent to surrounding property owners within 300 feet of the subject property. Eight responses were not opposed. Seven responses were opposed.

Mr. Scarce opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Janine Howard. Ms. Howard stated I am the President of the Board of Missions for the United Methodist Church for the Danville district which covers this area, Pittsylvania, Franklin, Patrick. I am also the district superintendent for the United Methodist church in this area. So that just describes for you what my role is in this. We have the Pastor of the former Stokesland Church with us as well she can maybe speak to any really specific questions you have. But as the president of the board of missions I just wanted to assure you that what we are seeking to do is serve the needs especially of the stokesland Community, the immediate community. These are some demographical instruments that we have access to. A couple of things that really stand out are the level of poverty in that community. We drew a circle of one mile around the property the poverty level there is significantly higher than the state averages in that neighborhood. Also, there is a very high level of single parents and it looks like the projection is lots of single family households with Dads. So we see some particular services that we might be able to provide in terms of the particular situation and needs of that community. We do appreciate you hearing us today. So that we can do what we need to conform to Danville Zoning in order to carry this out.

Mr. Scarce stated this is basically an outreach of the Church that is doing this. You're not leasing it to another non-profit.

Ms. Howard stated what we will need to do is be in partnership with other organizations to be able to continue using the building. It is a fairly large building with a big piece of land. So from an economic stand point we need to be able to at least defray the expenses of things like utilities. So that would involve lease situations but it is not to make money. It's just to enable us to keep using the building. There is no money owned on it but we need to keep it insured and there is maintenance we need to keep it a safe place for people to go. But not for the purpose of making money the Danville District Board of Missions is a 501(c) (3). So that is not what we are trying to do here we are trying to make it a valuable long term answer to the community.

Mr. Wilson stated can you give us an example of a mission or two that will be paying to be a part of this facility.

Ms. Howard stated well we actually have someone from one of those facilities here. He can speak to that in a moment. We have talk to a number of groups. The agency Patrick Henry Services which provides counseling for families who are taking care of foster children; presented an issue to us that we are hoping to help with. Something that they had identified was that Danville needs as a service. In the process of trying to bring them into the building we discovered we could not bring them in unless we went through the rezoning. We are going to have to have them come in a pay a little something for rent to cover the utilities. We discovered we couldn't do that legally.

Mr. Wilson stated it's not important to me for me to hear from each group. I'm just interested to hear what kind of services will be utilizing the facility.

Ms. Howard stated some of them may be partner agencies or not for profit and some of them maybe things we do internally. You will notice we left art studio on the list we know that having an open studio for community members just to come in and use for free to do painting or sculpture, is really important for the well-being of the folks in the community. So that would not be a partnering but that is something we would do. We will probably launch the place with putting in a community garden. To help people know how they can garden for their own purposes for healthy eating and to save money. So those are the types of things. Does that help in terms to your question?

Mr. Wilson stated yeah.

Mrs. Evans stated you will continue to have church services correct?

Ms. Howard stated yeah without getting to deep into the politics of the United Methodist Church. The members of that church have actually placed there membership with Moseley Memorial. We discontinued that property as a congregation as of July 1st of this year.

Mr. Wilson stated which community?

Ms. Howard stated Stokesland.

Mr. Wilson stated so the stokesland congregation has been absorbed by the Moseley Memorial.

Ms. Howard stated yes, but we are permitting them to worship there as a satellite congregation. I know it's confusing. They have continued to meet there for worship and we want to continue to provide that to them for as long as we can.

Ms. Lisa Nordan stated I am the Pastor of Moseley Memorial United Methodist Church and the stokesland site. To address the question on the ground stokesland is still an active community. They want to be a part of whatever non-profits come in to be in connection and build relationships. There will be many different types of non-profits. In my world of thinking it is a vision. It is going to be a one stop non-profit mission center where if someone comes in and they are challenged with not having enough money to buy school clothes for their kids we can give them that. Then send them next door if they need some type of peer to peer resource to learn how to finance better. If they need an education we can maybe help

them on the computer to do resumes. It is my hope one day that it will be one space where people can go and get help for a number of different things. Where they are empowered not simply given a handout.

Mr. Mike Ellyson stated I am the founder of the Recovery Refuge Peer Support Center. We are an official 501(c) (3) that right now operates in a satellite location. I want to address Mr. Wilson's question on free services. Last month we trained 15 different people free of charge and providing them lunch in Suicide Skills Intervention Training. At any given time we will contact 1.3 people each of us individually someone that is having suicidal thoughts. We just think that as many people in our community that can be given the skills on how to keep someone safe is vital. We will have that same class free of charge again this Thursday and Friday we have 15 people registered again at 215 Murphy Circle. On the 22nd I have 30 people registered with 15 people on a waiting list for a program called safe talk. Which is an prevention to suicide on how you identify the signs and actually start up a conversation with somebody. Where Ace is an intervention, safe talk is prevention. We also run a program called Wellness Recovery Action Plan again free to the community it started twenty some years ago in Vermont for people that have mental illness. The Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Authority of the Federal Government deemed it an evidence based practice. They gave the Copeland Center 8.6 million dollars to push that throughout the state. All of our services are free to anybody that identifies or anybody that wants to be a care provider. You will have to forgive my attire; I was in Roanoke at training today for the Department of Behavioral Health talking about the opioid addiction throughout our country. I got a phone call from a gentleman that is retired whose grandson had attempted suicide at some point last year and over the last two months his behavior has come to a point where he has withdrawn. As soon as I leave here I'm sending him a registration so that he can come to the class Thursday and Friday. So that he can have the skills to keep his grandson safe. So that he will know what signs to look for, who to call and be given the resources to bring that boy to a different place in his life.

Ms. Rhonda Vogler stated I am here to speak in favor of approving the stokesland request. Local missions and ministers have long been a passion of mine. As Bruce can tell you from my West Main Baptist Days from starting the fellowship breakfast and working with many area ministers. I have had a lot of experience working with these types of agencies. I am very excited to hear this plan that stokesland has proposed and I'm looking forward to being involved in helping them with it. I feel that having a central location offers numerous types of help. We will be able to greatly increase the number of people served but also help them more completely. I think it's important to look at the bigger picture here too that yes we will be helping individuals but we will also be impacting every person that those individuals interact with. As someone who would not only like to help with this as a member of the stokesland community myself right now. I do not only want to welcome it to our City but to my own neighborhood.

Mr. Searce closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Searce stated it seems like so much that they want to do could fall under the umbrella of any particular churches standard ministry. Is the reason we have to go thru this because they are partnering with someone else and bringing them in?

Mr. Gillie stated they are partnering with someone else and they have the potential to actually charge rent. So while it will truly be a non-profit if income of anything else is coming in. As she said the congregation has actually stopped but they are still using the facility.

While the church is in there and they are really not in there; we felt that this was the cleanest way to make sure there was no questions on the operation of the facility.

Mrs. Evans stated if they wanted to start a community garden would they have to come back to us for that or does this include the ability to do that?

Mr. Gillie stated if it going to be the Urban Agriculture under that definition they would come back.

Mr. Scarce stated if they just wanted to plant a tomato plant or two they wouldn't have to.

Mr. Gillie stated it all depends on how the operation is. That was kind of new to me at this meeting so I will talk to them about that after the meeting.

Mrs. Evans stated so that is not something we could add to this?

Mr. Gillie stated no it has to be advertised if it is under that portion.

Mr. Dodson made a motion to approve *PLRZ20160000237* as submitted. Mr. Garrison seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

II. MINUTES

The August 8, 2016 minutes were approved by a unanimous vote with a correction to the vote on the last page Mr. Bolton recommended approval not Mr. Garrison.

III. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Gillie stated City Council approved everything that you sent forward. We do have cases for next month so please plan to be here. This is more for the television audience at home the Planning Office is going to be closed this Friday. The staff is going to a training seminar in Lynchburg. This is the first time in the twenty years that I have been here that the entire office will be closed. It will only be closed on Friday so if there is anything you need Zoning Clearances, Business Licenses and Construction Clearances come down Thursday otherwise we won't be able to issue anything this coming Friday.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:31 p.m.

APPROVED