

**TOWN OF WEST POINT
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
September 7, 2016**

I. Call to Order at 5:00 pm

The West Point Planning Commission held its regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, September 7, 2016, at 5:00 p.m. Chairman James Pruett called the meeting to order.

Members Present: James Pruett, Chairman
Stuart L. Daniel
James H. Hudson, III
James Vadas
Gail Nichols

Members Absent: James N. Brockwell, Vice-Chairman
Mary Montague Sikes

Also Present: Andrea G. Erard, Esq., Town Attorney
Holly N. McGowan, Community Development Director
Charlotte G. Scanlan, Secretary

And other interested persons.

II. Review of Agenda

There were no changes.

There was a consensus to accept the agenda as presented.

III. Citizens Address the Commission

A. Citizens Address the Commission

Chairman James Pruett opened the floor for any citizen to address the Commission on any subject. There being none, the citizens address portion of the meeting was closed.

IV. New Business

A. Public Hearing/Plan of Development Language

Chairman Pruett opened the floor for any citizen to address the Commission on Public Hearing/Plan of Development Language.

Mr. Joe Sanders, J. Sanders Construction Company, West Point, stated that he did not agree with the way the proposed language was written based on that he found it to be overly burdensome and not cost effective. Mr. Sanders went on to say that the Town already has a pretty extensive procedure as it is. He continued by saying that his son, Ben Sanders, has a degree in Civil Engineering but that he does not have the State License and a Certified stamp because of the high cost of insurance which that would bring. Historically, what they had done was Ben Sanders would create and organize project drawings. With Storm Water Calculations and other projects, which physically need a rubber stamp, they have previously hired a number of licensed Engineers to review and stamp the drawings. He said requiring them to have stamped drawings is burdensome and costly to the customer. By not needing one, the customer will have saved approximately a five-figure cost.

Mr. Sanders stated that we are trying to draw businesses into town and that it will make it harder to bring people in with raising the cost of commercial building, which is unnecessary. With all the different Agencies the plans have to go through for review (HRSD, VDOT, WATER DEPARTMENT, etc.), it has become more and more difficult to do commercial building here in town.

Mr. Sanders asked that the Planning Commission review and rethink the language of the Text Amendment.

Chairman Pruett closed the Public Hearing. He also requested that Ms. Holly McGowan review the proposed changes for the Commission.

Ms. Holly McGowan, Community Development Director, reviewed the proposed changes line by line to the Text Amendment for the Commissioners, as requested.

Commissioner Nichols said she had received complaints that it is difficult to bring businesses into West Point already. Commissioner Gail Nichols, then asked if the State Statute requires the plans to be stamped with a Licensed Engineer's stamp?

Mrs. Andrea Erard, Town Attorney, responded that the State does not require a Certified Stamp. Mrs. Erard went on to say that she believed the previous language was a bit more relaxed. Previously, the Planning Commission had given a consensus that the language should be more specific on who would and could prepare plans. That is where this language changes originated. She went on to say that there is no

State Law stipulating who can prepare a Plan of Development. Therefore, the question before the Planning Commission is what qualifications the Commission feels the person who can prepare and submit a Plan of Development should be required to have.

Mr. Sanders had pointed out that there are some uncomplicated projects which shouldn't need an engineer or architect in order to submit a Plan of Development.

Ms. Erard went on to say that it is really up to the Planning Commissioners to decide what qualifications they feel someone should have in order to submit a Plan of Development. She also pointed out that Mr. Sanders had made the Commission aware that there are some projects which are simple enough that they really do not need a Civil Engineer or Architect to be able to submit a Plan of Development.

Chairman Pruett interjected that the Planning Commission had really wanted the Text amendment to follow whatever the State required.

Ms. Erard answered Chairman Pruett by saying there really aren't any State Laws pertaining to Plans of Development to be able to follow. She also said that all the Town's regulations, which we have, originated with the Town itself.

Ms. Erard said that maybe the Commissioners need to take another look at the proposed changes.

Commissioner James H. Hudson, III agreed that there should be further research into what the Federal and State regulations are so that we can be in line with their regulations.

Ms. Erard suggested that the Commission give her and Ms. McGowan a chance to look at the changes and come back with another draft next month at the October Meeting.

Ms. Nichols made a motion to give Ms. Erard and Ms. McGowan the opportunity to review the changes and present the Commission with another draft at the October 5, 2016 meeting. Commissioner Stuart Daniel seconded. Upon unanimous vote, the motion was approved.

V. Old Business

None

VI. Committee Report

Commissioner James H. Hudson, III reported on the August 30, 2016 Town Council Meeting.

Commissioner Daniel reported there was no August meeting of the BZA/Wetlands Boards.

VII. Adoption of Minutes

Commissioner James Vadas made a motion to approve the July 6, 2016 meeting minutes, as written. Commissioner Gail Nichols seconded. Upon unanimous vote, the motion was passed.

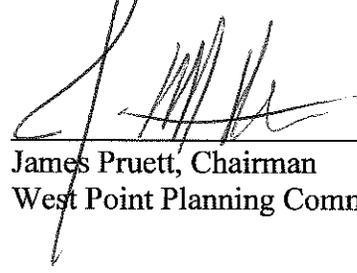
VIII. Set Next Meeting Date

October 5, 2016, at 5:00 p.m.

IX. Motion to Adjourn

Chairman Pruett declared the meeting adjourned.

Approved 7/5/2017



James Pruett, Chairman
West Point Planning Commission

Commissioner's Terms

James Pruett (Chairman)	832-1185	9/30/2017	jpruett@baydesigngroup.com
James N. Brockwell	843-2485	9/30/2018	james@brockwellseptic.com
Stuart Daniel	843-3082	9/30/2017	sddaniel4@msn.com
James H. Hudson, III	843-3262	12/31/2018	jhudson@west-point.va.us
Gail C. Nichols	843-4418	5/31/2019	nichols.baylor@yahoo.com
Mary Montague Sikes	843-3284	9/30/2016	monti7olen@verizon.net
James E. Vadas	843-4082	9/30/2016	jimvadas@yahoo.com